

B'NAI GOMBIN

Newsletter of the Gombin Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society

ISSUE 11, JANUARY 2000

EDITOR: NOAM LUPU

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The Gombin Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society (GJHGS) is a non-profit organization (EIN 33-0762680) that seeks to educate the public about the history and genealogy of the Jews of Gombin. To achieve this goal, the GJHGS collects and publishes relevant materials, encourages historical and genealogical research, and undertakes activities aimed at preserving documents and relics of the culture and history of Jewish Gombin. *B'nai Gombin* is the newsletter of the GJHGS. Everything published in *B'nai Gombin* is meant to provide information for Gombiners and their descendants. Articles, stories, poems, or other genres about Jewish genealogy, Poland, Gombin, or other subjects of interest to Gombiners submitted, may be published in *B'nai Gombin*. The views and opinions expressed in *B'nai Gombin* are not necessarily those of the Gombin Society. For further information or to receive back issues, contact the Gombin Society (GJHGS) by mail at P.O. Box 503052, San Diego, CA 92150, by fax at (925) 274-0927, by e-mail at NoLupu98@aol.com, or by phone: Mindy Prosperi, President, at (914) 928-8211 or Noam Lupu, Secretary, at (925) 930-6588. Visit our website at <<http://www.jewishgen.org/shtetlinks/gombin/gombin.html>>.

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ABOUT THE SOCIETY

The Gombin Jewish Historical and Genealogical Society is a nonprofit organization, open to all people, from all over the world, who have an interest in Gombin Jewish history and genealogy.

The goals of the Gombin Society are to:

- Educate the public about the history of the Gombin Jewish community and the genealogy of the Jews of Gombin.
- Collect, teach, disseminate, and publish knowledge and information on the history of the Gombin Jewish community and the genealogy of the Jews of Gombin.
- Encourage all interested persons to pursue historical and genealogical research focused on the Gombin Jewish community.
- Undertake activities aimed at protecting, preserving, and restoring vital records, documents, and physical relics and landmarks of the culture and history of the Gombin Jews.
- Undertake activities to preserve the memory of the Gombin Jews who perished in the Holocaust.
- Assist the activities of all other organizations whose objectives are related to the preservation of the heritage of the Jews of Gombin.

B'nai Gombin is the newsletter of the Gombin Society (GJHGS). Its main purposes are to inform Gombiners of projects and activities of interest to them, as well as to share experiences and writings. Any articles, stories, poems, or other genres may be submitted for publishing. The views and opinions expressed in *B'nai Gombin* are not necessarily those of the Gombin Society. For back issues, contact Noam Lupu at the Gombin Society's address.

Gombin also has a website at <<http://www.jewishgen.org/shtetlinks/gombin/gombin.html>> including information about Gombin's history, the Holocaust in Gombin, the Gombin Society, the Mailing List, *B'nai Gombin* and more.

EDITOR'S NOTE

It is the end of a millennium, the end of a century, a celebration throughout the world. Yet how can one celebrate the possibilities of the future without sensing the shadow of the tragedies of the past?

It was in this past century that the Jews of Gombin — men, women, children — were sent to the gas vans at Chelmno. It was in this century that a neighbor's silence and the world's indifference led to the genocide of six million Jews, of millions of Cambodians, of countless ethnic Muslims in Bosnia. It was in this past century that Jewish Gombin was systematically exterminated, an almost unnoticed detail in the implementation of Hitler's Final Solution.

But it was also in this past century that man made his most remarkable scientific discoveries: the formulation of penicillin, Watson and Crick's discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA, Albert Einstein's theory of relativity, Neil Armstrong's walk on the moon. It was also this past century that some historians call the century of civil rights. And it was also in this same past century that Jewish Gombin was reborn as a worldwide network of Gombiner descendants interested in researching its past, remembering its tragedies and commemorating its murdered.

