

THE IVANSK PROJECT e-NEWSLETTER

Issue Number 14

September – October 2005

Welcome, dear reader, to the latest e-newsletter of the Ivansk Project. You are one of over 250 people who receive our newsletter on email, or perhaps you are one of those without email whose friends and family regularly print copies for you to read. Our readership is increasing steadily, and includes people in Canada, Colombia, Israel and the U.S.A. Many readers have told us how much they enjoy receiving the e-newsletters, including historical memoirs of Ivansk, present day photos and stories of visits to Ivansk by members of The Project. Your correspondence with new ideas, suggestions for improvement and material for publication are very much appreciated.

If you know of others who would like to receive this e-newsletter on e-mail, please forward their e-mail addresses to the editor, Norton Taichman <nstaichman@comcast.net>. While we have no budget to mail out copies, we are able to forward back copies electronically to whoever requests them.

We look forward to the future (hopefully about a year from now) when the e-news will describe the dedication of our completed restoration of the Ivansk Cemetery. Even more than death, we seek to memorialize life by collecting histories and memories of our people who lived in Ivansk for hundreds of years. Unlike many other Polish shtetlach, there has never been a Yizkor Book for Ivansk, and we are hopeful that material made available as a result of our work will help in fulfilling this function, commemorating the lives of Ivansk's Jews.

Soon, the High Holidays will be here, a time to strengthen our bonds with family, friends and community and to ponder what we believe in and stand for. We hope that the year ahead holds great promise and satisfaction for you and yours.

From all of us to all of you,

L'Shanah Tova

A Happy, Healthy, Prosperous 5766

A Year Filled With Hope And Peace!

CONTENTS

- **Progress Report on the Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project**

Thanks to your generous support we have raised over \$41,000 for the restoration project. Unfortunately, this isn't enough yet to begin construction of the cemetery wall, gate and memorials to honor our people buried in the cemetery as well as those killed in the Shoah (including the Viennese Jews who were deported to the shtetl and then murdered with Ivansk people in Treblinka). Understandably, authorities at The Poland Jewish Cemetery Restoration Project, which manages the project on our behalf, insists that the full amount for each project be on deposit before actual work can begin.

We remain fully committed to getting the job done, and we are confident that you share in our determination. If you've already donated to the project, we thank you most sincerely and ask if you would consider making an additional gift to help make up for the short fall. If you are one of the many who have not as yet stepped forward and who keep meaning to do so, your help is needed now, more than ever. Let's pull together to achieve this mitzvah and celebrate completion of the restoration and rededication of the cemetery in 2006.

Instructions on how to make your tax-deductible gift are found at the end of the e-Newsletter.

- **MEMOIRS (*Part 1, Life in a Small Polish Town*) by Manny Rotman, 1909 – 1997**

Manny Rotman immigrated from Ivansk to Toronto when he was 17 years old. At the urging of his family he wrote an account of his life in Poland and in Canada. Canada blessed Manny with material success, and in turn Manny demonstrated his appreciation by the charitable legacy he left to his community. Later in life, Manny lived in Israel where he generously supported many social, cultural and educational institutions. Here, we present the first part of Manny's memoir that describes his early years in Poland.

- **LIVES LIVED: *MANNY ROTMAN* by Ruth Wolfish Rotman**

After his death, Ruth Wolfish Rotman published a brief summary of Manny Rotman's life in the "Lives Lived" column of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. The article provides many additional insights into the accomplishments and the generous qualities of her remarkable husband.

- **A Postscript About My Uncle Manny by Sydney Kasten**

Syd shares some of his memories of "Uncle Manny".

- **Synagogues and Cemeteries: A Trip to Poland and Spain (*Part One – Poland*) by Gary Lipton**

Poland and Spain once had the largest populations of Ashkenazim and Sephardim in Europe. During the summer Bonnie and Gary Lipton journeyed to Poland and Spain for the first time. Gary describes what they saw and how they felt as they stood in places that were once home to thriving Jewish communities and where only a handful of Jews remain. Part One recounts their experience in Poland. Part Two, to appear in a future e-Newsletter, takes place in Spain.

- **Report From Ivansk: *An e-Mail Letter from David Blumenfeld***

In August David Blumenfeld, who is preparing a documentary film on the restoration of the Ivansk Jewish Cemetery, arranged for a group of Israeli schoolgirls to visit the cemetery. His letter describing what happened is compelling and uplifting.

MEMOIRS (*Part 1, Life in a Small Polish Town*)

by Manny Rotman, 1909 - 1997

[Ed: Manny Rotman was a man with unbounded energy, optimism and sense of purpose. His life was filled with distinguished accomplishments, and he left a legacy to his family and community that will endure for years to come. At the urging of his family Manny completed his memoirs in 1988. His tale is divided into two parts: his early days in Ivansk followed by his life in Canada. Sydney Kasten has made the first part of his Uncle Manny's biography available to us. Manny's widow, Ruth Wolfish Rotman and his son, Joseph Rotman have granted permission for us to publish the document. We hope to publish the second part of Manny's story about his life in Toronto in a future e-Newsletter. Meanwhile, we are pleased to provide Ruth Wolfish Rotman's biographical sketch of her husband that appeared in "Lives Lived", a regular feature of the Toronto Globe and Mail. Also, Sydney Kasten writes "A Postscript About My Uncle Manny" that appears at the end of this feature.]



Manny Rotman, 1997

For a number of years my grandchildren, Janis and Kenny Rotman, have asked for a summary of my Polish experiences. Janis even sent me a book to complete entitled, "My Grandfather's Recollections". This book comprises questions that are a guide to writing memoirs. Sharon Black, my brother Motel's granddaughter, presented me with a beautiful family scroll for completion, which I never did. Alex Waugh, Vice-Principal of Woodsworth College, also suggested I record my memoirs. I started over some time to write and make files with little co-ordination. Instead of reorganizing my files I have decided to start my memoirs anew at the request of David Latner, my great nephew. He is recording a family tree, and since his grandfather was my brother he wrote and asked me for information about my parents, i.e. his great grandparents. In answer to David's letter, I wrote several pages describing the Rotman's life in Ivansk as I was growing up. Joe, Janis and Kenny have copies. When this letter was finished, Ruth said to me "continue on with your experiences in Canada". I then started writing from memory about my arrival in Canada in 1927 until I left for Israel in 1977. Also included are experiences subsequent to 1977.

I was born on March 11, 1909 in Ivansk, Poland, a small town. I was one of twelve children and lived in Ivansk until I immigrated to Canada in 1927. My father came from Lagov (*Lagiv*), another small town of about the same size. My father's name was *Hersh Leib* (*Zvi Yehuda* in Hebrew). The Nazis shot him on October 8, 1939. My mother's name was *Chaya Yehudis* (maiden name *Applebaum*); she was born in Ivansk and was killed by the Nazis on October 25, 1941. Her parents were *Merle* and *Yosef*. The names of my paternal grandparents were *Sima* and *Yishai*.

