

THE IVANSK PROJECT e-NEWSLETTER

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The Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society's Jubilee Celebration, Toronto, 1961



From the Editor: Almost 80 years have passed since the founding of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society. The men who made it happen in 1932 are gone but their legacy lives on. Although most of us are not card-carrying members of the Society, it belongs to all of us. It is more than the sum of its members. Then as now, it is the focal point of the “Ivansker Diaspora”. We all share the heritage of that far off, almost forgotten Polish shtetl. The connection is deep within us. The Society is the glue that helps preserve our sense of communal identity.

On its thirtieth anniversary the Society published a commemorative book which is reproduced here. Reading it, you will share in the pride that stirred the men and women who fêted that evening. The Society had accomplished its major objectives, caring for its members as well as addressing the needs of others; everyone was eager to move forward into the future. But despite the optimism and confidence, everyone in that room harbored an intense sorrow. The pain of losing family and friends left behind in Ivansk would never abate and was most acutely felt on joyful occasions.

The commemorative book was written in English and Yiddish. Portions of the Yiddish text that were not rendered into English in the original appear in English in the e-News. For this we are indebted to **Miriam Beckerman** of Toronto whose expertise and cooperation were so essential to translating the Yiddish into English. If you would like a copy of the Yiddish text, please get in touch with me.

The Jubilee Book contains several pages of congratulatory messages and advertisements from members, friends, charitable organizations and business associates. The sentiments expressed reflect the esteem that the Society had achieved in its first three decades. Moreover, the people who supported the Society included scores of familiar names that many of us will recognize, especially those of us who grew up in Toronto in the '40s and '50s. Ivanskers in other communities worldwide will also encounter names of relatives and friends. This is another indication that the Society is part of all of us. This issue of the e-Newsletter cannot display all the messages. Please let me know if you would be interested in seeing the material appear in a supplemental issue of the e-Newsletter.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the indispensable help that **Gary Lipton** and **Laurie Naiman** provided in assembling this issue of the e-News. Both Laurie and I are blissfully retired; it is not that difficult for us to find time to devote to the e-News. But Gary still gets up very morning and puts in a full day's work. Yet he has never refused my incessant calls for help. I am grateful to both of you for your unselfish commitment to making the e-News something that is valued by our readers.

Finally, “*L' Shanah Tova!*” May 5770 be a year filled with health, happiness, prosperity and peace!

Greetings from Mendy Shuman, President of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society

As a young boy I had no idea that one day I would lead the Ivansker Society as its President. I feel very privileged to head this organization. I would like to thank our Executive Committee for its support, determination and commitment. Their efforts will help secure our Society's future. Our support of the State of Israel and the Jewish Community of Toronto will remain unflinching.

Historically, our landsmanschaft was organized as a religious and burial Society. We had an "Actzie", which enabled members to borrow money in times of need at low interest rates. We also arranged for a family physician to visit sick members. And our Society has always been committed to supporting worthy causes.

In the early 30's the Society's elders purchased a tract of land (known then as the "Wood Farm") on north Bathurst Street between Finch Ave. and Steeles Ave. The property is used as a burial ground for our membership. Other sections of the land were sold to synagogues and societies to accommodate the needs of Toronto's Jewish Community.

As a little boy I attended Society meetings with my late father, and observed how devoted and involved so many of our elders were in debating the subject matter of that day's agenda. They included brothers Alter Myers and Michael Myers, Chiel Kesten, Srukka Cooper, Yankel Brown, Motel Lipovitch, Henry Lederman and Art Lipton. Moishe Lipovitz, our long-standing secretary, recorded the minutes entirely in Yiddish; Wolfe Citron headed the Chevra Kaddishe and Stanley Teachman, Abe Shuman, Sam Brown, as well as others, kept our business affairs in order. Our organization flourished.

Back then religious services were conducted at the Farband House on Cecil Street across the road from the Jewish Old Folks Home. Despite the solemnity the services were very inspiring.



Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society Executive Committee

Seated (L-R): Marv Rotman (Recording Secretary), Sol Budd (Second Vice President), Art Lipton (Past President), Mendy Shuman (President), Morey Papier (First Vice President)

Standing (L-R): Julius Podeswa (Trustee), Gary Lipton (Trustee), David Papernick (Trustee), Sam Cohen (Trustee), Hank Rosen (Trustee), Harry Bernstein (Trustee)

Absent: Jeffrey Rubenstein (Treasurer)

Times have changed. We recently revised our constitution, allowing women to become equal members. This would not have been possible years ago.

What the future will bring, I cannot forecast. Organizations such as ours have disappeared because of an aging membership, lack of recruiting new members or indifference. Of course, we live in a different world than our predecessors and becoming involved in our Society is not as high a priority as it once was. Hopefully, the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society can alter this trend. So far we have had been successful and will continue to do our utmost to attract future generations into our Ivansker landsmanschaft.

The Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society - In Retrospect by Gary Lipton, Toronto, Canada

By reprinting the 30th Anniversary Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society Jubilee commemorative, the readers of the Ivansk Project e-newsletter are presented with a perspective of Ivansker Jewish life in Toronto 1961, now almost 50 years ago. A strong theme repeated in the testimonials is how grateful and happy Society members are to be living in Canada where they were not only saved from the horrors of the Shoah, but were able to work, pray, and conduct their daily lives in relative freedom. Those who succeeded in immigrating to Canada before World War I, and between the two wars, had few regrets. But there was a lingering pain felt for the relatives and friends left behind in Ivansk; most did not survive. Unfortunately, more could have been saved if Canada would have opened its doors when it was still possible for Jews to flee the Hitler terror.



Ivansk at the turn of the 20th century was a town with extreme poverty, little opportunity, and anti-Semitism. Although Jews lived in the shtetl for at least 200 years (and in Poland for approximately 1,000 years), Jews were always the “others” in a host land. Nonetheless, the years spent living in Ivansk imbued in our ancestors a strong sense of family, Yiddish culture and Jewish religion.

In 1932 the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society was formally established when a group met at the home of Yudel Vilner at 70 Elm Street.

The Society was founded for the following reasons:

1. To form a burial society, a “*Chevra Kadisha*”.
2. To acquire a place where Ivanskers could worship together. The original premises were rented at College and Brunswick Streets.
3. To raise money to send to relatives in Ivansk (the Overseas Aid Committee).
4. To assist recently arrived Ivanskers settle in Toronto, at a time before socialized medicine and unemployment insurance (the “*Actzie*”, the welfare organization.)
5. To support Canadian charities. (The society remains committed to this principle.)
6. To preserve our heritage. In the words of Michael Myers (translated from the Yiddish), “*the Ivanskers thought of preserving on this soil the beautiful traditions of their shining shtetl*”. To this end Arthur Lipton wrote (in the English section) that “*parents are encouraged to involve their children in the activities of the society.*” *

* *Arthur Lipton, who was the past president in 1961, recently celebrated his 95th birthday. He may be the only person alive who contributed to the Jubilee commemorative. All Ivanskers wish Artie a mazel tov and many more years of good health.*

By 1961 the activities of the Society had changed from those of 1932. After the war the Overseas Aid Committee was dissolved. Charity then, and now, focused on the fledgling State of Israel as well as local Canadian charities. Religious services were at the time conducted at the new and current home at 3425 Bathurst Street. The Actzie may have continued for a short time but was soon dissolved.