Where will Jewish Gombin be in the future? in the next century? in the next millennium? Who can say. . . Is it possible that Jewish Gombin will again disappear, perhaps for good, in this coming century as more and more of those who remember it disappear? Yes. But it is this Society's mission to rule out that possibility.

So we continue our work, continue to plan new projects and see them to completion, continue fulfilling our mission: to remember and to ensure that future generations never forget.

Noam Lupu

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Gombiner Family & Friends,

Can it really be that the last President's Message I wrote was written before we went on our "pilgrimage" to Poland? It seems like only yesterday and yet a dividing line in my life. . . as if parts of my life are now divided into "before Poland" and "after Poland."

I will not spend too much time on our trip as many of our members have already done a fabulous job of detailing it. I just wish to tell those of you who were not able to attend that this was an astounding trip. We saw sites of beauty and horrors beyond belief. We saw acts of hatred but also kindness and heroics. We went to Poland as a group of people, each with their own agendas, and came home as a "Gombin family." We are no longer "just names" in e-mail or newsletters but real people who have shared a real life experience together.

Already there is talk of another Gombin trip. . . Perhaps next time we will go to Israel together. Perhaps next time those of you who could not attend this trip will be able to join us. More on that another time.

For today, we need to focus on the short term future. . . Where do we go from here? Since our group's inception, most of our focus has been on the projects in Poland, lead so admirably by Leon Zamosc and Jeremy Freedman. And our bridge to the future is the wonderful work by Minna Packer, *Back to Gombin*. I cannot wait to see the finished project!

To help make that a reality, I hope those of you in the New York area will be able to attend the benefit dinner in New York on March 7th (see page 10). I also hope that many of you will be able to join us for a Gombin Society Board Meeting to be held in Cranford, New Jersey on February 13th. Only board members can vote on issues at this meeting but we would love to have the input from all interested parties prior to voting. This organization belongs to all of us. We need your ideas and we need you to volunteer your time and energy to help us set our focus and direction for the new Millennium. Please join us. . . please help us. We look forward to another year of achievements, of successes and of growth. Thanks to all of you who have taken us this far and thanks in advance to those of you who will bring us forward.

Sincerely,

Mindy S. Prospero, President

NOWHERE ELSE HAS WATER LIKE THIS

I am Zielonka, Izchak Zielonka from Kilinskiego Street born in 1921. And you? 1928? 1931? You are young!" This is what a Jew from Tel-Aviv, who had arrived in the town where he was born, said to the Poles.

"Do you remember Finkelstein the tailor?" asked Ignacy Balcerowski. "Before the war I was a shoemaker and I knew all the Jews from Gombin because I lived with them. Moniek had a sweets shop."

"There were two sweets shops!"

"And do you remember Pietkow?"

"Ask, ask more, more names," requested Itzhak Zielonka, because he wanted to remind himself about the past. He came to Gombin with a group of Jews from Israel, USA and England to take part in celebrating the completion of the work in the Jewish cemetery.

In Poland there are over a thousand Jewish cemeteries. The one in Gombin is about two hectares, today there are just a few gravestones.

"After the Jews were taken to Chelmno, the German occupiers destroyed everything," explained Zbigniew Lukaszewski, head of the Gombin Land Lovers Association. "The stones were broken up and used to build the roads between Browarnej Street and Moniuszko Street and to strengthen the bridge on Browarnej Street. Before the arrival of the Russians, the Germans also dug an antitank ditch three meters wide and two meters deep."

The townspeople and the Land Lovers Association felt strongly that the stones should be restored. Lack of financial resources and lack of contact with survivors and descendents of Jews of Gombin made this impossible.

The situation changed when they heard there was an association of Jews from Gombin abroad, especially in the USA. They financed the restoration of the cemetery and the stones.

Now at the entrance to the cemetery there is a

wall built with pieces of stone mainly recovered from Browarnej Street. This is where the main ceremony took place. The prayers were conducted by Yehuda (sic) Witt, a rabbi from Jerusalem whose grandfather lived in Gombin.

The father of Mindy Prosperi also came from this town. She said "I thought about this day for seven years and I cannot believe that I am here!"