Hersh Leib was a bible scholar and spent most of the day in the house of study [*Beis Medrash*]. Chayah Yehudis was the breadwinner for the family in addition to being mother to 12 children (8 of whom were known to me; 4 died). The names of my four sisters were *Sara Zvetel*, *Matel Hannah*, *Sheindel* and *Merle*. Sara Zvetel and Matel Hannah died before I left Ivansk. Sheindel and Merle were still alive, but the Nazis murdered them, their husbands and children. The only survivors were Sara Zvetel's two sons, *Alter* and *Shmiel* who escaped to Bogota, Colombia. The names of my 3 brothers were *Motel*, Sam (*Srul-Bear*) and Joseph (*Yossef*); only my brothers and I came to Canada.

When I was young the source of income for the Rotman family was a toll bridge, which connected Ivansk and Apt (Opatow). Every horse and wagon paid a toll both coming and going. This bridge was rented from the municipality. Later, the family bought and sold farm products. The business was conducted from our house as well as by going out to the farms. Sometimes my father came with us to the farms to make sure we were doing the right thing. The Rotmans sold produce to farmers that they did not grow. On the other hand, we bought farm produce and sold it to people in Ivansk, Lagiv, Apt, *Stashiv* (Staszow), etc.

Every farm district had a rich man called a "paritz" (squire) who owned orchards. The Rotmans rented such orchards where various kinds of apples, plums, grapes, peaches, tomatoes, and onions were grown. The orchards were nurtured, guarded and harvested by the Rotmans and the produce marketed to the various cities. The Rotmans estimated the amount of fruit growing on the trees and on the ground in order to determine a competitive rental fee for the paritz as well as a fair profit to provide them with a living during the winter. The fruit was kept in cold storage until it ripened enough to be sold and marketed in wooden crates built by the Rotmans. A portion of the harvested grapes was used to make wine. They also traded in hides and marketed dried fruits; the latter were produced in a primitive oven dug into the ground.

The Rotmans also made and sold whitewash in the market place [whitewash is composed primarily of water and lime (calcium carbonate) mixed to form a thin paste]. It was the paint of that time (early 1900s) made by digging a hole in the ground in an empty field to form a deep oven that was filled with stones. The stones were heated by burning wood in the oven to yield the lime. Every house in town was covered with whitewash.

When we lost the income from the toll bridge, we opened a store on the Road to Klimontow (*Klimintov*). My mother was in charge of the store located in part of the house. All the children helped with the business.

I was about 12 years old when my older brother Joseph was inducted into the army.

My father took me to the Anshteter Rabbi, and the Rabbi taught me cubic calculations in order to estimate the size of the lumber. My father was a Hassid of the Anshteter Rabbi. Every Saturday the Rotmans and the Applebaums would gather for a discussion on the Torah Portion of the Week and the Ethics of our Fathers. The family was very close.

The Rotmans were also in the lumber business and obtained wood from the forests owned by farmers. The timber was taken to a mill and cut into lumber; the unsuitable part of the tree was converted into firewood. Farmers with horse and wagon were hired to move the lumber and firewood from the mill to the train and from there to the Rotman storage. The lumber was sold to construction companies and lumber dealers. The firewood was used to make whitewash and was also sold to individuals for home heating.

On market days the Rotmans sold whitewash and handled the toll bridge. During these periods the family lived on one floor of a fourplex with three other neighbours, each one independent from the other with the exception of a common washroom, which was outside the fourplex. The fourplex was two blocks away from the market.

None of us dared to miss studies. On the days we spent going out to the farms, we would study in the evenings and at any other time available. Just as the daily prayers were a must, so were the studies. I did not know anyone who did not perform the daily prayers or eat kosher meat.

My schooling in Ivansk was comprised of several levels. (1) I studied with an elementary teacher in the house where he and his family lived. I learned to recognize the Hebrew alphabet and sentences, continuing until I could pray from a *Siddur* (prayer book). But I did not understand what I was saying; (2) Having mastered reading Hebrew, I went to the house of another teacher and studied the Bible (*Chumish*) and commentaries of the Bible, such as *Rashi*. The group that studied in this class was much more competitive; i.e. the pupils strove for high marks; (3) Upon completion of this class, I continued with a third teacher to learn Talmud. Some pupils quit this class for lack of desire or ability. In our home it was not acceptable to stop studies. In fact, it was a custom to continue studies in the Ethics of the Fathers and the Torah Portion of the Week in the House of Study (*Beis Midrash*). At this stage I was about 17.

In the Beis Midrash everyone was on his own or when necessary, consulted with someone for interpretation or joined a group dealing with the same issue. Most individuals were ready and willing to listen and respond. Lectures were also given periodically at the House of Study. Most students were involved in other activities in order to help the family earn income. A small number studied to become professionals such as a rabbi, teacher, or *shochat* (ritual slaughterer). The Rabbi was the overseer of religious practices and ruled and made decisions on disagreement and behavior, i.e. *din Torah*.

My father studied constantly and in Yiddish was referred to as a "*kest kint*", which means that he was supported by his wife's parents. He was highly regarded by the entire family and community, and in the House of Study he was given a seat of honour on the east wall.

In 1926, although I was still not of military age, I was advised to become a resident of a major city in Poland in order to minimize political stress [presumably, "political stress" refers to ease of obtaining a passport in a large city as opposed to the shtetl]. I moved to the largest city in Poland, Warsaw. After living in Warsaw for 60 days I was qualified to get a passport; when I received my passport I went to Danzig to start my journey to Toronto. But as I checked in on board ship, my passport was confiscated, and I was kept in jail undergoing interrogation two or three times a day. The cruelty of the interrogation could not have been worse if I had committed murder. At the end of ten days a decision was made to send me back to Ivansk. Chains were placed on my hands and feet and accompanied by a policeman I traveled during the day. At night I was placed in jail where the interrogations were repeated with the hope that I would weaken and confess to something [ie, something illegal] that would justify the cruelty. They were unwilling to accept the facts. It took a year to clear myself. When I reached Ivansk the family put up bail and I was released from custody, but the investigations continued, which, along with the trial, took another year. [See explanation about Manny's encounter with the Polish police in "A Postscript About My Uncle Manny" below].

From the House of Study and helping the family with calculations, I left for Canada where.....

[This installment of the narrative ends at this point....please continue "Lives Lived" below]

LIVES LIVED: *MANNY ROTMAN*

by Ruth Wolfish Rotman

Published in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, Monday, May 18, 1998

Ruth is Manny's wife. They were married on 15 August 1978.