The new home on Bathurst Street was symbolic of the fact that Ivanskers had “made it” in Canada. It was no longer necessary to meet in rented premises. The hall became the meeting place for executive meetings, general meetings, and socials. Today, as it was in the 60’s, there are two general meetings each year. One is in the spring after Pesach when those who take winter vacations have returned to Toronto. The second meeting is the Sunday before Rosh Hashanah.

Even before the purchase of the Bathurst Street building, the Society had erected a granite monument in 1951 at the entrance to the Ivansk section of Bathurst Lawn cemetery. Every year members congregate at the monument to pause and remember those who perished in the Shoah as well as to read the names of members who died in the previous year. This is a stirring and binding tradition. It is respectful to take time from our busy daily lives to pause and think about those who have died and at the same time remember that everyone present has ties to a common shtetl and culture. All of us are no more than two or three degrees separated. As landsmen, we are one big Ivansker family.

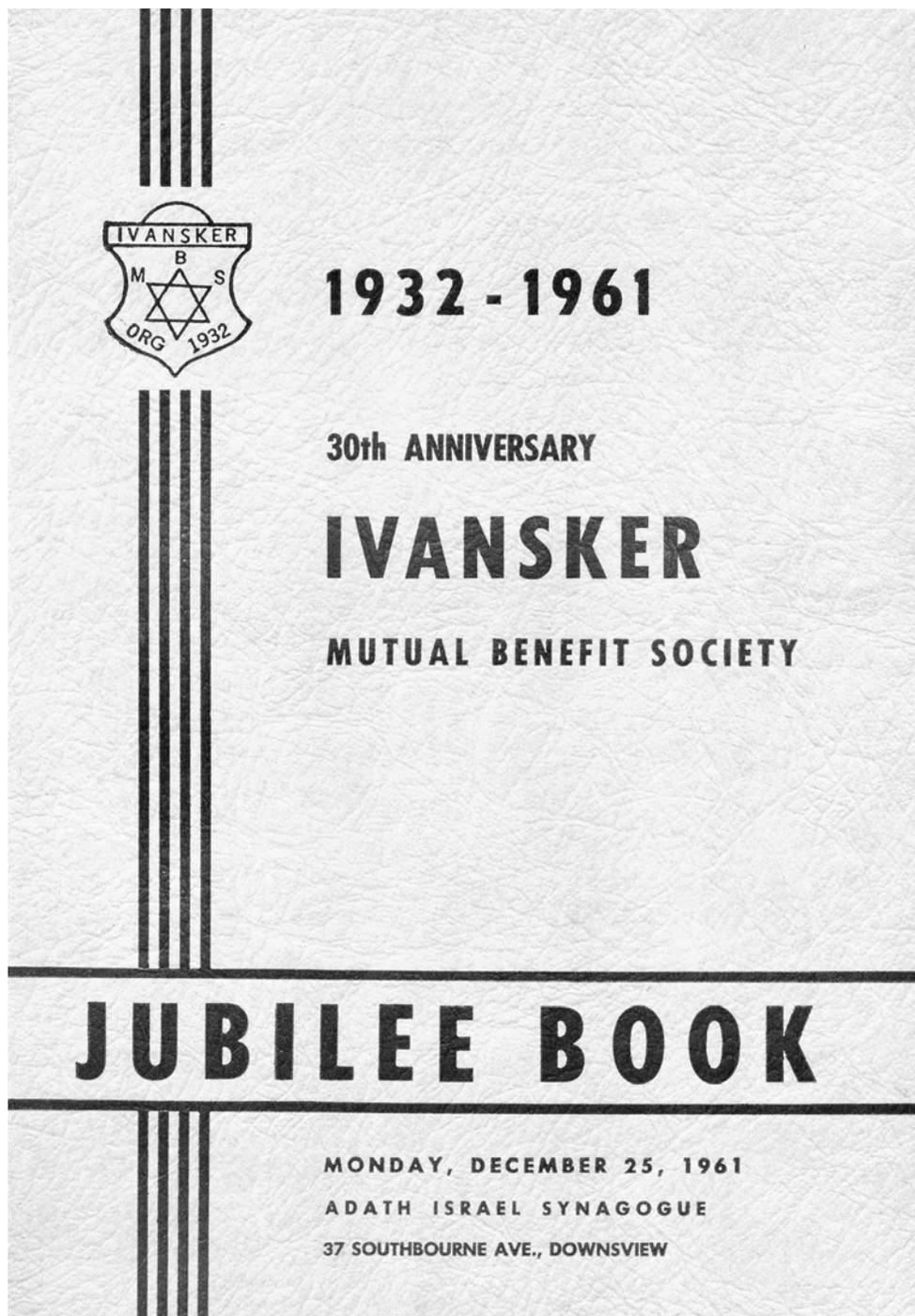
Today this sense of family is one of the main reasons that the Ivansker Society still exists. Many other landsmen societies in Toronto have either disappeared or exist in name and bank account only. Recognizing this fact, the Jewish Federation of Toronto has established a Landsmen division. Since the societies are not-for-profit organizations, funds cannot be withdrawn except against expenses or to be donated as charity. It now appears that the final form of each society will be as an endowment fund set up in perpetuity.

At this time many Landsmen societies in Toronto are closing and transferring their assets to the Jewish Federation. The Ivansker Society is financially solvent and remains active with over 150 members. Five years ago we changed our constitution to allow for equal status of men and women. This was one impetus for growth. As well, current members have successfully brought in the new generation, these being second and third generation Canadians. Looking back at the original reasons that the Society was founded, we continue to share the following principles:

1. We serve our members as a burial society.
2. We maintain an annual budget for charities in Israel and Canada.
3. We provide our members with a communal focus, a place where we can immerse in *Yiddishkeit* and a shared Ivansk heritage.

Looking ahead to the future I am certain that the Ivansker Society will continue to play this same role for at least one or two generations. A time will come when the memories of the “*heim*” (the ancestral home in Ivansk) will fade, and eventually disappear. After four or five generations in Canada there will be little or no memory of the time that our families lived in Poland. The Ivansker Society will most likely go the way of the other societies and convert to a perpetual endowment of charities supporting worthy causes, Jewish and sectarian, in Israel and in Canada. The thought is sobering but not alarming. Change is inevitable. But as long as the Society exists it provides practical reasons for its existence - as a burial society and as a charitable organization. At the same time the Society is the focal point of our common heritage providing identity and substance to the ebb and flow of life. Those who understand this fundamental concept are the richer for it.