Zygmund Nissenbaum appealed to the municipality of Gombin to take care of this place. It was his foundation that financed the restoration of the cemetery.

"This place, this earth that contains human remains, is a holy place," said Alina Jurkowska Dusik from the Nissenbaum Foundation. "In the Jewish religion it is most important that where there are human bodies the site should be protected and saved from vandalism."

The organizers of this ceremony honored Maria Maciejko-Kaminska whose family saved two Jewish girls during the holocaust.

"I now live in a Jewish house by First of May Street," explained Jadwiga Luszczewska. "The family Pietkow had a grocery shop there but none of them came back after the war. I do not know if they survived."

"They used to say that Gombin was a town of shoemakers and Jews. Not long ago a man from Warsaw came to us, he was over eighty years old, he asked for a drink of water. He said nowhere else has water like this. He took some home with him in a bottle. He was a Jew who had lived here before the war."

"Yes there were some who shouted 'beat the Jews' and 'don't buy in Jewish shops', but you find stupid people everywhere," said Wictor Nowakowska. "We lived together in friendship."

"We used to buy books for Jewish children because they also learned from Polish books," said

— continued next page

Czeslaw Kowalski, "We spent our time in the shop of Wolkowych."

There is no detailed information about when the Jews settled in Gombin. The first document is from the tax office in 1564 in which there are a few Jewish names. The Jews of that time were mostly merchants and craftsmen. In 1710 a wooden synagogue was built. Before the First World War most Jewish children attended cheder. In 1914 a group of young intellectuals opened a library. After the elections of 1917 (when the town rabbi was Yehuda Zlotnik) the Jewish citizens took twelve seats out of eighteen in the municipal administration. There were times in the nineteenth century when the Jews were the majority. They were mostly shopkeepers and they sold shoes, clothes and food in the market. Between the First and Second World Wars there were 488 craftsmen of whom 198 were Jews. In 1935 there were 65 Jewish tailors, 28 shoemakers, 25 seamstresses and embroiderers, 14 butchers, 7 milliners, 5 hairdressers, 5 bakers, 4 cabinet makers and 4 builders. Some were wagonners and others rented houses to tourists. From the internet you can find out that the Jews were members of trade unions. From 1922 they had 129 craftsmen. They also started banks that gave loans to small shopkeepers and traders. For the very poor there were charitable organizations such as Linat Tzedek which helped the homeless and gave medical assistance. There were a few schools, political parties and two libraries with about 6000 books. There were also sports clubs such as Maccabi Hapoel.

The critical situation in Poland made some Jews emigrate. Between 1920 and 1935, 47 families went to Palestine.

When the Germans occupied Gombin they burnt the wooden synagogue. From October 1939 the Jews had to wear an armband with a yellow star. All the men had to register and be available to work for the Germans three days each week. At the beginning of 1940 the Jews were placed in a Ghetto, there were 2100 Jews there. In May

1942 the Germans liquidated the Ghetto deporting the Jews to a camp at Chelmno. Those who opposed the deportation were shot on the spot.

Lucian Sikorski and Kazimierz Paczkowski, who both live in Gombin, remember when the Germans came in the morning and deported the Jews. They told the Jews to leave their belongings behind, assuring them they would be collected later.

Only 212 Jews from Gombin survived the Holocaust. Of these 180 ran away at the beginning of the German occupation to the Russian side. The remainder hid on the Aryan side, a few survived the concentration camps.

Itzchak Zielonka said that in 1939 they ran away to Warsaw and from there to Bialystok. On the border the Russians took away all the valuables they had. However they survived by running away to the Russian side, they worked in mines in the Ural and now he lives in Tel Aviv.

Arkadiusz Adankowski

translated by Helen Goldman

from Wyborcza Gazeta, August 16, 1999

WANT BACK ISSUES?

