

Relatives retrace ride to Auschwitz

AUSCHWITZ, Poland (AP)-1,000 French Jews arrived yesterday by train at Auschwitz, the Nazi death camp where their relatives perished a half-century ago.

Every car of the train was marked with a large plaque that said, "Drancy-Auschwitz, 1942-1992. The Memory Train." Drancy was the French internment camp where the Jews were taken before being deported.

"For 50 years, I have thought about my mother's death," said Henri Benchoan, 58, whose mother was deported from France in 1942 and died at the camp. "But here today, I have faced the horrible conditions in which it happened. It's much worse than I ever expected. But now I am at peace."

Organized by Nazi hunter Serge

Klarsfeld, the 14-car train bearing Jews of French origin left Paris Sunday morning, reaching Auschwitz in a cold, driving rain after a 25-hour journey through Germany and Poland.

Those aboard, who had come from as far away as New York and Tel Aviv, disembarked on the ramp where Nazi doctors sent their parents and brothers, aunts and sisters to their deaths.

Nearly 80,000 French Jews were deported during the war. About 2,500 survived.

The visitors placed a marble plaque at the ramp outside the camp where most of the French Jews arrived, and where the Nazi "selection" took place.