Manny Rotman: entrepreneur, philanthropist, community activist. Born March 11, 1909, in Ivansk, Poland; died of a heart attack in Toronto, Dec. 27, 1997, aged 88.

When Manny Rotman arrived in Toronto in 1927 from Poland at the age of 17, he was already a seasoned entrepreneur. He had helped in the family business, managing a toll bridge between Ivansk and Apt, operating orchards, producing whitewash and dealing in lumber.

Because he could not speak English when he arrived in Canada, his first job was helping his brother load and deliver coal. He then got a job in a mattress factory where his work included sweeping the floor and flattening the mattresses. He worked at this for four weeks for no pay and then he received \$3 a week. (Last summer he told his great-nephew Gabriel about that first wage and the six-year-old shot back, "I call that a rip-off.") When the dust from the mattresses affected his health, he took a cleaner job in a cloak factory. A minor fracas with another employee got the two of them fired although the manager told Manny to come back in the morning. He did, but had a plan. He told the manager he was going into the coal business and asked for his help to get started.

Not only did he obtain coal orders from the manager and his entire family but his fellow workers also became his customers. With the \$160 he was able to borrow with the help of three guarantors, he bought a horse and wagon, filled bags with coal and carried them to the bins of customers. And so Royal Canadian Fuels was born. When the coal volume increased he disposed of the horse and wagon and bought a two-ton truck. The time he gained by having the truck he used to hire agents to sell coal for him. When oil replaced coal as the preferred heating fuel, he switched his emphasis and eventually became the largest independent fuel dealer in Toronto.

Manny had bright red hair, a lust for life and a persuasive personality, all of which helped him to succeed. In 1929 he married Goldie Kestenbaum and they had three children: Jennie (Cass), Joseph and Millie (Shime). As a new immigrant Manny was determined to integrate fully as a Canadian and diligently studied English until he spoke it fluently.

He expanded his business interests to include bankruptcy takeovers, investments, and finance and even had a brief, successful stint in the film industry. He demonstrated his appreciation for his blessings through philanthropy, including supporting the Goldie Rotman Oncology Centre at the Toronto Hospital and the Millie Rotman Shime pre-university program at Woodsworth College, University of Toronto, named for Manny's late daughter.

He was also a community activist and served as a member of the United Jewish Appeal allocation committee and worked on the United Appeal Campaign. In the 1960s, he was chairman of the Bureau of Jewish Education, where he successfully arbitrated a pending strike in the entire day-school system.

While he was very much dedicated to the business world, his lifelong commitment was to learning. He always regretted not having a university degree and was determined to fill the void. Shortly after his wife died, when he was in his mid-60s, he entered the University of Toronto to study comparative religions. Halfway toward the completion of his degree, he decided to enhance his studies by taking courses at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He learned to speak and write Hebrew fluently. His credits were transferred to the University of Toronto and in November 1985, at 76, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree. He considered it to be his greatest achievement that he had satisfied the academic requirements of the two universities.

All his children were University of Toronto graduates and he was tremendously happy to join them. His 10 grandchildren are all graduates of institutes of higher learning.

Shortly after his 88th birthday Manny completed his memoirs. He said: "I thank and bless Canada, a country of many freedoms which I utilized to progress from a floor sweeper, serving three weeks for nothing and then for \$3 a week, to become financially independent and to contribute to nonprofit institutions. Thank you Canada, also, for those wonderful pension and old-age security cheques."

Manny died on his way home from a family party.

A Postscript About My Uncle Manny

by Sydney Kasten, Jerusalem, Israel

In 1926, before leaving for Canada my Uncle Manny moved to Warsaw. Apparently, he anticipated that in the big town he could minimize the "political pressure" (see text in his "Memoirs") and the costs that were inherent in securing a passport through the services of a "middle man". But his decision backfired and his career as a jailbird goes something like this:

My Uncles Manny and his future brother-in-law Oizer (Izzie) Kestenbaum decided that it was time to join that part of their extended families already in Toronto. Their mistake was that they decided to do it on their own rather than through the local "*macher*" [a man with "connections"] who took a hefty fee for making whatever paper arrangements that had to be made, and perhaps to pay off necessary links in the process. This *macher*, however, was not a man to be trifled with; he had his ear to the ground and knew what was going on. Because of the danger to his future business, as well as the insult of being snubbed, he made sure that the authorities knew that these two were traveling under assumed addresses or whatever. My Uncle's incarceration delayed his departure from Poland until 1927.

Ruth Rotman's account of Manny's life focused on his development as a citizen of Canada. Through the lines one can appreciate his love for Israel. Indeed, after the death of my Aunt Goldie he liquidated his holdings in Canada, moved to Israel and became an Israeli taxpayer. His generosity extended to funding a chair in Jewish Education in the Diaspora at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and support for Elwyn Jerusalem, a system that tenders social and vocational support for the socially and intellectually challenged of all ages. The names of Goldie and of his daughter Millie will be found on the donor walls of many smaller educational institutions. In his memoir my uncle gives great emphasis to the imperative of education at all levels of

development. As children, at family gatherings, we used to joke about his habit of reading his children's comic books. It was much later that we realized to what extent this gave him a fluent idiomatic and conversational command of the English language. On the other hand, when cajoled to say a few words at an Ivansker banquet he made sure that his truly few words were closed with a homily from the Talmud.

Uncle Manny was a modest man. I find it interesting, that although he was part of all our family celebrations here in Israel I wasn't able to find one usable photograph in our albums. I will keep looking, but until then I offer this photo of a **Toronto Passover Seder in 1936**. (Any resemblance to a Francis Ford Copolla scene is purely coincidental.)



- At the head of the table in a bow-tie is the elder Rotman brother, Uncle SrulBer (Sam). To his left, holding Millie, is Uncle Mendl (My Uncle Manny). Since Mendl and SrulBer were married to sisters, this picture is basically slanted to the Kestenbaum siblings.
- To Sam's right is his wife, Minnie; behind her, daughter Jean (Hanser) and, behind his father, the late Joe.
- Starting from the left of the picture is Uncle Izzie Kestenbaum, and his wife Sylvie, with Estelle (Teperman) between them.
- Beside Uncle Izzie is my mother, Ruchel (Rose), nee Brauner, who is the "K" of the K-B Map, and my father, known in Ivansker circles as Chiel Kesten.

- Standing tall behind Uncle Izzie is my sister Dorothy. I am peeking out from behind my mother. The bright smile behind me belongs to Mary (Goodman), Minnie and SrulBer's number 3, and between my father and Minnie is Sadie (Rotstein), their number 4.
- To Uncle Mendl's left is Jennie (Cass). Between Jenny and Auntie Goldie is Joe Rotman, the well-known businessman and philanthropist.
- Finally we have the family of Uncle Harry Cooper and my father's youngest sister, Bessie, with Irv standing and Davie Cooper on his mother's knees.
- Missing from the picture is my father's sister Sarah, her husband Shmiel Kestenbaum (they were cousins) and their son Maxie, presumably because they led a strictly orthodox life style and wouldn't travel on *Yom Tov*.