If you would like to receive back issues of *B'nai Gombin*, send your request to the following address:

Noam Lupu
Gombin Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 503052
San Diego, CA 92150

MY JEWISH FRIENDS

One day, Jerry Temanson who is one of my good friends and teacher, has mentioned something about Jewish ceremony, which has to occur soon in Gombin. I thought it could be a marvelous opportunity to practice my English language and also to meet new people and culture. Some people I know are against Jews and everything which is connected with them. Most of them are young and simply want to impress their friends with what they do and think. I, on the contrary, agreed to Jerry's proposal without any hesitations and promised to be in touch.

On the week before the ceremonies, I started getting very nervous. I did not know what I should wear. I called Jerry up twice. We also decided that I should come to Gombin on the day before.

Sunday, August 15, 1999

A day full of meetings and events. Around 9am we set out on a journey to Konin and Chelmno. But there were too many people and too few cars. Jerry got a little nervous and started calling. To the joy of everybody, he managed to find a car. We were late.

On our way we stopped at the gas station and waited for the group, which was coming from Warsaw. Then a huge coach appeared. Everyone jumped to their feet. The bus stopped and people started getting off. They welcomed one another, hugged, shook hands. I heard "go ahead, introduce yourself," but I was completely astonished. I did not know what to do. Then Mr. Lukaszewski asked me to translate for him and in that moment all obstacles disappeared.

We formed one big group, which consisted of the coach and a few cars. Our visit at the Konin Regional Museum was short but very interesting. I learned a lot about Gombin's Jews. I was not working, meaning translating, because Mr. Lukaszewski was in a different corner and Mr.

Borysiak in another. While leaving the museum somebody took a picture of the Rabbi and myself with my camera. I keep it as a souvenir of this visit.

Then we visited the Catholic cemetery of Konin where some Jews were buried during WWII. Before we entered, we were given skullcaps, those who did not have them. It was the first time I wore it. I felt strange, just like I was a member of the group. The Rabbi led a short ceremony. There I saw Jews putting stones on the grave. I remembered this custom from the film *Schindler's List*. I promised to myself to ask somebody to explain the meaning of the custom. What do the stones mean?

We reached Chelmno around 4pm. It was a big area. Some local people who seemed to be interested in the ceremony, or may be in us, stood near the wood. They watched us and took pictures of themselves with us in the background. It's maybe a little funny but I felt as if I was one of the Jews present there. The Gombin Memorial Monument at Chelmno is very impressive. The inscriptions are in Hebrew, Yiddish, Polish and English. Among the people who were standing there, I saw a Catholic priest with whom we later prayed.

During the main ceremony, I heard my Jewish friends singing a beautiful song. I do not even know if it was a song; maybe it was a prayer, or their national anthem, and it was very unusual and moving.

The group from Plock went to their hotel and we went back to Gombin. After supper we went to bed.

Monday, August 16, 1999

In the morning we all met at Gombin's *Stary Rynek*, the old marketplace. We were divided into two groups and started visiting the town. The leader of my group was Mr. Lukaszewski whose words I translated into English. We visited the

place where the school for the Jewish children was and saw also many other old buildings.

Then Mr. Lukaszewski had an appointment in the town hall. Jeremy Freedman asked me to go with his group since they did not have a translator.

Mr. Borysiak became the second leader of my group. That part of my Gombin adventure I liked very much. People were asking many questions, wanted to find out as much as they could. Sometimes, Mr. Zielonka became a speaker and people listened to him and not Mr. Borysiak. It was a big mess but I liked it.

There were two moments which moved me and which I shall never forget. They are closely connected with the attitude of Poles towards us. One of them was when Mr. Zielonka stopped in front of the house with number 22. I do not remember the name of the street. His memory started working. He wanted to go into the house and see something. He touched the walls and shouted: "It was here!" The gate was closed, but we managed to open it somehow and stepped in. I was just behind him. We talked to a Pole for a while. When we went away he swore at us.

The second moment was later, when we were walking with Mr. Borysiak. We met another negative guy. He said that Mr. Borysiak was no more a Pole, because he was walking and talking with foreigners, accusing him for doing business with us.

