

Rolava, Sokolov dist., Karlovy Vary Region

Mining plant and prisoner of war camp

(Second World War)

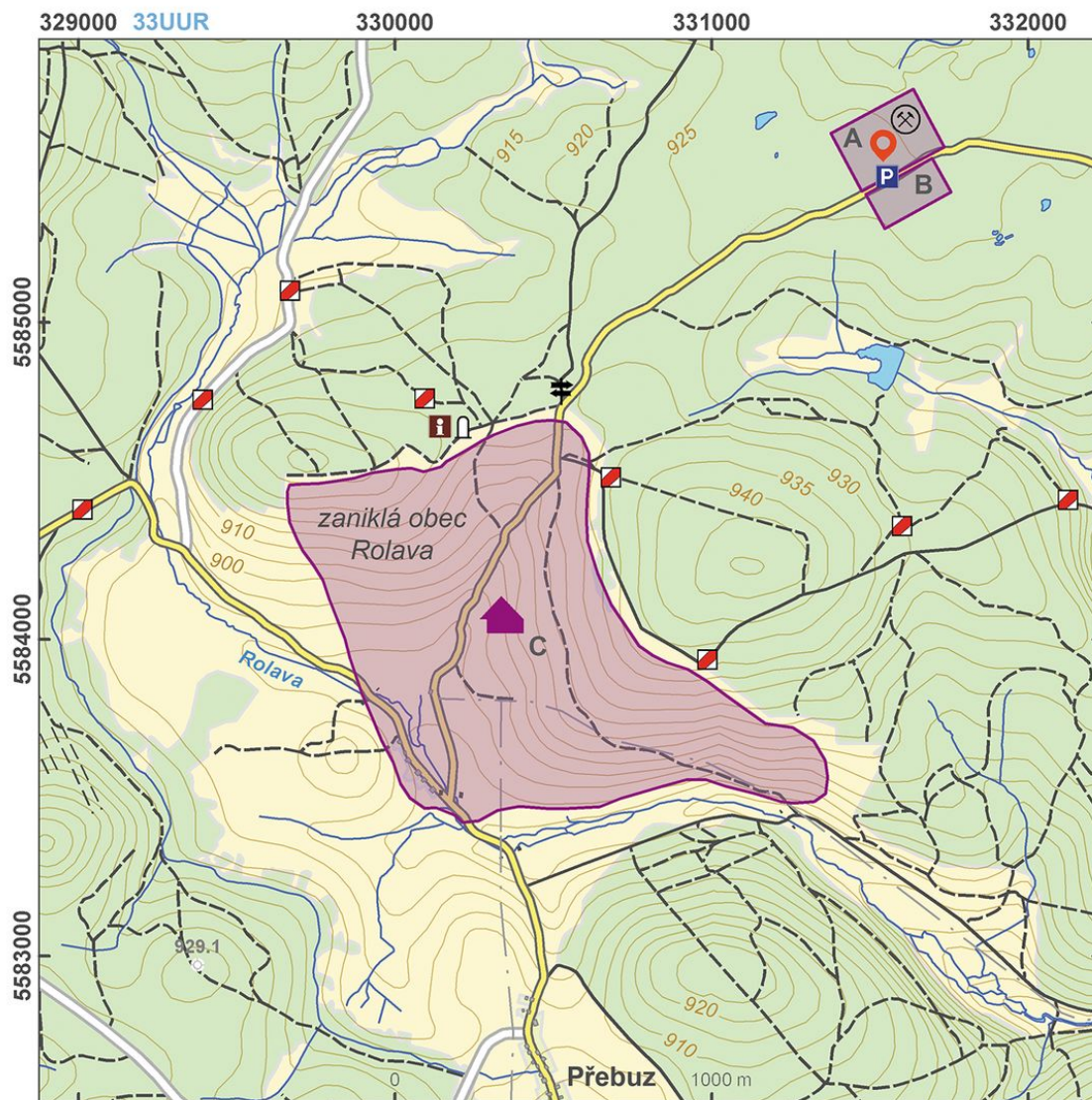


Remnants of a mining plant and prisoner of war camp of the Second World War, an impressive, yet so far publicly unknown memorial to slave labour. The Ore Mountains became a major area for mining non-ferrous metals by the Middle Ages at the latest. Tin and tungsten were already important in the war economy of the First World War; in 1940 underground mining operations began and a camp was created for French and (later) especially Soviet prisoners. After the war, both the personnel and prisoners fled. The industrial facilities and machines were taken over by the 'Rudné doly Příbram' company and transferred to the Příbram region, where they were used for ore extraction during the following years. The site also serves as a model example of the way archaeological sites are formed, including the varied decay of different types of built structures.