**The Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society's Jubilee Celebration
Toronto, 1961**



The English cover page of the commemorative issue.



A Period of Maturity

In honor of the 30th Anniversary of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society

By Henry Lederman

President

Our sages taught us that when a person reaches the age of 30, he enters into a period of maturity.

That which is true about an individual is also true about a group of people who belong to the same society or organization. The word maturity (Gevurah) does not only apply to physical strength. It can also mean spiritual strength or morality.

The same sages also taught us that he who can control his desires or baser instincts is considered spiritually strong.

Our Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society is now celebrating its 30th Anniversary and thus entering into its period of maturity. It is strong, not only because of its stable financial position, but also because it believes in a healthy principle – live thy neighbor as you love yourself.

We inherited this principle from our parents and it has been continued from generation to generation. We continue to maintain the spiritual and moral beliefs of our parents. We value with great respect the memory of those of our relatives and friends in Ivansk, as well as European Jewry, who were murdered by the Nazis. We hold dear and precious the traditions that we brought with us from our native town.

There is so much evidence of how our mutual benefit society demonstrates true maturity on the celebration of its 30th Anniversary.

We start our 31st year of existence in a brand new home at Bathurst and Melrose. It is our fond hope that our new home will strengthen the bonds of friendship among our members and also attract new members from our native-born children, who can someday take over the leadership of our organization.

I consider it a privilege and an honor to be president of our organization in the same year when Israel is celebrating its Bar Mitzvah and our society is cele-

brating its 30th birthday. I am extremely thankful to the members and officers for their confidence and trust in me this year, in re-electing me to my fourth term as president. I thank them for their confidence and shall always treasure it.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our brother Samuel Gleitman and his dear wife for their generous act in assisting us to acquire our new home at 3425 Bathurst Street.

I also wish to thank the chairman of the Anniversary Committee, Brother A. Kesten, and his hard-working committee who have spent considerable time and effort in order to make this event an outstanding success.

On the occasion of this wonderful celebration, I wish to express my good wishes to all the members and their families and hope that we shall all be present to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of our society. In conclusion it is my fervent hope that Israel will live in peace and that there be an end to the cold war and that peace, happiness and brotherhood shall reign throughout the world.

1961-62 OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE OF THE IVANSKER MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY



Front Row: — S. Teachman, 1st Trustee; W. Citron, Hospitalier; G. Teperman, Treasurer; H. Lederman, President; M. Lipowitz, Rec. Sec'y; S. Cooper.
 Centre Row: — L. Starkman; M. Floder, 2nd Trustee; M. Lipowitz, A. Shuman; B. Cooper, H. Kesten.
 Back Row: — A. Lipowitz; A. Kopsfick; H. Cooper; S. Brown.

THIRTY YEARS ACTIVITY IN THE IVANSKER SOCIETY



By YEHIEL KESTEN
Chairman, Jubilee Committee

I consider it a great honor to be chairman of the Jubilee Committee in charge of the 30th Anniversary of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society.

Who would imagine 30 years ago when several Ivansker thought of forming a society that today we would have one of the best organizations in Toronto, financially and spiritually.

I recall one incident when I first joined the society. It was decided at a meeting to recruit new members and I was appointed to a committee to canvass potential members. It took a great deal of effort to achieve the present membership of 118.

I approached a landsman from Ivansk and urged him to join our society and help us in our work. Much to my surprise he refused. His reason was simple. He said, "You are being very foolish. Our

Ivansker will never stick together. It is a lost cause." I answered him immediately. "The first Ivansker were the ones who couldn't stick together. But these are the newly-arrived Ivansker who will work together." And it proved to be true. Today the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society is one of the outstanding societies in Toronto.

After I thought over carefully the words of my landsman who refused to join our society, I decided to work even harder to recruit new members.

One of the first tasks of the society was to form a Burial Committee before we even had a cemetery. We then purchased cemetery lots through the efforts of our lawyer Morris Lipton. We rented a place to conduct services at College and Brunswick (upstairs), where we prayed Saturdays and holidays.

We also formed an Overseas Aid Committee to raise money to send to our relatives in Ivansk who needed help. We had to stop this work regrettably during World War 2, when the Nazi slaughter of our loved ones in Europe occurred.

Another good feature of our society was the formation of an Actzie, so that those members who needed a loan could obtain one. It was my privilege to be the first president of the Actzie.

The officers of the Ivansker Society were always careful to preserve harmony and avoid misunderstanding among the members. The good work of our society thus went on for the past 30 years. Thanks to the Almighty we are all assembled here this evening to celebrate this auspicious occasion. I hope we will live to celebrate many more such events.

It is unfortunate that many of our active members over the years did not live to see this wonderful 30th Anniversary Celebration. However their memory will always remain with us.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to our president Henry Lederman, who was of great assistance to me in organizing this most successful jubilee. He spent much time and effort in this task. I also wish to thank my hard-working committee and all the members for their help.

In conclusion, my wife, children and I offer our heartiest congratulations to all our members. Let us all live in peace and happiness to celebrate many more such enjoyable affairs.

THE STORY OF A "SHTETL" CALLED IVANSK

The 30th Anniversary of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society:

The History of a Jewish Landsmanshaft in Toronto

The celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society in Toronto coincides with two historic events in Jewish life – one different from the other, but both having an indirect connection with our celebration.

One is the trial and verdict of the highest court in Jerusalem, of the arch-murderer of 6,000,000 European Jews, Adolph Eichmann. The second is the recent 200th Centennial Jubilee of Jewish life in Canada today in many impressive ceremonies.

Perhaps there is little similarity between the two events. However, when one analyzes them closely, whether one is religious or not, it appears that it was the will of the Almighty that we should leave Ivansk years ago to come to Canada and continue Jewish life here.

As we celebrate our 30th Anniversary of our beloved society, we should realize that things could have been different. The tragic events that befell European Jewry could have also struck us and thus affected our landsmanshaft, to which we are bound by childhood memories, as well as affected the communal life of Canadian Jewry.

We should realize that it was the will of the Almighty that we should remain alive to continue the rich inheritance of Jewish cultural life that was begun in Poland over 1,000 years ago. For the trial of the arch-murder, Eichmann, could have represented the final chapter of all the traditions of Polish Jewry –

ourselves included.

Thus we see the connection between the two above-mentioned historic events and the celebration of our small society. The Eichmann trial represents for us the last bloody chapter of a glorious Jewish past in Poland; the observance of 200 years of Jewish life in Canada represents a happy event, the beginning of a new era in a free, democratic country, with British traditions and limitless opportunities – Canada.