With a little delay, the main ceremony at the Gombin Jewish cemetery started around 4pm. Beforehand, four people including Gabriel Zamosc, two other men and myself brought two tombstones which were found that morning: a big one found by Joe Richards and a smaller one found by one of the women. They were put in the Lapidarium. There were many official guests and inhabitants of the town. During the ceremony Ada Holtzman gave a gift to Maria Kaminska Maciejko from Gombin, whose family saved the two Wolfowicz sisters during Holocaust. My job was to translate the dedication signed by all partici-

pants from Polish to English. I waited to the moment of the translation and was very nervous. All went very well.

Around 6pm all of us who were gathered at the cemetery went to the Fireman's Hall to meet the elderly local inhabitants of Gombin. I was supposed to be the translator of the official part of the meeting, but I was not. Just a few minutes before it started, one of the Jewish women asked me for help. She wanted to find the house where her family lived before the war. With one of the Gombiners, we managed to find not the exact place but the area where it might have been. She started crying. She was happy. Maybe it was the main aim of her journey to Poland. I must admit I was really happy too. Of course we were late to the meeting.

Then the whole group went to Plock. Jerry also joined them. Only a few people stayed at his house - Leon, his family, two women from the kitchen and myself. We had an interesting chat, wine and good sense of humor.

Tuesday, August 17, 1999

A very sad day. My new friends are leaving. I spent only three days with them, but I felt as if I knew them for a long time. I shall never forget what they did for me. Their arrival to Poland, not only made it possible for me to speak English, but also gave me the opportunity to meet Jewish people and learn about their culture and history.

I was very sad when I had to say good-bye to Leon's family. Before my departure, I stood with Leon face to face. I felt tears in my eyes. I do not know if he saw them. I waved to him and he waved back. My Gombin adventure had ended.

I would like to thank Jerry and all my new friends for including me in this event. Now it is over, but I have memories. I am more than sure I shall remember those three days for a long time. I wonder if I shall meet my Jewish friends again.

■

Robert Szwajkowski was one of several volunteer translators for the ceremonies

OUR MURDERED KINSMEN

I had made a hurried visit to Gombin with my son Jeremy about two and a half years previously. It was winter and the full beauty of the silver birches and the pine forests was not apparent. This time we saw them in midsummer. I did not like Warsaw on our first hasty visit and it had not become any better this time, that is until Shabbat afternoon when we walked to the Old Town, beautifully restored.

Our Sunday trip to Konin moved me very much. One, because the grave was in a Catholic cemetery alongside a Polish mass grave and it appeared that both graves were cared for by the Catholics. Who knew when the last Jewish party had been there, or indeed, when another Jewish visit would take place. Two, because the Rabbi making the prayers there had a list of names of those who were buried there, among which were two names bearing my maternal grandfathers surname of Tibber. This somehow personalised the Holocaust for me, something that I had never entirely felt before, growing up in the UK away from the main body of Europe.

I was not happy about the situation we found with the archaeologist at the Holocaust museum or indeed, at the site of the concentration camp at Chelmno. It would seem to me that now we should leave what remains in the ground there at peace. Surely we do not need any more proof to know that the Nazis caused the Holocaust? Living testimony from the survivors and those who saw with their own eyes is quite another matter.

The ceremony in the pine forest was another intensely moving time. It was full of dignity and beautiful prayer. That at least is what we can give back to our murdered kinsmen.

Touring Gombin was a high spot for all of us. One myth that all Poles hate the Jews was quickly dispelled. Many elderly people came to see what we were doing. With the help of young interpret-

ers they were friendly and anxious to share their memories with us and with Isaac, who had lived there with them until he escaped to Russia just before the Holocaust. The Catholics had suffered very much in Gombin, losing their priest to the concentration camps and having their church destroyed. Ten of the village men were shot by the Nazis outside the church wall because one Nazi soldier had been killed.