Of the adult Kestenbaums in the picture, there remained behind in Poland two brothers together with their parents, all victims of Nazi cruelty and of Canada's "None Is Too Many!" policy *.

[* "*None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe 1933-1948*" is the title of a book written by Irving Abella and Harold Troper. The authors describe the shameful policy of Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and his administration to choke European Jewish refugee immigration to Canada before and during World War II. Canada was only one of several nations, including the USA, that did little to save Jews who could have escaped from the Nazis.]

Synagogues and Cemeteries: A Trip to Poland and Spain

(Part One – Poland)

by Gary Lipton, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

This summer my wife, Bonnie, and I spent 3 weeks travelling in Poland and Spain on what is known these days as a “Jewish Roots Trip”. Rather than joining an organized tour, we opted to do the research and go on our own. The main reason for the trip to Poland was to walk the streets, especially in the shtetls of our grandparents, to see if we could still feel their presence, and by association, our own. In addition, as a representative of the Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project I visited Ivansk to assess our restoration work that has yet to be completed.

It was readily apparent that little remains of the Jewish presence in Poland. Modest synagogues, *yeshivas*, study halls and *mikvehs* have long ago been burnt down or destroyed in some other manner. Great synagogues in which the structures still stand survive as city archives or other government buildings with little or no reference to their original functions. Private homes of our forefathers are numerous, and living in them now are families of modest means who have survived the Nazi horrors as well as over 40 years of Communist deprivation. Besides the few surviving synagogues, the most profound testimony to the hundreds of years of Jewish life in Poland is the cemeteries, vast in the big cities such as Warsaw, Krakow and Lodz, and small in the numerous shtetls. When we were travelling around I often felt that I was looking at a scene after a fire. Here and there we could still make out the form of something like a synagogue still standing. But it was like looking at the ashes of a great log after a fire. The form was still there but if you try to reach out and touch it, the image collapses because the life has been removed.

Misconceptions and stereotypes

We quickly learned that some of our preconceived notions of the situation in Poland both before and during World War II were not correct, and where we had no preconceptions, we were often surprised. The heartland of Poland, an area known as Wielkopolska, is the geographical centre of the country and includes Warsaw and the area of our family shtetls- Ivansk (Iwaniska), Apt (Opatow) and Rahav-Annapol. The landscape has rolling hills, oak and maple trees and green fields. It is surprisingly very similar to southern Ontario. The weather, as well, is not very different from our own. Those who arrived here from the old country would have found this aspect, at least, to be familiar. It was also readily apparent that we Jews look very different than the Slavic Poles. Even after 1000 years of intermingling and, no doubt, some intermarriage, we have, for the most part, kept to ourselves. Much has been written about the Jewish “Otherness” in Poland. Even in areas where Jews were a majority of the population, we remained as outsiders. Jews had their own civil administrations, the *kahals*, whose members recorded births, deaths and marriages and collected taxes. Our separateness from the Polish national fabric was due not only to exclusion but, also, from our own refusal to assimilate. After centuries of being disenfranchised in Europe, there was little or no desire to support national aspirations as the benefits might come at the expense of our religion and customs. This is an issue that Jews in the Diaspora continue to face today.

We were fortunate that we were able to travel around Poland with our friend, Jerzy Tempski, a 79-year-old resident of Warsaw who comes from the area of Pomerania, in north-western Poland. We had long discussions with Jerzy on Polish history. Both from these discussions, talks with other Poles, and from our own readings and experiences, it was evident that many of our old notions have to be modified. For one thing, Poles were not “worse than the Nazis”. The latter is a phrase commonly heard for years after the war. This feeling evolved, I believe, for two reasons. First of all, it is clear to all that the Nazis conceived and perpetrated the Holocaust. Despite centuries of anti-Semitism Jews and Poles did share much of their daily lives and there was an element of harmony. Much post-war resentment has been directed by Jews at the Poles because they were our neighbours, not a faceless war machine like the Nazis. What lingers in Jewish memories is the image of the sadistic Poles who benefited from our misery, as well as those that offered no assistance. The Polish view here is that there was absolutely nothing that they could do. If one opened one’s door to help, an entire family would be shot. Those who acted like overt anti-Semites, they say, were a small minority.

Another reason for Jewish resentment toward the Poles is due to events after the war. The well-known Kielce riots in 1946 in which 42 Jews were murdered, as well as similar incidents in other towns, is perceived by Jews as the zenith of Polish anti-Semitism, paranoia and cruelty. The Polish view here is that the attacks were really directed at the Communists, as Jews were viewed as Communist leaders. What is closer to the truth is that the Communists were already persecuting Jews and setting them up as scapegoats. This was to repeat itself in 1968 in the aftermath of the June 1967 war when the remaining 20,000 Jews in Warsaw were banished from the country. There is no doubt that anti-Semitism was traditionally strong in Poland supported by the Catholic Church for hundreds of years, by political and commercial interests and finally later by the communists. This being so, Jewish life in Poland was brought to an end by the Nazis. The Polish concept is that after the war they were abandoned by the west. While Germany benefited from the Marshal Plan, Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe were left to Stalin and the communists. Most modern Poles have adopted a “what could we do?” kind of stoicism. As modern Poland moves closer to membership in the European Union, economic and social standards are rapidly improving. What we want to remember, Poles want to put behind them. The understanding that Jews and Poles have of their shared history, the war, and the aftermath, is very different. There were times on the trip that I felt very confused. History is no doubt, very subjective.

Two Days in Warsaw

Warsaw is grey. The city was both the heart of Jewish life in Poland as well as the centre of the Polish resistance. Even before the ghetto uprising in 1943, the Nazis had destroyed much of the city. Warsaw was effectively levelled as a response to the Warsaw ghetto uprising and during the uprising of the Polish resistance in 1944. After forty years of communism one building commands the skyline, the Palace of Culture, Stalin’s “gift” to the Polish people.

On our first morning we had a meeting with Grzegorz (Greg) Gregorczyk, who serves as a member of the Ivansk Project Action Committee, as well as with Andrzej Omasta and Wojtek Brochwicz-Lewinski, representatives of the Polish Jewish Cemeteries Restoration Project (PJCRP). Andrzej and Wojtek had already arranged for the architect’s plans for the cemetery restoration. At the meeting they were able to provide estimates for each anticipated expense: enclosure wall materials and construction, commemorative stones, local building inspector, survey, and rabbinical supervisor. Although we are still short of our budget, completion of the project is moving along well. In preparation for our trip to Ivansk, arrangements had been made in advance for us to meet with the mayor and priest as well as with a local contractor. Andrzej has a tremendous knowledge of Jewish history in Poland and numerous contacts. He and Wojtek were able to answer all of our questions, both about the business part of our project, as well as the historical aspects. We were

greeted and accompanied by civic officials at many of our shtetl visits due to the arrangements that they made. Their support and assistance has been invaluable and greatly appreciated.