We should keep these things in mind as we celebrate three decades of activity of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society. Let us remember that things could have been different. Let us remember that the total existence of our society should not be judged in terms of small deeds, but rather in the thought that there was an unseen hand that guided events so that we should remain alive to continue the heritage of Ivansk as well as Polish Jewry – an inheritance of a generation of decent Jewish life which was wiped out by Eichmann and his Nazi colleagues.

We, who find ourselves today in Canada, were sent here by the Almighty to transplant the fine qualities of a glorious past and to hand them down to our children, in order that the "Golden Thread" of Jewish continuity should not be broken.

IVANSK SENT THE FIRST JEWISH SCOUTS TO CANADA

While the first Jewish settlers to Canada came from France and England

over 200 years ago, the main Jewish immigration, especially from Eastern Europe, did not arrive in Canada until the early 1900's. Among the first Jews from Poland who came to Canada, were our fellow Ivanskers, who were so-called "scouts" to look over the land for us, who came here in later years.

It is a fact that Ivansker Jews arrived in Toronto before Jews from other Polish cities. One of the first pioneers, who with God's help is still with us, and can testify as to the hardships of those early days, is Brother Joseph Rosenberg, whose wife, Sheiche, was the first secretary of our Sisterhood. Due to Brother Rosenberg's phenomenal memory of those early years, we learn of a fine Ivansker businessman, Mr. Lazar Rotenberg, who had to leave Ivansk for army duty, and arrived in Canada in the early 1900's. He opened a travel agency and was instrumental in bringing to Canada hundreds of Ivansker Jews. As a factory owner, he employed many newly-arrived immigrants from Ivansk and was known as their "father". He became their adviser and conducted their financial affairs – he saved their money and paid their debts. This fact should be noted by the future historian of Canadian Jewry.

Brother Rosenberg recalls another Ivansker Jew of that period who due to circumstances wasn't given the opportunity to advance at home, yet in Toronto he became an important person and gave comfort and encouragement to many immigrants. His name was Lazar Borenstein, a warm, goodhearted person who played an important role in building the character of early Toronto. It appears that a number of native Ivansker to whom fate was not too kind at home to come to Canada to prove their value and make a success of their lives.

These are but several examples which illustrate the character of the people who helped to mold the fine Jewish

community in Toronto today. It is without a doubt that Ivansk had a hand in forming the Jewish character of Toronto and today the younger generation is taking over the task that their parents began.

IVANSK – A TOWN OF SCHOLARS AND WISDOM

The town of Ivansk, which numbered only 500 Jewish families, was able to play a prominent role in Jewish life in Poland because of two characteristics – scholars and wise men. The Jews of Ivansk were known throughout the Jewish world as persons who studied the Talmud day and night. They were also known as wise men.

However, these two attributes had no connection with earning a livelihood. For the word livelihood was a foreign word in Ivansk. However, because of its scholars, the town had a good name and it also brought prestige to Polish Jewry as a whole.

As was common in most towns in the old country, there were many arguments l'shem shomayim regarding the interpretation of the word of God in Ivansk. When Jews had free time from learning, they discussed petty politics. Brother Rosenberg recalls that the young Rabbi David Isaac Shapiro, who died at the early age of 42, had much heartaches about the arguments because his own personality was dragged into the political discussions. Although he died very young, Rabbi Shapiro published a number of books on the theme of the old Talmudic law. His chief trouble with the townspeople arose because he was too young and to modern a rabbi.

After the death of Rabbi Shapiro, it took a lot of persuasion by the leaders of the community to bring the Shidlover Rabbi to Ivansk. He was somewhat of a "miracle man", which brought him

The author(s) of this essay was not identified.

income and the town business.

It is possible that the arguments and idleness caused the young people to leave Ivansk and seek a haven elsewhere. Toronto gained what Ivansk lost. Thus began the Jewish migration from Ivansk to Toronto over 50 years ago for a number of reasons – poverty, anti-Semitic neighbors, idle living without a goal. The young people were restless and needed an outlet for their energies. They came to Toronto to start a new life and thus began a new chapter in the history of our city.

THE "SECOND ALIYAH" FROM IVANSK TO TORONTO

The migration from Ivansk to Toronto can be divided into two eras – the era of Aliyah A which took place in the early 1900's, and the era of Aliyah B right after World War I. The present membership of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society consists mostly from Aliyah B. They left Ivansk as teen-agers and were quickly absorbed into the communal life of Canada. Today they form an integral part of Canadian life and participate in all worthwhile activities. When Canadian Jewry celebrated its 200th Anniversary, it was only natural that the former residents of Ivansk now living in Toronto should participate in the ceremonies. Who would think 50 years ago when the first Ivansker-immigrants arrived here, that Toronto would today have a Jewish Mayor, Nathan Phillips, and Ontario a Jewish Cabinet Minister, Hon. Allan Grossman, MPP.

Thus we come to the end of the too short history of the 30th Anniversary of the Ivansker Society. We end with the same analogy as we began – the identity of our celebration, which is being held in an atmosphere of friendship and brotherly love, with the two historic events in Jewish life – the Eich-

mann trial and the 200th Centennial of Jewish life in Canada. The first represents the tragic end of over 1000 years of Jewish culture and tradition in Poland. The second is a new life with a bright future in Canada. The first is a symbol of death. The second a symbol of life. This is similar to Jewish history throughout the ages – when one Jewish era has been destroyed, another springs up.

THE NEW HOME ON BATHURST STREET

The Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society enters its 31st year of existence in a beautiful new home at 3425 Bathurst St. The building was recently purchased thanks to the energetic efforts of the officers of the society, led by Brother Henry Lederman, the president.

It would be in order to make public a few of the facts concerning the purchase of the new home. A sum of \$24,000 was needed, leaving a \$20,000 mortgage held by a large finance company at 7 per cent interest. Brother Lederman discussed the matter with Brother and Mrs. Samuel Gleitman, two veteran members of the Ivansker Society. They graciously agreed to take over the mortgage during their lifetime. Afterwards it will revert to the society as a gift and will perpetuate their names.

Brother Lederman was also instrumental in persuading the non-Jewish head of the finance company to terminate the mortgage 4½ years before its expiry date without bonus or interest. Brother Lederman a conscientious and energetic president, organized a team of canvassers from the Ivansk Society for the U.J.A. campaign and the Jewish Home For The Aged.

The Ivansker Society believes in maintaining a friendly atmosphere among the members and in helping those of its members in need.

Space does not permit us to list all the individuals who have done good deeds. However, we must pay tribute to one of the most active and faithful members, who of late has not been very active due to illness – Brother Michel Myers. Here indeed is an example of devotion who has been a tower of strength to the society. We wish Brother Myers and his dear wife many years of good health and happiness and activity in our beloved society.