Isaac finding his grandparents' house still standing was another thrilling moment. I was particularly taken with the elderly man who, as a young boy had witnessed many atrocities which the Poles were prevented by the Nazis from seeing, but he, like Josephus and the Romans, was able to watch from a hiding place.

The ceremony at the cemetery was wonderful. Not only were we all there, but many Poles wandered in as well as the civic dignitaries. Particular emotion was expressed when Mr. Bernie Guyer found a piece of his brother's gravestone, a child aged eight, who had died from disease.

At some point on our last afternoon we walked through the woods to find a site where wonderful life-sized carvings were being made. Whole figures emerging from tree trunks, smaller articles had been lovingly carved by the craftsman who allowed our children the opportunity to try their skills. A magical place in the woods for our sophisticated eyes.

Oh Poland, that can produce a Chopin and build marvellous palaces on beautiful lakes and yet to have treated the Jews so badly, that is until the arrival of the common enemy, the Nazis. Even then the last pogrom took place after World War II was over, I believe in 1946. Why then did Jews live there for five or six hundred years?

Joan Freedman

DOCUMENTARY UPDATE

The documentary *Back To Gombin* is in post production. Although there are still elements that need to be taped and filmed (Ada Holtzman plans to come to the US and I want to get her interview; I hope to still convince at least one of the Frankel brothers to appear on tape; I must get Phillip Gerkin and his daughter), my editor and I have begun the process of transferring approximately eighty hours of digital video to Beta SP. This is a lengthy process necessary for editing on the Avid system, which my editor Harry Kafka uses. We have a great deal of work ahead of us—technical processes such as compositing and taping with an animation stand numerous photographs and documents; the continued translating and transcribing of many interviews conducted in Yiddish, Polish and Hebrew; the ongoing dialogue between director and editor involving what is included, what is most dramatic, clearest in terms of storytelling.

It has been a most exciting process and to have finally reached the point of editing is quite thrilling. So many stories within stories have been told on tape, among them: the story of Leon Zamosc and how a personal investigation into his fathers legacy led a group of children of survivors, survivors and committed Poles to create a memorial to the past and a promise for the future; the incredible saga of Chana Guyer (Rissman) who left Gombin at the eleventh hour, leaving behind her father and siblings after burying her young son, Pinchus (the boy whose death gave life to the rest of the family); the saga of a group of survivors of the Shoah from this tiny shtetl and how their personal tragedies affected their children and subsequent generations—how those children and grandchildren's lives were altered and how a journey back to Gombin changed their lives forever.

Since last year at this time, when I decided to chronicle the story of Jewish Gombin and the af-

termath, I have been fortunate to meet and film survivors, their children and some who came before and paved the way for their relatives. I have taped interviews with our elderly survivors: Rajzel Zychlinsky, the exceptional Yiddish poet who lives in a nursing home in Berkeley, California; our precious Mendele Wruble and the very lucid Haim Russack in Los Angeles; the courageous Ben Guyer; the intrepid Michael Zielonka (my wonderful father) and the achingly honest Sam Weiss in Florida; the erudite and provocative Jacob Spievak, the painfully lovely Rose Dinerman, the optimistic beyond all reason Raymond and Bela Boll and the startlingly direct George Zolna in New York and New Jersey; Chana Guyer, Hania Shane and Rae Guyer in Detroit; the most beautiful, inside and out, Sara Laks in Israel and many more. . . their children, grandchildren and friends, including a number of Poles who have become an unforgettable part of this journey.

I must say that without the help and support of so many of you Gombiners and friends of Gombiners, none of this would have been possible. The list of people that I need to thank is long and I will sing it boldly in the credits to the film. In particular, I must thank Sam Rafel, the grandfather of my project, whose images of Gombin—the Jews, the children, the streets, the synagogue, the forests, the LIFE—are at the heart of my inspiration.

I hope to have a rough cut by late spring, at which time Dick Hyman, who has generously consented to write the musical score, will begin his process. My editor warns me that this project may take well beyond the summer to complete. But I am hopeful for an earlier completion and will keep everyone informed on the development.

