

Largest synagogue in Germany reopens

by UPI

BERLIN - A Berlin synagogue, the largest in Germany, held its first religious service in 67 years Friday to mark its reconstruction and reopening. The Ryke Street Synagogue, which can hold 1,200 worshipers, was built in 1904. The building was heavily damaged in Kristallnacht, the 1938 pogrom orchestrated by the Nazis with attacks on Jewish homes, businesses and places of worship. One of the guests at Friday's service, Rabbi Leo Trepp preached at the synagogue in the 1930s, Deutsche Welle reported. Trepp, 94, was deported to the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. "It is a miracle that there are Jews in Germany again," Trepp said. "And the synagogue on Rykestrasse, which survived two different regimes, is the symbol of that miracle." After the fall of Germany in 1945, the synagogue was used as housing for Jewish concentration camp survivors. The building was in the Russian sector of Berlin, which became the East German sector and served as a center for Jews from eastern Europe. Efforts to restore the synagogue completely began after German reunification. The restoration cost about \$7 million.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Largest synagogue in Germany reopens by UPI