

Kremenets and Shumsk Association in Israel
The 2009 Askara (Memorial Service)
Rachel Karni
16 August 2009

On August 16th the Annual Memorial to commemorate the massacre of the Jewish communities of Kremenets and Shumsk was held at Seminar Hakibbutzim in Tel Aviv. Some eighty people participated. This year we welcomed descendents of the community of Lanovets who have joined with us. Especially gratifying were the many people who were attending for the first time, having found a new interest in the roots of their family. The hospitality of Seminar Hakibbutzim was, as always, lovely.

Pesach Koller, the treasurer of our organization, gave the touching opening address, "*Seventy Years to the Outbreak of World War Two*" and this was followed by the *Kaddish* and *El Maleh Rachamim* in memory of the people who were killed in our towns. Pesach was a young man in Kremenets on September 1, 1939 and he vividly described those days and the tragedy of the ensuing period.

This was followed by words in memory of those of our members who unfortunately passed away this year:

SHMUEL HARTZFELD, who was born in Shumsk and lived in Tel Aviv was the son of Pesi and Haya Hartzfeld. His sister is our devoted member and friend Rachel Hartzfeld. He passed away in April 2009.

CHARNA KATZ RABIN who was born in Lanovets and lived in Herzlia was the daughter of Hinda and Eliezar Katz. Her grandparents lived in Shumsk and she wrote an article about her grandmother Tiecha Katz, in the Shumsk YB. Her aunt was Sheindel Marmelstein, active in the theatrical society of Shumsk and the owner of a photo shop in Shumsk. (The stamp "Marmelstein" can be seen on the back of many photographs from the town.) Charna was the widow of Chaim Rabin, the editor of the Shumsk and Lanovets Yizkor Books, among many others.

ZEV WALTER SACHISH was from Kremenets and lived in Tel Aviv. He was the husband of Devorah Sachish. Zev was a devoted member of the organizations and attended the Azkarot each year even though he was ill. He passed away a little over a year ago.

FREIDA SHNEIDER GESIS who was born in Shumsk and lived in Mishmar Hashiva was the daughter of Moshe Shneider of Kremenets and Feiga Chasen Shneider of the Chasen family of Shumsk. Freida's uncle, Mordechai Chasen, was the president of the Shumsk Jewish Community in the 30's and until the war. His signature-M.Chasen- appears on many of the Shumsk documents that have been found from that period. Freida's uncle David Chasen, who had immigrated to the States, provided the wonderful paper on which the Shumsk Yizkor Book is printed. Freida was the sister of Devora Sachish. Freida passed away four months ago.

DAVID TZUKERMAN, the beloved and devoted President of the Kremenets-Shumsk organization passed away this winter. His son in law, Miki Nin Nun spoke about him. David Tzukerman and his wife Sonya, who passed away a year and a half ago, wrote a book about their lives and it will appear shortly. Mr. Tzukerman will be sadly missed. We will remember his many years of leadership of our society, his wonderful organization of the

yearly Memorial Meetings and his stirring recitation of the El Maleh Rachamim at the memorial service.

DR. FREIDA BERENSHTEIN UTZENIK who was the daughter of Wolf Berenshtein and Sonya Bryk Berenshtein, was born in Shumsk and lived in Bat Yam. She miraculously survived the war with her father and the riveting account of their experiences during these years appears in the chapter written by her father in the Shumsk Yizkor Book (pages 21-28 of the English translation). Zohar Ravit Rabinovitz, Freida's first cousin, spoke about her and her work as a physician in Israel.

AZRIEL BERENSHTEIN was a son of Yisrael and Golda Berenstein. He was born in Lanovets and lived in Hod Hasharon and passed away at the age of 99 and a half six weeks ago. His paternal grandparents were Kovka and Edis Berenshtein of Shumsk. Michal, Azriel's granddaughter, presented a moving Powerpoint presentation in his memory. He was part of an very large family in Israel and the United States, documented by Richard Spector.

PENINA DORFMAN SHARON, the daughter of Isaac Dorfman and Sara Batt Dorfman, a descendent of the Bahat-Batt family of Shumsk was born in Shumsk and lived in Kibbutz Afek. She passed away three weeks ago. Her close relative Rachel Yaari spoke about Penina. Penina, who was a devoted friend of many Shumskers, wrote a book telling her life story and the book will appear shortly.

Hana Gottlieb presented a beautiful Powerpoint presentation detailing the visit of 10 of our members to Kremenets and Shumsk. They had returned from the trip on the Thursday prior to the Memorial.

Maya F. Katz Golan presented a Powerpoint presentation about her late father David Katz, who was an electrical engineer in Kremenets for 12 years until the German invasion in 1941. We saw marvelous pictures of the electric plants in Kremenets during this period.. During WW2 David Katz served in the RAF. In Israel he was Chief Electrical Engineer for the national health fund "Kupat-Holim Clalit" for 24 years, until he passed away in 1974. He was in charge of planning and building the whole electrical infrastructure in all Kupat-Holim's institutions (hospitals, clinics and health resorts) for Jewish Holocaust survivors throughout the country and around the world. His unique professional contribution was in designing and building Automated Emergency Power Stations within hospitals' areas throughout the country.

Susan Sobel prepared a Powerpoint presentation, presented by Shimshon Bahat, telling of the new materials the Kremenets District Research Group (KDRG) is working on. Many of the participants were excited by the opportunities for obtaining information which Susan so graciously offered to supply.

At a short "business meeting" chaired by Benyamin Chofshi Pesach Koler was elected the new President of our organization and Shimshon Bahat and Yehuda Lerner were approved as signatories on the bank account of the organization.