References: Rojík 2000; SOA Plzeň, f. Cínové doly Rolava.

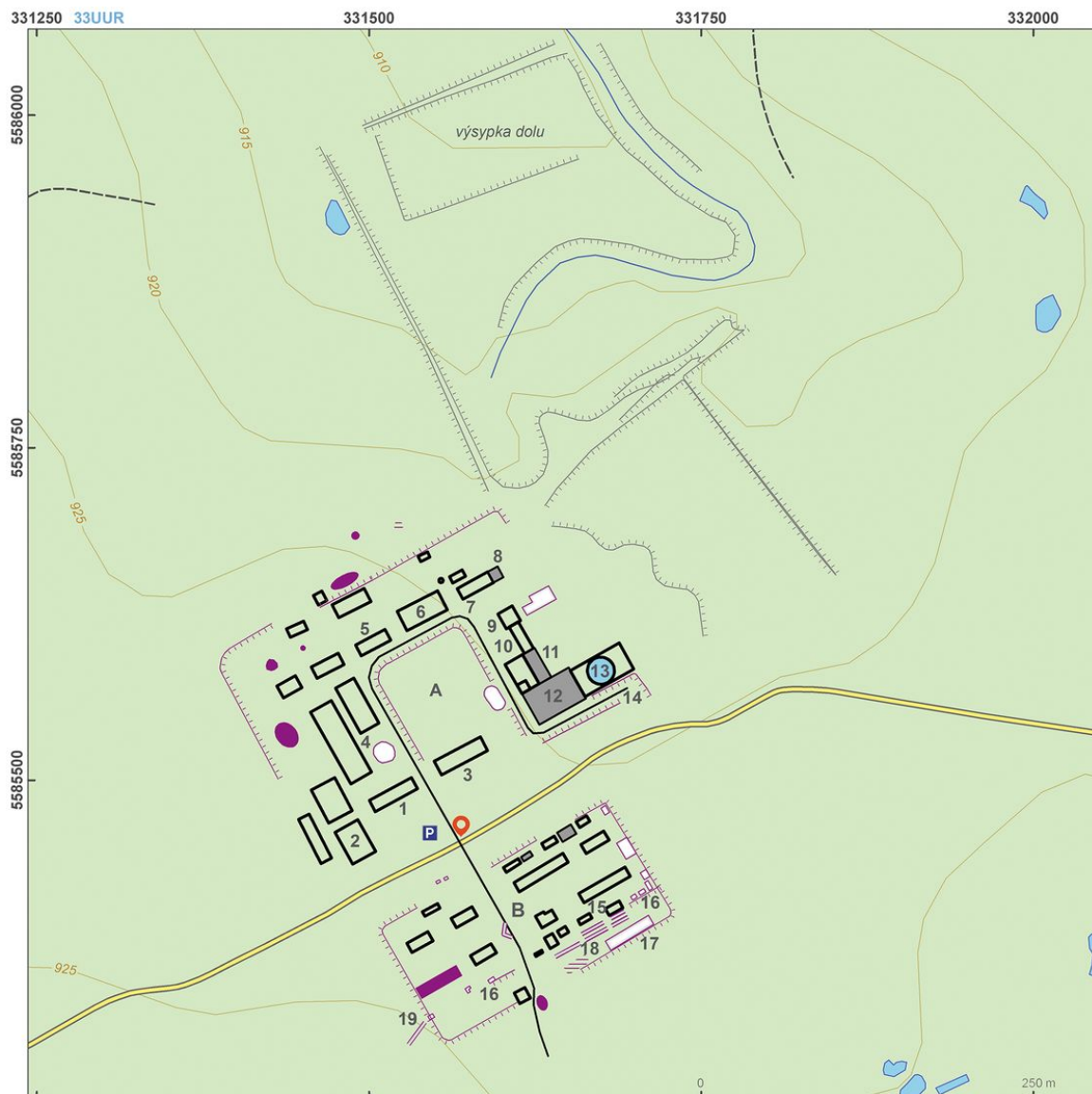
Navigation points: N 50°23'49.01", E 12°37'48.43".