At the completion of the meeting Jerzy led us on our tour of Jewish Warsaw. The first shock is that so little remains. What one sees is predominately memorials: the haunting Rappaport sculpture which depicts Jews being taken away to their deaths, the reconstruction of the *Umschlagplatz* (the train platform where hundreds of thousands of Jews were evacuated to be murdered at Treblinka) and the *Mila 18* memorial where Mordechai Anielewicz and the ghetto fighters made their last stand in a bunker in the Warsaw ghetto uprising. I was not prepared for the immense size of the Warsaw ghetto (there were actually two ghettos connected by a bridge). One small fragment of the ghetto wall remains tucked into a typical communist-era residential area.

Only one synagogue, named after the Nozyk family, escaped destruction during the war. The numerous small shuls (there were approximately 300 shuls and shtibles in Warsaw before the war) are all gone and on the site of the Great Synagogue of Warsaw now stands the offices of a French automobile manufacturer. I went to shul on Saturday evening thinking that this was where I could see what remained of traditional Polish-Jewish customs. On entering the sanctuary, the scene looked familiar, a dozen white-shirted lads with beards and *peyyot* [sidelocks] engaged in a Talmudic discussion in Hebrew. Almost immediately the scene turned incongruous. As I approached the group I could hear their heavy Polish accents and they looked like typical Polish lads. The rabbi who was a *shaliach* [Hebrew for “emissary”] from Israel explained to me that the young men all claimed some Jewish past and were now undergoing conversion. Currently, there were 30 men in the class. Besides the oddity of the scene, I asked myself where these boys would find brides.

In the morning we visited the Warsaw Jewish Cemetery. To those of us familiar with the size of North American cemeteries, the large Warsaw cemetery is staggering. There are between 250,000-300,000 burials of many different kinds: modest graves, large horizontal slabs placed flat on the ground, fenced in family plots, and large *ohels* [“tents” or mausoleums] of renowned rabbis. It was explained to me that the stones are still standing because the cemetery was located in an area of Warsaw that had paved streets, so the Nazis did not require paving stones for this purpose.



Warsaw, The Nozyk Synagogue
(named after Zelman & Ryfka Nozyk)



Warsaw Jewish Cemetery on Okopowa Street

Treblinka



Directly from the cemetery we set out for Treblinka, a three-hour drive. I was aware that Treblinka was completely dismantled by the Nazis and what is at the site now is a memorial. Nevertheless, it was essential for us to visit Treblinka because this is where Ivanskers had been taken and murdered. The Nazis used the site just over a year (July 1942–November 1943), but in that short time approximately 800,000 people, predominantly Jews, were murdered there. There is one sole Ivansker who survived by escaping in a camp revolt.

What one sees at Treblinka today is symbolic. Concrete slabs recreate the train tracks that led from the gate. On the site of the gas chambers is a monument built of large blocks of stone reminiscent of the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Behind it is a large pit, the site of the open-air crematorium. I was, and still am, aghast at the enormity of the horror. Without the monuments, there would not even be a hint of the awful events that happened there not so long ago. Around the monument stand stones engraved with the names of towns where the victims originated. Besides the Ivansk stone, we saw many names of towns from which we had family members. We said *Kaddish* and began to make our way out. Along the path of the railway line we were greeted by a group of Israeli youth singing songs and marching with the Israeli flag.

Sandomierz was to be the base for our visits to Ivansk and the other family shtetls. Numerous road repair works marred the drive there. If you drive in Poland, be prepared that short distances may take a long time to traverse. It was evening when we arrived at Sandomierz. The night was very hot and the rooms were not air-conditioned. We treated the Polish mosquitoes to a feast because the windows were not equipped with screens.

Off to Ivansk and the Trip to the Shtetls

It was not until morning that on leaving the hotel we noticed that we were staying on *Zydowska Street*, or the “Street of the Jews”. The old stone synagogue, which escaped destruction, now houses the historical archive. Both the street sign and the plaque on the wall describing the building as a former synagogue, have a remote, matter of fact, almost existential feeling about them. In the Polish view these things were, and are no longer. This runs contrary to our Jewish concept that we must never forget.

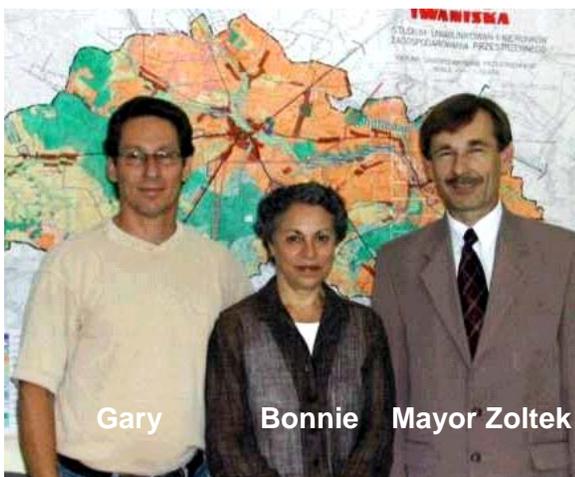
We drove into Ivansk from the east via Klimontov where it was a busy market day. In comparison when we drove into Ivansk the town seemed to be sleepy and quiet. Thanks to the Kesten-Brauner map, we were familiar with the basic layout of the town. It was easy to find the central square (*Ryneck*), the community centre/fire hall, which stands on the site where the synagogue once stood until it burned down during the war, the large church and the modern town hall. Around the square are old wooden homes. It was not so long ago that our own Jewish family members inhabited many of these houses. As was apparent throughout our trip, evidence of our presence

was all but obliterated. As far as I know, there are relatively few commemoratives set up by Poles in shtetls honouring former Jewish inhabitants that perished in the Holocaust.