A GROVE OF TREES IN ISRAEL

The Ivansker Society has made a number of important contributions to local charities and also to the State of Israel. In honor of its 30th Anniversary, the society has decided to plant a Forest of Trees a mile long, consisting of 3000 trees at a cost of \$5,000, in the Negev in Israel. The society similarly planted a Grove of Trees, consisting of 1000 trees at a cost of \$1500, in 1957 in honor of its 25th Anniversary. Thus the name of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society will live on forever in Israel by this contribution to the Jewish National Fund.

The Ivansker Society as a group, as well as its individual members, participate actively in many worthy fund-raising drives. Among the local and national organizations that benefit from the activities of the Ivansker are: United Jewish Appeal, Israel Histadrut Campaign, Jewish National Fund, Polish Farband, Mose Chittim, New Mount Sinai Hospital, Farband Labor Zionists, Kupat Holim, Denver Sanatorium, Pioneer Women, Talmud Torahs, Folk Schools and many others.

However, the chief purpose of the society is to help its landsleit who are in need here or in Israel. It is the fervent hope of the present members of the Ivansker that the new home on Bathurst

St. will bring into the fold the native-born children, the second generation, so that they will become active and capture the meaning and essence of Jewish traditions of their parents' home in Poland where there was poverty and hunger. Here in Canada the parents were able to provide for their children prosperity and all the comforts of life.

The Jewish community of Toronto salutes the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society as it enters its 31st year of activity and wishes it many years of successful work on behalf of its fellow Jews everywhere at home and abroad. May all your wishes come true!

THE OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

One of the reasons the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society has been so successful in its efforts is because it has been blessed with energetic, faithful officers, since the founding meeting was held in the home of Brother Yudel Vilner at 70 Elm Street in January, 1932. This includes the officers of the sisterhood as well as the loan branch (actzie). It is no secret that the society finds itself in a stable and healthy financial position today. The money in the treasury is used for many worthy charitable purposes.

For the past four years the society has been led by the youthful and capable president Henry Lederman. He is proud that it was under his regime that the new home on Bathurst St. was acquired and thanks all the members for their assistance and help.

The names of all the presidents from 1932 to 1961 should be noted, for under their able leadership the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society was able to progress and advance throughout the years. They are as follows: the late Yudel Vilner, the late Jacob Lipovitz, Max Meyers, Yiechiel Kesten, Israel Cooper, Kalmen Eliezer Shiffman, Arthur Lipton and Henry Lederman.

Arthur Lipton
Ex-President

Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society



Now that the IVANSKER have finally acquired a new home, we feel that our long delayed march to implement our Society by having all our children participate in certain activities of their own in our Society Hall can begin.

We feel it is the obligation of each and every member to now advise their children that our Society has crossed a threshold after many years of not having a home for our children to gather in.

We have endeavoured for many years to arrange this place for them to have whatever meetings and social affairs they wish. All in all we would like them to come forward and give us their ideas and thoughts how we can now approach the children of our Society members and have them come in and either form a group of their own or join the main organization.

We feel now that we can have participation with our children at any time,

where as before it was necessary to arrange accommodation and many other facilities which would be benevolent for them.

Now I wish each and every member to pledge themselves to have their children come and join us and advise us how they wish to participate in our new home at 3425 Bathurst Street.

We feel it is a personal obligation on their part to utilize all these new facilities we have available and see that our children take advantage of all these features we wish to offer them.

In closing may I suggest that all members contact me personally and see what steps we can take immediately in order to put this plan in progress.

Looking forward in seeing the Junior Organization spring up in the very near future, I am,

Yours sincerely,
ARTHUR LIPTON



A Message from the 1st Trustee

our own. Many thanks to a group of very nice fellows, for their's was a job well done.

This all came about a few weeks ago. I received a phone call very late one night. It was our President. "Stanley, I would like you to come over right away, it's very important."

Not asking any questions, away I went. On my way down there I asked myself, "What does that man want now? Doesn't he ever give up?" I have never seen a man drive himself so hard; surely there must be a limit to all this.

When I arrived I was greeted at the door by our President with a cheque in his hand.

"This is all very amusing," I said to him, "but Henry, why do you have to bring me down here in the middle of the night. You know I don't need any money." Well, it's obvious I was either very sleepy or out of my mind to make such a remark. Thank goodness our President has a sense of humour. "Stanley," he said to me, "I want you to sign this one thousand dollar cheque. It's an offer for a building and looks like a very good deal. Let's hope it goes through."

"Well," I replied, "I hope so too. Thirty years is a long time to wait."

I am now the proud possessor of that same cancelled cheque, and it shall remain with me for as long as I live.

And now it is the fondest wish of my wife and myself, that you all have good health and happiness for many, many years to come and we can always look back on this day as one of the great achievements of our time.

Very proud to belong,

STANLEY TEACHMAN

PRESIDENTS OF IVANSKER MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY

1932—1961

JACOB WILNER ז"ה	S. COOPER
M. MEYERS	K. L. SHIFFMAN
JACOB LIPOVITZ ז"ה	ARTHUR LIPTON
HARRY KESTEN	H. LEDERMAN

1961-62 OFFICERS

ARTHUR LIPTON	Past President
H. LEDERMAN	President
A. MYERS	Vice-President
G. TEPPERMAN	Treasurer
S. TEACHMAN	1st Trustee
M. FLODER	2nd Trustee
W. CITRON	Hospitaller
M. LIPOWITZ	Recording Secretary
F. SKURKA	Financial Secretary

EXECUTIVE

S. Cooper	S. Brown
M. Lipowitz	A. Kopstick
J. Lipowitz	A. Shulman
M. Goldhar	B. Cooper
H. Kesten	H. Cooper
L. Starkman	

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

H. Kesten	S. Cooper	B. Cooper
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RELIGIOUS COMMITTEE

A. Myers	J. L. Wolfe
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AUDIT COMMITTEE

H. Kesten	S. Teachman	S. Cooper
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Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society
 Home base at 3425 Bathurst Street, Toronto,
 next door to Gryfe's "bagel emporium".
 This photo did not appear in the Jubilee Book.

PRESIDENT AND PAST-PRESIDENTS, IVANSKER MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY



Front Row: — K. L. Shiffman; Henry Lederman, President; M. Meyers.
 Back Row: — S. Cooper; A. Lipton; H. Kesten.

JUBILEE COMMITTEE, I.M.B.S., 1961 — 30th ANNIVERSARY



Front Row: — S. Brown; G. Teperman; A. Lipton; H. Lederman, President; H. Kesten, Chairman; S. Teachman, Secretary; S. Cooper.
 Centre Row: — M. Goldhar, W. Citron, M. Lipowitz, A. Shuman, B. Cooper, N. Teperman, M. B. Cohen, M. Lipowitz.
 Back Row: — L. Starkman, J. Lipowitz, A. Kopstick, M. Floder, H. Cooper, L. Lederman, H. Goldhar.