Map notes: A – mine with processing area; B – POW camp; C – deserted village of Rolava (Sauersack); 1 – gatehouse; 2 – stables; 3 – administrative building with labs; 4 – tin warehouse with loading ramp; 5 – forge with locksmith workshop; 6 – miners' locker room and washroom; 7 – compressor room with concrete-foundations for machinery; 8 – substation; 9 – mining tower above shaft; 10 – ore mill; 11 – silos for the storage of ground ore; 12 – ore treatment plant; 13 – sludge condenser; 14 – loading ramp at truck turnabout; 15 – delousing station; 16 – relief edge demarcating the original area of the POW camp; 17 – remains of simple constructions; 18 – trenches for uncompleted sewerage line; 19 – spillway for drainage of surface water.



Access map.

After Kuna et al. 2014.



Site plan.

After Kuna et al. 2014.



Historical picture of already dismantled mining tower (in the middle), engine house (left) and ore mill with ore silo (right).

© Geological Survey of CR. Photo R. Hylský, 1946.



View across the originally roofed sludge condenser pond on the ore treatment plant with silos.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



Smokestack and processing plant facade. Construction made of reinforced concrete was covered by insulating wooden layer.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



Former showers area.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



Concrete bases for mining devices and mine ventilation system.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



View in the processed ore warehouse; remains of roofing and reed isolation are visible on the ferroconcrete frame.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



Remains of constructions with cellars in the prison camp; the frontal served as a foodstuffs' store, the rear probably secondarily as a prison cell.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



Remains of the prison camp are less well preserved than those of the factory: mouth of the channel shaft (front left), a barrack's concrete foundations in the background.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



Sunken features in the time of snow melting.

Photo J. Hasil, 2013.



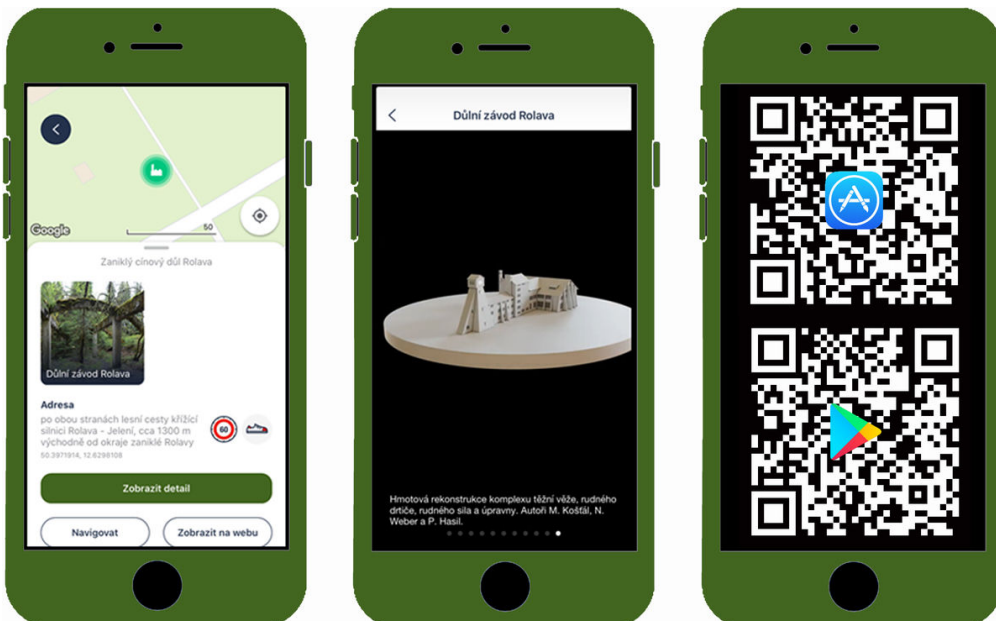
Spoil tip to north-east of the mining plant.

Photo J. Hasil, 2014.



Tin cast in the shape of a little dog's head found in the area of the camp during the illegal metal detector prospection. Prisoners killed monotonous days of forced work by producing such products.

Photo Z. Kačerová, 2014.



Application for mobile devices on the Android and iOS platforms has been open to the public since 2021 to learn about the archeology of the dark heritage and mountain relics in the area of Rolava.

J. Hasil, 2022