



[ShtetLink](#) . [October 2000] Alternate name: Beuthen. [50°23'N 18°54'E](#) , about 60 miles W of Krakow. [Yizkor](#) .

Bytom is one of the oldest cities of Upper Silesia, known as *Bitom*

in 1136 and Beuthen since 1440. Part of the German Empire in 1871, in the 19th

and the first part of the 20th centuries, the city industrialized. The area has coal deposits. In 2007, Bytom and its neighbours created the Upper Silesian Metropolitan Union, the largest urban center in Poland. Bytom had 3,500 Jewish inhabitants before WWII. Many fled, but nearly 1,000 Jews were deported in May and June 1942 to where--unknown. [April 2009]

REFERENCE: *They Lived Among Us: Polish Judaica* , a travel brochure: Arline Sachs.

REFERENCE: Gruber, Ruth Ellen. *Jewish Heritage Travel A Guide to East-Central Europe* . New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1992. p. 25

- CEMETERY: [photos](#) . [photos](#) . [April 2009]
- (May 24, 25 and 27, 2009 visit): There are signs of reconstruction and renovation but they are side by side with damaged buildings, both residential and commercial, that I am convinced have not been touched since the end of the war in 1945 (except to brick up the front door). I spent only two and one part days in Bytom (and one was a Sunday), so the objectives for my visit were limited to getting a feel for the place, to visit the Jewish cemetery where many of my paternal ancestors are buried, and to look at some of the addresses where they had lived. I had an old central area street map, in German, and an up-to-date Polish street map of the whole city of Bytom. I also had a list of all Bytom street names, in alphabetical order, with their German equivalents. This is very essential if you are trying to discover where specific German-era addresses are located. From the city centre (the Rynek) it takes only about 10 minutes to walk to the cemetery on Piekarska or about 25 minutes from the railway station. The rather dismal station building does have an Internet Café. To get into the cemetery through the iron gate, ring

the bell and the lady caretaker will come and see to you. On my first visit, with the taxi driver's help, I obtained a list of all the graves containing persons with my family name, GRAUPNER (with an umlaut over the a). She found them in one of the several school-type exercise books in which she (or someone else?) had hand written the names of all the graves, together with the date of death, and a grave location identifying number. These numbers relate to a plan of the cemetery she keeps referring to all the time. I made an appointment with her for the next day for her to guide me through the cemetery. The next day the caretaker guided me through the very overgrown cemetery. Graves are not numbered on site so the only way for her to find any specific grave was to count off graves from some pathway corner based on where the plan showed the grave number we were looking for. I am very concerned with what I saw there. I think her plan on paper or linen is about to disintegrate from frequent folding and unfolding. I trust someone, somewhere, has another copy of the plan the caretaker is using at this time, for use in the future. Secondly, what body or organization owns or manages the cemetery? I believe consideration should be given to having the wild growth cut down. It is unsafe to walk off-path between the rows of graves because of the hazard of stumbling over stones on the ground. I nearly lost my camera that way. Also, being so high, the growth interferes with reading all that is readable on the gravestones. If clearing the growth is a matter of cost, I would be happy to make a contribution. Finally, I was very disappointed to find that several names on my family tree were not listed in the caretaker's lists. Since they appear in the Bytom LDS data on deaths, I have to assume they were buried in the much older Jewish cemetery that no longer exists at all. Some of the gravestones from this older cemetery were supposedly moved to the Roman Catholic cemetery, which is just across the road from the remaining Jewish cemetery but I did not have the time to check this out nor am I aware of the existence of any list of names for these relocated gravestones. Source: [Henry Graupner](#), Guelph, Canada. [August 2009]

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- Before 1965, in Pystrowskiego Street was a small Jewish cemetery about 1,000 years old. It no longer exists. Only two pieces of tombstones were left. The government moved the other tombstones to a Catholic cemetery in Piekarska Street (Ulica Piekarska). The tombstones were thrown into a small green forest in the Catholic cemetery. Alexander Gerner may have further information. alexg@post8.tele.dk [date?]

- The cemetery in Bytom is a bit overgrown, but is otherwise in reasonably good shape, with a high wall, and some custodial supervision. It is in the city proper. [Gottfried Brieger](#) visited in September, 2004. [January 2005]

- An old Jewish cemetery on Pstrowskiego Street (now Piastów Bytomskich Street) was demolished in the 1960. I don't know the reasons. I've not found the matzevot. The old matzevot were not brought to the Catholic cemetery at the Piekarska Street as reported, but to the new Jewish cemetery at the same street, vis-a-vis the Catholic one. There's a monument made of these matzevot and another monument in memory of Jews from Netherlands, who have died in the Nazi forced labor camps around Bytom. Source: [Wojtek Tworek](#) [July 2004]

- **BYTOM:** I and II US Commission No. POCE000250 and 258: IThe US Commission has supplied no further information.

{gallery}EastEurope/Poland/Bytom{/gallery} Photograph by [Henry Graupner](#), Guelph,

Canada