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Mr. Henry Lederman,
 President,
 Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society,
 154 Regina Avenue,
 Toronto, Ont.

Dear Mr. Lederman:

The Canadian Jewish Congress is proud to be among those who greet the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society on the 30th Anniversary of its existence. The Landsmanschaften and Sick Benefit Societies have a great share in the formation of our community today and in helping to establish the values and standards of our present community life. It was they who in the days of the first influx of immigrants to these shores gave the newcomer the sense of belonging, the feeling of security and that touch of intimate "heimishkeit" which was so necessary in the unsettling process of uprooting oneself and settling in a new home.

In its 30 years the Ivansker Society has always been in the forefront of all constructive activities on behalf of our community in this country and in the reconstruction first of Palestine and then of the State of Israel.

We salute the Ivansker on its anniversary and wish them many years of undiminished energy and activity on the community's behalf.

MEYER W. GASNER, Chairman,
 Central Region,
 Canadian Jewish Congress.

JEWISH NATIONAL FUND

October 5, 1961.
 25th Tishrei, 5722

Mr. Henry Lederman,
 President,
 Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society,
 154 Regina Avenue,
 Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Lederman:

Once again it is the pleasure of the Jewish National Fund to salute the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society on the occasion of its Thirtieth Anniversary. It was our pleasure to extend greetings at the Twenty-Fifth Jubilee Celebration which took place on January 6th, 1957.

Since that time the Jewish National Fund has continued to enjoy the support of your Society as a whole, as well as a number of the individual members.

Since its establishment thirty years ago your Society has carried out the noble purposes for which it was founded: to assist the membership, especially those of your townspeople who were forced to flee from a Europe overrun by the Nazi hordes.

In recent years your Society seems to have enlarged its original aims by assisting the Jewish community at large through its contribution to many worthwhile philanthropic causes.

We hope that your Society will go from strength to strength and trust that we will be afforded an opportunity to extend greetings to you when you celebrate your next anniversary.

LEON PAPE,
 Toronto President

Yours sincerely,

HARRIS D. GULKO,
 Executive Director

תרצ"א-תשכ"ב 5722-5691



30 יאר

איוואנסקער

מיוזשוער בענעפיט סאסייטי

יופריי בוך

מאנטיק, דעם 25-טן דעצעמבער, 1961

אין דער עדת ישראל שול

37 סאוטהבירן עוועניו, דאונסוויי

The Yiddish cover page of the commemorative issue.

A Word of Greeting

by Alter Meyers
Vice President

א באגריסונגס ווארט



פון אלטער מייערס
וויצע-פרעזידענט

My situation at the time of this present day celebration is truly a difficult one/depressing. However, I must control myself because today is a simcha and I must carry the responsibility with importance/significance and in the spirit of the Ivansker.

As one of the founders of our society I must control myself and must reign in my feelings because of our present jubilee.

It is in this spirit that I greet you, dear brothers and sisters of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society. I greet you also because of the devotion and the faithfulness that I have always shown to the duties of the generation and

in this way made possible that we, as a Society, should write a beautiful chapter in our local community life.

Together with my dear wife we greet warmly the founders, builders and active members of the Society who, together with me, were able to create this exemplary Society, one that the Jewish community can be proud of.

In Honour of Today's Celebration

A few Words by I. Cooper



צו דער היינטיקער
פייערונג



עטלעכע ווערטער פון

י. קופער



As one of the founders and builders of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society I, together with my wife, send you our heartfelt blessings, to all our officers and members. It is a great *Yomtov* and I am proud to have been a participant in the development of the Society.

We have devoted much time in strengthening our Society. We spent many a night in our endeavors and felt this responsibility had to be undertaken with love to have a home of our own. We are very pleased to come to today's celebration.

When we now gather together to tell about our 30 years of work, we must report on the existence of our undertakings which represent a living pulse of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society.

Accept our wishes, those of my wife and I, for further success.

May the spirit of the *Chavershaft* and the Brotherhood always be amongst our ranks.

Mr. and Mrs. I Cooper Treasurer of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society

באַנדיסונג פון דער איזאנצקער סיסטערהוד

Greetings from the Ivansker Sisterhood

We, the officers and members of the sisterhood greet you, founders, leaders and members of the Ivansker Society on the occasion of the present celebration. You have carried on for the past 30 years with good, useful activities in many fields: community and philanthropy.

We, as a part of the Ivansker women in Toronto, are happy that our men are so devoted to community work, and we are proud that our Sisterhood can also highlight the varied benefit work that we have done for our landsleit in Israel. We hope to continue this benefit work in the future.

This is a family *Yomtov* for us Ivanskers. We wish you to continue the good work in a peaceful world. May we live, together with our families, to celebrate many more *Yomtovim*.

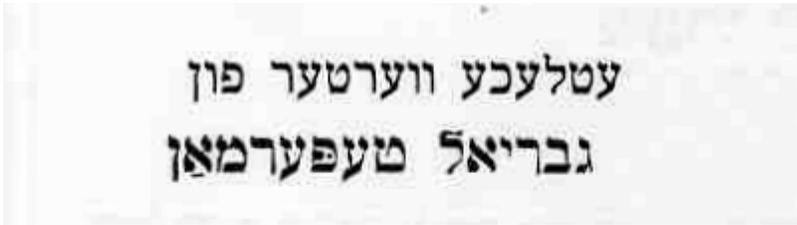
Gitel Shuman, President
Faigele Teperman, Pesl Varsh, Vice President
Bessie Cooper, Recording Secretary
Pearl Goodman, Finance Secretary
Goldie Starkman, Treasurer
Soreh Kesten, Rochel Kesten, Soreh Eisen, Social Committee

SISTERHOOD EXECUTIVE OF THE IVANSKER MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY



Front Row: — Mrs. P. Warsh, Mrs. H. Cooper, Mrs. A. Shuman, Mrs. A. Tepperman.

Back Row: — Mrs. H. Kesten, Mrs. L. Starkman, Mrs. P. Goodman, Mrs. S. Kestenbaum, Mrs. I. Eisen.



Few Words by Gabriel Teperman

It is a privilege for me to be the treasurer of the Ivansker Society, especially when we have lived to celebrate this 30th anniversary. My wish has also been fulfilled for us to have our own building.

I hope that all of us, sisters and brothers, of the Ivansker Society, may live to celebrate the 50th anniversary, with an even greater effort.



30 Years Ivansker Society in Toronto

by Michael Myers

It is important that this evening, when all our members and their families are gathered to celebrate the 30th anniversary, we recount how our Society was founded, the spirit and the atmosphere that existed amongst those who gathered with the thought of establishing a landsmanshft society. The spark of the old home inspired their hearts as they longed for the shtetl of their birth where they took their first steps...

Facts and Dates.