We continued our walk about the town for about an hour. The basic plan of the town has not changed since our people lived there. The old well on the road to Staszow was easy to locate as marked on the Kesten-Brauner plan. The town hall is also in the same place. The sole new building freshly painted in bright yellow is the community centre-fire hall. It sits just off the southwest corner of the square and is approximately 6 house lots in length. It was easy for me to envision the synagogue, *Beit Midrash*, and women's synagogue that once stood on this same spot. Those who have read the Ivansk Project e-Newsletters are aware of the numerous contemporary testimonies that we now

have. As I stood and looked at the site where the synagogue once stood I thought of the "Funeral", the haunting account told by Yitzhak Goldstein of the last days of Ivansk before the deportation to the Cmielow and then to the death camp at Treblinka. Looking around the town I could not see a single trace of the former Jewish inhabitants amongst which were my own family members. Before the war Ivansk was a bustling town with between three and four thousand inhabitants, of which over half were Jewish. Daily life was, for the most part, harmonious. Jewish eyewitness accounts tell us that the both the mayor and the priest were reticent to give assistance to the Nazis in their actions against the town's Jewish population. Based on the 1929 Polish Business Directory for Iwaniska (published in a previous e-newsletter), we know that the town had numerous bakeries, butchers, saddle makers, cabinet shops, dairies, shoemakers, a tannery, a lawyer, a hairdresser, just to name a few of the active professions in the town. Iwaniska is now a sleepy town with only a few grocery stores. The life of the town seems to have been sucked out. Like many other places in Poland, the war and communism have stilted progress. What remains is the shell of the once-vibrant town stripped of its Jewish occupants. The Shalom Aleichem-like images of the lively shtetls exist now only in literature and in our collective Jewish memory.



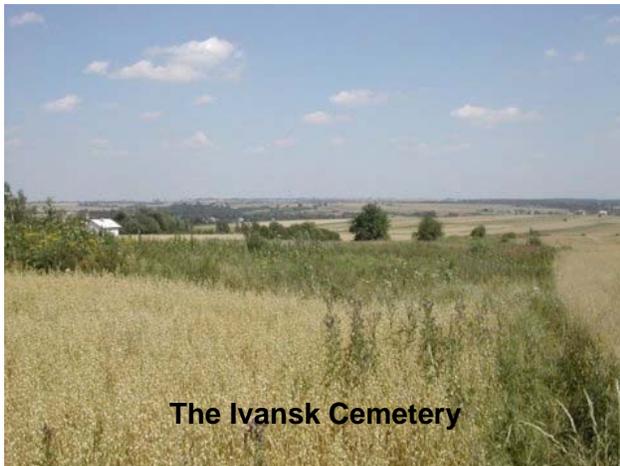
Before continuing on to the cemetery we had two appointments to keep with the town's mayor and priest. As the mayor was detained for a few minutes, a young reporter from the local Ostrowiec newspaper interviewed us. The restoration of our cemetery together with the generally increased interest by Diaspora Jewry in investigating and preserving what remains of pre-war Jewish Poland has awakened similar interest among the Poles. The reasons for this are manifold and beyond the scope of this travelogue. But once again we were faced with a misconception of notions. Diaspora Jews of Polish origin know that the Polish episode of Jewish history died in the flames of the Holocaust. The reporter asked us if Jews of Ivansk/Iwaniska origin

would be returning. This was a question that had been posed to us on numerous occasions. I replied diplomatically that I did not think that this would be happening now, but that one could not predict the future. Once again, we were faced with a situation that modern Jews and Poles see in an entirely different way. The interview ended with a bit of a party atmosphere when it became

known that the reporter was celebrating her saint's day, a bigger event than a birthday. The mayor entered at this time and pictures were taken of the group.

Mayor Zoltek has had numerous meetings with Norton Taichman and other members of the Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project. He received Bonnie, Jerzy and me very cordially. He is well aware and supportive of our efforts to restore the Ivansk Jewish cemetery. We talked about our progress to date, the fact that the cemetery had been cleaned, plans have been submitted for the construction of the enclosure wall and the gate, and the success of our fundraising effort. Mayor Zoltek held up an album of the our e-newsletters indicating that he was keeping abreast of our efforts. He also showed us in his diary that he had a meeting the following week with David Blumenfeld our project photographer who was coming with a youth group of Israeli girls to visit and clean the cemetery. After an exchange of gifts in which the mayor Zoltek gave us a medallion celebrating the 600th anniversary of the town we were off to see the parish priest, Father Stanislaw Kolasa.

Jerzy continued to act as interpreter and we exchanged pleasantries over cold drinks. The main question that I wanted to ask Father Kolasa was whether any more Judaica had come to light, in addition to the three matzevot that had been turned over to us. Unfortunately, the answer was negative. On our exit Father Kolasa said "*Shalom Aleichem*" and I had the impression that he understood and meant what he said.



We walked back to the town hall where we met up with a contractor who is one of the candidates to erect our cemetery restoration wall. He led us out to the old road to Rakow and on to the cemetery. The cemetery is a green narrow swath of land of approximately 7,250 square metres. The green area stands in sharp contrast to the furrowed fields of wheat and barley all around it. Although in the immediate post war period, all of the matzevot were removed to be used as building and grinding stones, the local population does not cultivate the land where the cemetery is located. We noted on our visits to other Jewish cemeteries in Poland that despite the fact that

the cemeteries were defiled after the war, the land has in general been left undisturbed. It is not uncommon to see Catholic memorial lamps at the site of old Jewish cemeteries. Reverence, it seems, is still accorded by the local population to these sacred plots of land.

As I stood before the cemetery I saw in my mind's eye the entire synopsis of Jewish history in the shtetl. Even a small community of Jews without a synagogue needs a place to bury the dead according to Jewish law. As the name suggests, The Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society in Toronto was, at one time, an organization serving the social and economic needs of the Ivansk community, and provided a prayer hall as well. The organization now serves mainly as a burial society. So it falls upon us, the survivors, to honour our ancestors and restore the cemetery. Ivanskers in Toronto spare no effort in tending to Bathurst Lawn Cemetery. By extension, should the cemetery in Ivansk be of any less significance? When asked by Jews and Gentiles why we are going to this effort thousands of miles away in a country that is no longer our home, the answer I offer is simple. Our tradition is to remember the past and respect and honour the deceased. That is how we as a people preserve our traditions.

The three of us walked around the cemetery with the contractor and assessed the work that needs to be done. Building the wall will be a formidable job. We need to erect monuments to all of the

fallen- those who died before the war, those who died in a mass grave at the site during the war and those who perished in the labour and concentration camps. Together with the original matzevot that we have, the final restoration will be simple and tasteful. As many before me, I said *Kaddish* and chanted *El-Maleh Rahamim*.

Driving back to the hotel we passed through Backowice. My paternal grandmother and her family were from this small village. I imagined that the Jewish inhabitants of such a tiny hamlet would have prayed in the Ivansk shul and probably buried their dead in the Ivansk cemetery.

From Backowice we continued on to Apt, or Opatow. At one time an attempt was made to restore what was left of the Jewish cemetery here. Numerous stone fragments were cast in concrete in the shape of matzevot. We noted that the fragments were not from the same matzevot. The restoration was modest, somewhat ill conceived, but poignant.

