

B'NAI GOMBIN

Newsletter of the Gombin Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society

The Gombin Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society (GJHGS) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization 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 descendents. 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 by mail at 320 County Route 105, Highland Mills NY 10930 or by email.

www.gombin.org

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The officers and board members of the Gombin Society wish all Gombiner families a happy and healthy New Year, 5766 (2005)

לשנה טובה תכתבו

President's Gombin Trip Report, July 17-18, 2005

Bernard Guyer

This summer I spent 2 days in Poland, visiting Gombin, Chelmno, Konin, and Sanniki. I stayed in Gombin at the home of Sebastian Balko's parents, Romek and Cecylia, who provided warm hospitality. I also met with several Gombiners, including the mayor, Mr. Krzysztof Jadczyk. The purpose of the trip was to begin the preparations for the GJHGS trip in 2006 (see page 4). The following thoughts and ideas were presented at the Annual Meeting in August, 2005.

Gabin [pronounced Gombin in Polish]: There are many new houses- some quite large in the town. On Kilinskega Street many of the pre-war structures we had seen in 1999 have been torn down and replaced with new construction. These people work in Plock, Gostynin and Warsaw and commute daily or weekly. Gabin is becoming more of a desirable community.

The site of the Gombin synagogue: The site is now a parking area for a small food market on Kilinskega Street. (continue p2)

Editor: Bernard Guyer

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The area going down to the river, where the mikvah stood, is still open brush with houses backing on to it.



Jewish cemetery: The cemetery looks good; the vegetation is cut back. The face of the monument has been cleaned, but there is debris around the stones. The entire concrete area and the remaining matzevot need to be cleaned. There is no graffiti or evidence of any vandalism. The gate is always left open.

Chelmno: At Chelmno I was fortunate to meet Krzysztof Gorczyca, an archeologist working for the Museum at Konin (see below).



There is much new research and excavation taking place at Chelmno to document the full

extent of the atrocities committed there, including the murder of the Jews of Gombin. The grave sites are far more extensive than previously realized. Underground furnaces have been discovered, even under the place where the shtetl monuments have been erected. They are also excavating at the site of the former manor house.

Konin Catholic Cemetery: The mass grave of Jews from the Konin work camp is unchanged from when we were there in 1999. No new matzevah has been erected.

Gabin Landlovers Association (Towarzystwo Milosnicow Zeimi Gabinskiej, TMZG): I met Mrs. Anna Ostrowska, the new president, and Mr. Borysiak, whom we met in 1999. The museum looked wonderful- somewhat expanded and very clean and orderly. The room with information on Jewish Gabin was somewhat expanded with materials.

Next Steps: At the August meeting, the Board took several steps: We will work with friends in Gombin to form a planning committee for the 2006 trip. We will begin research into placing a monument commemorating the ancient synagogue of Gombin on its original site. This monument might also commemorate the former catholic cathedral that was also destroyed by the Nazis. We might plan for Jewish Gombiner grandchildren to spend some time in Gombin and at Chelmno. We should improve the collection and exhibition of Jewish materials in the Gombin Museum by preparing some posters on important Jewish Gombiners.

See the full president's report at www.gombin.org

“Why I attended my first Gombiner meeting”

by *Soren Packer* <soren212@yahoo.com>

I attended my first annual Gombiner meeting this past August. My mother Minna has participated in these meetings for several years, but only now have I come to realize the importance of embracing this part of my ancestry.

As the grandchild of Michael Zielonka who survived the Holocaust in Poland and lost his entire family to Nazis at Chelmno, forgetting my family's past would be a tragedy in itself. I am forever grateful to my grandparents for their perseverance and work ethic, and will always work toward achieving greatness and dignity in their honor.

My mother Minna has devoted the last five years of her life to creating and distributing a film about the survivors of Gombin, many of whom were our ancestors. Her work traveling across the world to preserve their memory has certainly been a source of inspiration for me, and it is this inspiration that I plan to carry forth into my own future involvement with the Gombin Society.

As a recent college graduate and alumnus of the Birthright Israel program, I have come to realize the value of participating in a Jewish organization, especially one with which I have a personal connection, like the Gombin Society and my cousin Joe's organization, Fuel For Truth.

Many of my peers downplay the importance of their Jewish heritage and take for granted the hardships and sacrifices made by grandparents and great grandparents. I have vowed not to follow this route.

Through my involvement with the Gombin Society and Fuel For Truth, I hope to become one step closer to embracing my ancestry, and strengthening our Jewish community. I look forward to interacting with you all as I strive to reach those goals.

Renew dues for Gombin Society for 2006 now:

Send check made out to **Gombin Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society** to:
Mindy Prosperi, 320 County Route 105, Highland Mills NY 10930

US members \$36; International members \$36; Students \$10; special donations welcome

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____ Phone: _____

How would you like to participate in the Society's work? _____

Join the trip to Gombin scheduled for July, 2006

Mindy Proseri has organized a group trip to Poland scheduled for departure from New York on July 17, 2006 (actual departure date may be 4 days on either side of this date). The 9-day trip includes one full day in Gombin, 4 nights in Warsaw, 3 nights in Krakow, and visits to Chelmno, Auschwitz, and other important sites with professional guides. Travel will be by motor coach. Accommodations are in first-class hotels; most meals are included. Call for details.

The quoted cost, including round-trip airfare, is \$2670 for adults; \$2380 for students age 22 and under. The Society will offer up to 10 partial scholarships toward the trip for Gombiner grandchildren who write an essay on some aspect of their family's Gombiner connections.

Indicate interest in trip by contacting Mindy Proseri (payment of 2006 dues required):

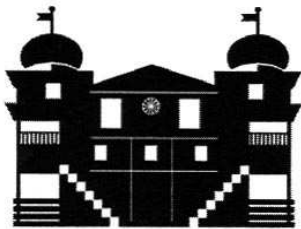
- We definitely want to go on 2006 Gombin trip___; Number in family party___; Enclose deposit of \$100 per person made out to the Gombin Society.
- We will go but want to organize own international flights___; May want to go on to Israel_____.
- Am interested but can't commit until later date___;
- Need more information___; Please contact me___;

Sign up early!!!

Name: _____

Phone: _____ email: _____

Address: _____



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