The Ivansker society was founded before the Hitler period, at a time when Polish Jewry stood in the shadow of political and economic unrest/persecution. It was at that time that the Ivanskers thought of preserving on this soil the beautiful traditions of their shining shtetl.



The thought of creating an Ivansker Society was brought forth by our former honorary president, **Reb Yudi Vilner** of blessed memory. He convened a meeting in his own home at 70 Elm Street on Sunday evening in 1932, attended by the following landsleit:

Alter Myers, Michael Myers, Moishe Goldhar, as well as the late **Yudi Vilner z"l, Shmuel Teperman z"l, Jacob Lipovich z"l, Shmuel Kaplansky z"l, Baruch Isser z"l, Myer Smuckler z"l, and Yaacov Wilner z"l**

They decided to convene a larger meeting of our landsleit and advertised the plan in the Yiddish Journal.

The meeting was held on February 2nd, 1932 in the Auditorium of the Eitz Chaim Talmud Torah on 30 D'Arcy Street in Toronto. A large number of landsleit attended and joined the Society, and thus our organization was born in the Jewish community. No elections for officers took place at that time. Upon the request of the assembled, Brother **David Eisen** agreed to become the recording secretary and prepare an election.

Three months later, in April, the first election for officers took place at a general meeting. The following were elected:

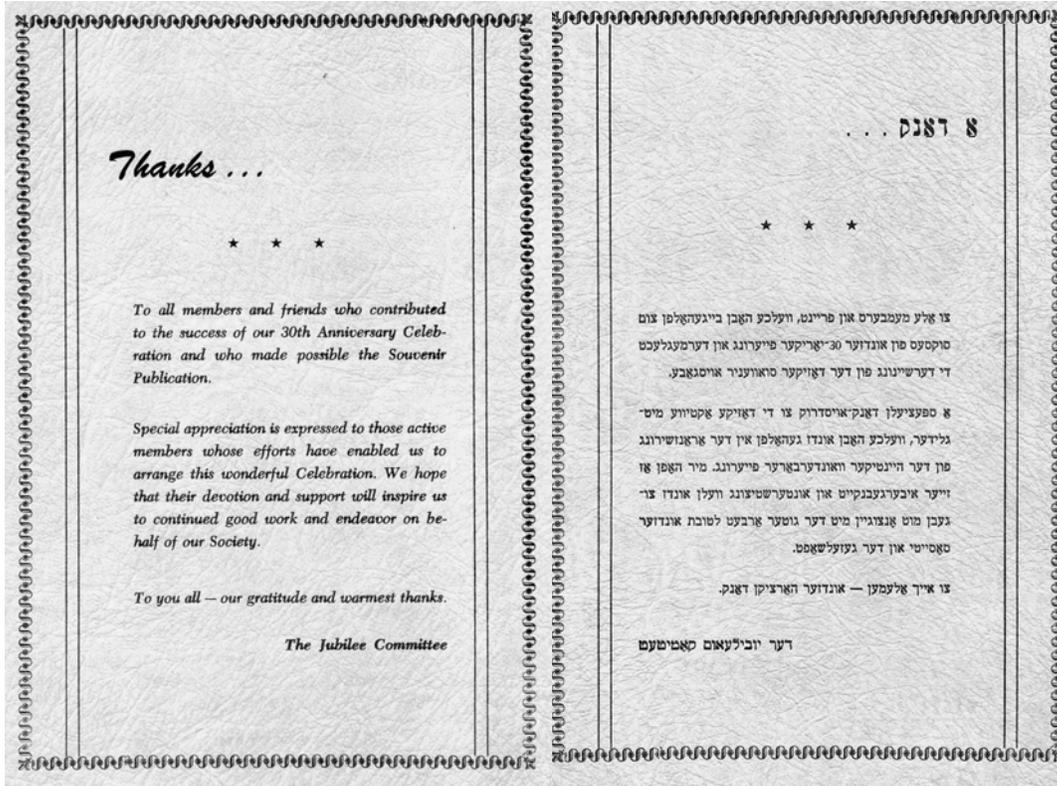
Yaacov Vilner, President
Michael Myers, Vice-President
I. Brown, Secretary

Since we were the only organized group of our landsleit in Toronto, it was immediately decided that the Society was established not only for sick benefit, but help must also be extended to our poor landsleit back in the old country. We were immediately joined by the Ivansker women who created a Women's Hilfs Farein (Sisterhood).

When war broke out our work increased. It is impossible to list the tremendous work and the large sums of money that our small group of Ivanskers raised during the war years. We were preparing for the great needs that would be required when the fire in Europe would stop. None of us could envision that the *Chorbun (Holocaust)* would wipe away our shtetl with all of our 500 dear Yiddish families. We can be proud that we were able to assist our surviving Ivanskers, including those we were able to bring to Toronto, as well as those who went to Israel. I also want to remind everyone that the Ivansker Sisterhood is still active in benefit work and sends considerable sums of money each year to Israel in general and to our Ivansker landsleit in Israel in particular.

It is appropriate to mention here more information about our Society's activities, about our active members and builders. They include our former presidents and officers for the past 30 years, the majority of whom are active to the present day. However, because of the lack of space, I must be brief; still, I can't avoid mentioning to write about the work of our present president, Brother Henekh Lederman. From the time he first took over the position of the president 4 years ago he continually worked for the improvement and enhancement of our Society. I always admired his energy and his exactness. But the work that he carried most recently to acquire our own building is simply impossible to evaluate. Because of his persistence and energy we have a living monument – a building to keep alive the memory of Ivansk; a place where all Ivansker members, as well as the Ivansker Sisterhood will be able to congregate. When I suggested at a meeting that we draft Brother Lederman to remain as president for 1962, all unanimously accepted my recommendation. All members, including myself, recognize and value of the good work he has done for the Society these past 4 years, especially in 1961. A "*Yashir Koach*" to you, Brother Henekh Lederman.

On the occasion of the present 30th anniversary of our existence I greet everyone personally together with my dear wife. I wish, our builders, active members, and all brothers that they and our families may live to celebrate many more anniversaries. I wish everyone strength and help to continue with the important work of our landsmanshaft. May we carry on the work for the benefit of local Jewry in general and for the benefit of Israel. And may we have many celebrations in the future.



“The Song of the Murdered Jewish People” by Itzchak Katzenelson

אלה אזכרה ...
 צום אַנדענק פון די מיליאָנען יידן, מאַרטירער און קעמפּער, וועלכע
 זענען דורך די היטלער-מערדער פאַרטיליקט געוואָרן.
 עלה הכורת עלינו, ויזכור עם ישראל ותבל כולה את הקדושים שנטרפו
 בידי הזדון — ארץ אל תכסי דמם!

These we will remember...

In memory of the millions of Jews, martyrs and fighters who were murdered/annihilated by the Hitler murderers.

אלה אזכרה...