Neighbouring Shtetls



Ozarow Jewish Cemetery
Restored Wall and Gate

We began the next morning with a visit to Ozarow. Andrzej and Wojtek had made arrangements for us to be received at the town hall and accompanied to the cemetery. Norman Weinberg, Moshe Gold, and other members of the Polish Jewish Cemetery Restoration Project recently restored this cemetery. Although many stones were removed or knocked over, some matzevot remain and the restoration is simple and pleasant.

From Ozarow we proceeded east. As we crossed the Wistula River there was a sign indicating that we were now entering Annapol. Bonnie was very excited. She held in her hand a Yiskor book entitled, "Rachov-Annapol Testimonies and Remembrance". Bonnie's uncle, Shmuel Nitzan (z"l) edited and contributed to this Yiskor book, which was compiled in 1978. Holding the pre-war map of the shtetl in her hand, it was easy to find our orientation. All the streets had the same names as before the war, including Radom Street and Lublin Street. There was one notable exception: Synagogue Street. Our guide from the city hall pointed out the site of the synagogue, but the building was no longer. As we walked down Lublin Street a grand, tall, stone, structure came in to view. There was no mistaking it as the mill and winery on uncle Shmuel's map. Adjacent to the mill was the stream as well as the millpond, also as depicted on the map.

Our guide then led us to the Jewish cemetery. He related, apologetically, that it was a bit overgrown with weeds. Compared to the vandalism that occurred after the war, neglect can hardly be seen as a big deal. It seems that the previous mayor was conscientious about sending out a crew to do an annual clean up, but the current administration was not concerned with this issue. The cemetery in Rahov-Annapol has a monument in three languages erected by an Israeli landsmanschaft. There is a modest wire fence and gate, which seem to have been erected over 30 years ago. We walked about the overturned and broken matzevot, thought about the fate of those buried here and those who were carried off during the Holocaust. As always, the visit ended with *Kaddish* and *El Maleh Rahamim*.

One unusual phenomenon that we saw in Rachov-Annapol is the remains of a large farm. It may not have been common for Jews to take up farming, but some did. One prominent farmer was Baruch Rosenberg who purchased the Rachov farm from a Polish princess. He is known to have had an extensive and successful enterprise in the opening decades of the 20th century. This was,

no doubt, a source of great pride to Rachovers then, and has entered the lore of Rachover descendents today. The buildings are a magnificent combination of cut limestone and fired clay brick. During the communist period the buildings were used as a collective farm. Today the farm is abandoned.

Krakow and Auschwitz

Our last few days were passed in Krakow, with a trip to Auschwitz. Krakow is a beautiful city filled with Gothic and Renaissance architecture. The grandeur of Krakow stands in sharp contrast to the devastation of Warsaw. Before the war approximately 70,000 Jews lived in the city mostly in their own community, Kazimierz, named after the Polish king Kazimierz III the Great who in the mid 14th century allowed Jews to come to Poland to stimulate the economy. Krakow was a major Nazi command centre and was not destroyed during the war.

At the Jewish Cultural Centre in Kazimierz an interesting story was related to us. After the war the communist government did not develop Kazimierz. Buildings were simply left abandoned. Over time Jews of Krakow descent have visited the city, applied for the return of their homes, and have been successful in their requests. The number of Jews living in Kazimierz today is small, perhaps 100-200 people. There are four synagogues, all of which have been restored. Adjacent to the *Remuh Synagogue*, which is the only one that still has services, is the old cemetery with graves of renowned rabbis. We watched a couple of Polish restorers working on the gravestones. When I tried to talk to them, they ignored my questions. It seemed that they were doing their work without any emotional connection to what they were restoring. At the *Izaak Synagogue* we saw a photo exhibit of Jewish life in Krakow. Then we watched a series of films that were part of an archive discovered in Germany after the war. The films depicted daily life in the good times before the war. Then in a manner the Germans mastered, scenes of the humiliations of the city's Jewish inhabitants were captured on film. Watching newsreels of the war, seeing real people in real situations, has always had infinitely more impact on me than the impact of Hollywood films. Even notable films, such as *The Pianist* and *Schindler's List* succeed only as artistic creations. In contrast, when you look at the face of an individual captured in a war photo or newsreel, it is possible to feel both the events and their repercussions in the eyes of the photographed subject.

To try and describe Auschwitz-Birkenau is nearly impossible. Bonnie and I went there to see with our own eyes the current monument to the horrors that occurred there during the war. One and a half million people were murdered there. No one is unmoved or unchanged after a visit to this horrible place.

The Road Back to Warsaw

We had one last stop on our itinerary before our return to Warsaw and our flight out. It was a very quiet Sunday afternoon when we drove into Kielce. Little remains of the grandeur of the city. Unlike Warsaw which has seen much recent investment and construction and Krakow which has retained its medieval beauty, Kielce looks as though it is still frozen in an impoverished past. The large central synagogue still stands just off the town square. We saw plaques in many languages commemorating the fate of the 27,000 Jews of the Kielce ghetto who perished in the Holocaust. As we might expect by now, the synagogue today serves as a municipal office.

Before we went to the cemetery, we passed by the building on Planty Street where 42 Jews were murdered in a riot a year after the war had ended. This tragic event is commemorated by no less than three plaques set up by the Israel government, the Polish government and one erected by the Nissenbaum Foundation at the behest of Lech Walesa. We saw more references to the Kielce riots

at the Jewish cemetery. The situation here was the same as at all other Jewish cemeteries that we had seen. Few, if any, stones were in place. Numerous monuments had been constructed, principally by Israelis of Kielce origin. It was evident that the cemetery is visited often as we saw many Israeli flags, notes and stones on the matzevot. One more recitation of the *Kaddish*, one more *El Maleh Rahamim*, and we were off to Warsaw.

On our last night in Poland we had dinner with our colleagues, Greg Gregorczyk and David Blumenfeld. We discussed the results of our meetings at Ivansk and the progress of the cemetery restoration. As part of the cemetery restoration project, David has been filming every step along the way. He showed us the preliminary version of the film. The film is beautifully done and adds another dimension to our work. So much new information has come to light lately on the history of our shtetl. The Ivansk e-newsletter, edited by Norton Taichman, with contributions by numerous Ivanskers, already fulfils many of the requirements of a Yiskor book. The Ivansk community around the world has stepped forward with generous contributions to restore the cemetery. No doubt our ancestors would be pleased.

When I reflect back on our trip to Poland, the dominant images I have are of synagogues and cemeteries. Everywhere in Poland one is reminded of the long and rich Jewish presence, but in stark contrast, very little remains to see and experience. The old Jewish streets, the neighbourhoods that were once inhabited by thriving communities, the shtetls bustling with Jewish traditions, are now completely devoid of Jewish life. The trip had been enriching but often frustrating. At times I felt like Don Quixote fighting windmills.