■

Minna Packer

visit the *Back to Gombin* website at
<http://pages.prodigy.net/madisonpark>

*PackerProductions and the Gombin Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society invite you
to a benefit dinner and evening performance on*

*Tuesday, March 7, 2000
6:00pm - 10:00pm*

*at
Cornelia Street Cafe
29 Cornelia Street
New York, NY 10014
212.989.9319*

*A sumptuous dinner with fine wine will be followed by entertainment including a performance by
Robin Hirsch, author of "Last Dance at the Hotel Kempinski" as well as glimpses of the film in
progress and other performances by New York area performance artists.*

A tax-deductible donation of \$100 per person for the benefit dinner and entertainment is requested.

*Proceeds will go toward post-production costs of "Back to Gombin," the documentary study of life in
the Jewish town in Central Poland, its destruction during the Holocaust and the aftermath left behind
for future generations.*

Please RSVP by mail, phone or email:

*Minna Packer
308 Eighth Street
Hoboken, NJ 07030
201.656.3722
packerproductions@prodigy.net*

KONIN PLAQUE INITIATIVE LETTER

Dear Dr. Nowak,

On behalf of the Gombin Society I am pleased to submit to you an official request to erect a tombstone (*matzeva*) to the Jewish victims of the Czarkow (Konin) Forced Labour Nazi Camp.

The Gombin Society wishes to erect a proper tombstone in the Catholic Cemetery on the mass grave where Jewish victims dead are buried. I formally inform you that the Gombin Society authorizes you to obtain all necessary permits and approvals from the pertinent civil and religious authorities.

Below find the proposed text, which is to be followed by a list with the victims names. The list is based mostly on Rabbi Aaronson's diary and other survivor testimonies. The research for the names took two months and included various inquiry messages over the Internet, Gombiner survivor interviews and an article in *B'nai Gombin* issue 10.

We also authorize you to make inquiries with those who would do the actual work, taking into account the following alternatives:

- 1) Erecting a simple stone matzeva with a metal plaque (using thick aluminum metalphoto technique like the family plaques we placed at the Chelmno Wall of Remembrance).
- 2) A stone matzeva of traditional Jewish/Polish shape.
- 3) A matzeva on the ground, a slanted-shaped slab in front of the existing standing stone with Polish plaque.

We completely trust you and are sure you will advise us on the best alternative. Please send us one or two proposals with price quotations. Please take into account that we will not be able to spend more than \$2000. After investing so much in the Gombin memorial at Chelmno, we are nearly left without budget and now have few resources. So kindly limit your quotation to the maximum of \$2000. We will choose among the quotations you submit and will respond to you quickly.

Thanking your kind cooperation and assistance and wishing you and all your staff warm season wishes and a most successful new year 2000. . .

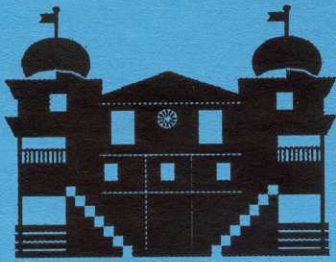
Sincerely yours,
Ada Holtzman
Representative in Israel
The Gombin Society

Plaque text:

HERE LIE THE REMAINS OF JEWISH PRISONERS
MURDERED BY THE GERMAN NAZIS
AT THE KONIN FORCED LABOR CAMP IN 1942 AND 1943
BEING JEWISH WAS THEIR ONLY CRIME
MAY THEY FIND ETERNAL PEACE

WE SHALL NOT FORGET YOU!

JEWISH GOMBINER SURVIVORS AND DESCENDANTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, 2000



GOMBIN JEWISH HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

President: Mindy Prosperi

Secretary: Noam Lupu

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Executive Committee: Harold Boll, Noam Lupu, Mindy Prosperi, Steve Tadelis and Leon Zamosc

Representative in Israel: Ada Holtzman

Representative in Britain: Jeremy Freedman

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