אין טיפסטן יראת הכבוד אונדזערע גאָטפאַרכטיקע עלטערן, זיידעס, באַבעס און נאָענטסטע, וועלכע זענען אין די שוידערלעכסטע באַדינגונג-גען אין אַנבליק פון טויט געגאַנגען אויף קידוש השם און נישט מוותר געווען אויף דער אמונה פון זייערע אַבות.

שבורים ורצוצים אחרי היסורים הנוראים הושמדו בעת הכבוש הנאצי אנא ד' נקום בעד הדם היהודי השפוך...

These we will remember...

Our God-fearing parents, grandfathers, and grandmothers and dear ones, who, under the frightful conditions in the face of death, continues on the path of Kiddush Hashem not giving up the faith of their ancestors.

אלה אזכרה...

נישט אין שטומען גראַניט קען מען געבן אויסדרוק דעם צער און צאַרן דעם אומקום פון מיליאָנען. די פאַשיסטישע חיה האָט אויסגעריסן מיטן וואַרצל מיליאָנען בויער און צווייגן — אַבער ווי זאָגט אויב: „כי יש לעץ תקוה“. אַ בוים האָט האַפנונג און ווי די טעג פון אַ בוים, זענען די טעג פון מיין פאַלק, זאָגט ישעיהו, דער גדול הנביאים...

These we will remember...

In speechless granite we cannot express our deep sorrow and outrage at the destruction of millions. The fascist beast uprooted millions of trees and branches – but as Job said: “There is hope for the tree”. “A tree has hope and like the days of a tree, so are the days of my people” so says Isaiah, the great prophet ...

אלה אזכרה...

אַפילו ביים טויער פון טויט איז ניט איינגעשטילט געוואָרן זייער לעבנס-שירה. אין דער שטיל האַבן זיי גערופן: ערד, פאַרדעק נישט אונדזער בלוט, זאַלן אַלע דורות וויסן פון די מערדערישע מעשים פון די ווילדע חיות אין מענטשן-געשטאַלט...

These we will remember...

Even at the gates of death their song of life did not cease. Quietly they uttered: Earth, do not cover our blood. Let all generations know about the murderous acts of the wild beasts in human form...

אלה אזכרה...

דאָס ערדישע האָבן זיי פאַרניכטעט אַבער ניט דאָס גייסטיקע. ווי ר' חנניה בן תרדיון אַמאַל האָט אונדזער דור געזען, ווי „פאַרמעט ווערט פאַרברענט, אַבער אותיות פליען“ — און פליען פון לאַנד צו לאַנד, פון איין וועלט טייל צו אַן אַנדערן. זייער גייסט האָט געבראַכט מדינת ישראל, וואָס צו אונדזער גרויסן ווייטיק האָבן זיי ניט זוכה געווען צו דערלעבן.

These we will remember...

They have destroyed the physical but not the spiritual. Like Reb Chananyah ben Tardion long ago, our generation saw how parchment is being burnt, but the letters “fly” – and fly from land to land. From one part of the world to another. Their spirit brought about the State of Israel, which to our deep regret, they did not live to see.

אלה אזכרה...

אַנטהילנדיק דעם אַנדענק־שטיין האָבן די איוואַנסקער זיכער געטראַכט ניט צו פאַרגעסן די מאַרטיראַלאַגיע פון אונדזער פּאָלק; ניט צו פאַרגעסן דאָס טרויעריקע קאַפיטל אין אונדזער געשיכטע — אַ קאַפיטל, געשריבן מיט בלוטיקע אותיות. זאָלן די קומענדיקע דורות אויך וויסן פונם רום און שטאַלץ פון די קדושים!

These we will remember...

By erecting this memorial stone the Ivansker vows not to forget the martyrdom of our people; not to forget the tragic chapter in our history- a chapter written with bloody letters. Let the future generations also know about the pride and greatness of those who died in the sanctification of God’s name.

איר האָט זיך, הימלען, צוגעקוקט פון אויבן, ווי מען האָט די קינדער פון מײן פּאָלק געפירט
איבער וואַסערן, אויף באַנען און צופוס, אין טעג אין העלע און אין פינצטערע
אין נעכט, צום טויט,
מיליאָנען קינדער האָבן ביים דערהרגעט ווערן הענט צו אייך געהויבן — ס׳האַט
אייך נישט גערירט,
מיליאָנען מאַמעס איידעלע און טאַטעס — נישט פאַרציטערט האָט אויף אייך די
בלויע הויט.
(יצחק קאַצענעלסאָן — „דאָס ליד פונם אויסגעהרגעטן יידישן פּאָלק“)

You heavens, observed from above as the children of my people were lead across waters, on trains and on foot, in both bright and dark days to death.

Millions of children raised their hands high to you - we didn’t touch you, millions of gentle mothers – the blue skin did not frighten you.

Ivansker Monument - Bathurst Lawn Cemetery, Toronto

Inscription translated by Gary Lipton



These photos did not appear in the Jubilee book. We do not know who composed the inscription that is engraved on one side of the memorial, but it is certain that the author was well versed in Hebrew language and verse. A non-literal English translation of the text is given below.

The stone was erected in 1951, just six years after the war. Only a few survivors from Ivansk had begun to arrive in Toronto, bringing stories of the unimaginable terror they had endured. The author does not mince his words. He describes the horror exacted by the Germans on our people in general and on Ivanskers in particular, and cries out for revenge using biblical references.

**G-d, the holy and pure souls,
People of the city of our birth, Ivansk,
which is in Poland,
Who were murdered, strangled and burned
in the fiery ovens,
In the years of the Shoah,
And the bloody empire of 5700 - 5705 (1939-1945),
By the accursed Germans,
Greatest of all abusers (Nazis of all Nazis) *
Of G-d and his people.
How the holy and the pure have fallen,
G-d, take payment for their blood;
The sun and moon
Will not shine their light on the abominable nation
Who murdered the innocent souls,
And the ground will not cover their blood
That pools like water
Until the G-d of vengeance appears
To take payment on the vicious savages,
On their heads,
To erase their names and their memory.
Because of all those who were sacrificed,
And those who were bound up and offered. **
Because blood was mixed with blood,
The blood of fathers and sons was combined with
The blood of merciful women and their children,
With the blood of brothers and sisters.
*Earth, do not cover their blood
And there will be no end to their screams.
Their souls will be bound up in the bindings of life.***



* The phrase נאצים מאצים is a double entendre. The Hebrew root "נאץ" may be translated as "to abuse or defile"; it is used in the Confessional prayer (The Vidui) said on Yom Kippur. The same letters in Hebrew spell the word "NAZI" (abbreviation of *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*). The author wants the reader to understand נאצים מאצים as both "abuser of all abusers" and "Nazi of all Nazis".

** The reference here is to the *Akedah* עקדה, the binding of Isaac, Genesis 22:1-24.