In the second leg of our trip we traveled through Andalucia. In Cordoba and Toledo we visited beautiful synagogues that had been restored. Both cities have extensive Judeiria, thriving Jewish quarters which are now tourist attractions. At times, we could see many parallels between the Jewish experience in Poland and that in Spain. The evidence of Jewish life is everywhere, but as in Poland, there are no Jews.

More on the trip to Spain in a future e-newsletter.

Report From Ivansk: *An e-Mail Letter from David Blumenfeld*

From: "David Blumenfeld" <david@blumenfeld.com>
To: "Norton Taichman" <nstaichman@comcast.net>
Subject: Report from Ivansk!
Date: Thursday, August 04, 2005 7:03 AM

Hi Norton!

Flew back to Israel early this morning from Poland. Although short, the trip was a great success and got some good footage. Had nice Shabbat in Warsaw, as usual. Greg and I met with Gary and Bonnie Lipton on Sunday at the end of their trip here. It sounds like they had a pretty intense time.

Anyway, I hired my friend, Ezra to head down with me to Ivansk on Monday.

On Tuesday morning we met with the Mayor Zoltek, and at about 1:00 pm in the afternoon the bus with about 40 girls from 3 Israeli high schools (including my daughter, Shira and their group leader, Chaim) pulled into the square. After a lengthy bathroom stop in City Hall, which peeked quite a bit of local curiosity, we drove toward the cemetery. I pointed out to the kids that this was a typical Polish Shtetl. Most of the homes/shops on the square were Jewish, and I showed them where Shira's great-grandfather was born! I told them the story of "The Funeral" as we drove the route - the same route that was taken by the community 63 years ago to bury the Torahs (the day before the deportation to Treblinka).

The bus was too big for the dirt road, so we stopped and the girls walked the 1/2 mile or so on the path to the cemetery. It was quite a scene: 40 Israeli kids walking that path and singing songs in Hebrew! I wish you could have seen it. (I have it on tape...)

We arrived there and Ezra ran to get Mrs. Jadwiga Pawlik the farmwoman who lives next to the cemetery. She came out and spoke to the kids about the Jewish cemetery and the mass killings she witnessed there when she was a little younger than them.

Then, of course, Mr. Viktor Stephan appeared out of nowhere walking up the path. He spoke a bit about his experiences to the kids - about being forced to drive a horse-drawn wagon loaded with Jewish kids out of Ivansk on their way to death in Treblinka.

(Both Jadwiga and Viktor send their regards to you, by the way!)

Standing in the cemetery, I then instructed the girls not to dig down, but to see if they could find any matzevot at the surface. The girls put on work gloves, which I had brought and started searching for matzevot in the area near where the gate used to be. They really got excited about it and kept yelling for me every time they found something. They found a number of "stubs" of matzevot stuck in the ground and a few bigger pieces sticking out of the earth. It seems like most of the matzevot, when taken, were broken off, so there must be scores of the "stubs" under the surface, which should be exposed in the restoration and give a great effect for what used to be there. A few girls ventured beyond this area with Ezra and came back with a large fragment with Hebrew writing on it. They were able to decipher the date and the fact that the matzevah was from the grave of a woman!

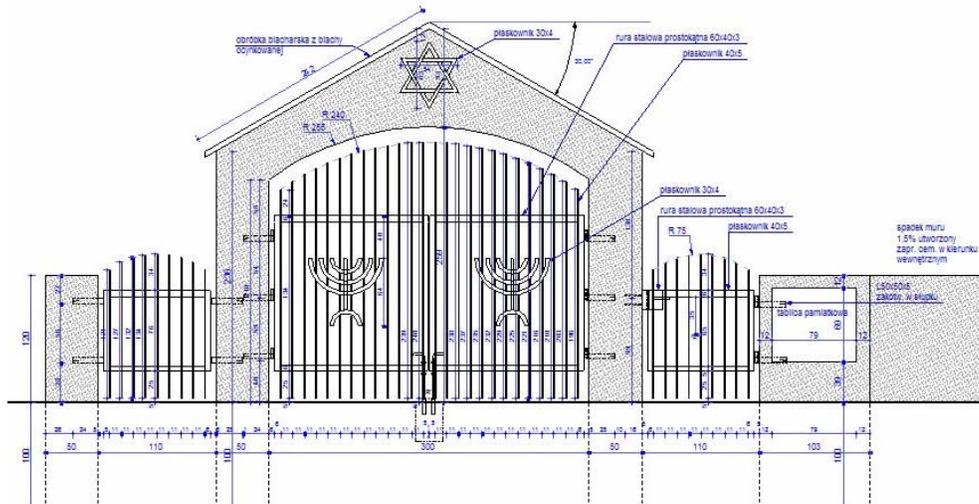
After their search, the girls formed a semi-circle around the matzevah, and the group leader, Chaim (whose father was from Opatow!) recited *El Maleh Rachamim* -Prayer for the Dead. Then Shira lit a memorial candle and placed it next to the matzevah. Chaim spoke to the kids about their experiences there - This was their final stop before the flight back to Israel, so it was a lovely way to end their Poland experience - Working to do something significant and making history!

Then, we sang *Hatikvah* for the first time in this place! Quite an emotional moment!!!

It was a lot of work for 2 hours of film footage, but it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for them and for me. And I got some great material. I'll send pics. Talk soon.

David

[Ed: David has been on assignments in The Gaza Strip and in New Orleans and was not able to provide photos to accompany his letter. We'll try to publish the images in a future issue of the e-News.]



HOW TO DONATE TO THE IVANSK CEMETERY RESTORATION PROJECT

CANADIAN DONORS

Cheques should be payable to:

The United Jewish Welfare Fund of Toronto

Mail to: c/o Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto

Attention: Angela D'Aversa

4600 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario M2R3V2

In the cheque's memo line, be sure to insert: "for Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project"

- Donations can also be made on VISA or MasterCard. Telephone Janice Benatar at 416-631-5847 or by sending the information in writing including your Name, Card Number, Expiry Date and the amount of your donation.
- You may designate a person you wish to honour, and a card will be sent to this person or the family to acknowledge your gift.
- The Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto will deposit all donations to a special account dedicated to the Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project. You will receive a tax receipt from the Foundation.

US DONORS

Checks should be made payable to:

The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies

PJCRP Account

787 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14209

In the check's memo line, be sure to insert: "for Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project"

You Can Donate On Line: < www.jewishphilanthropies.org >

- You will be asked to specify which agency and which fund you want to support.
 - **For agency, select Poland Jewish Cemetery Restoration Project.**
 - **For fund, type in "Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project".**

You can honor someone or send a memorial gift via this site, and the funds will be credited to the Ivansk Project. Your donation will be acknowledged by the Foundation and a tax receipt will be forwarded to you.