

To: All Vishnive Families and Descendants
From: Dvora Rogovin Helberg and Uri Helberg, Modi'in, Israel
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Renovation of the Jewish Cemetery in Vishnive and Additional Projects

Dear Friends:

My parents, Mordechai and Chaia Elishkevich Rogovin, of blessed memory, left Vishnive for Eretz Israel in the 1930's. Most of our family perished in the Holocaust.

In May, 1996 we visited Vishnive. This is what we found:

The Jewish Cemetery is totally neglected. It is almost inaccessible due to very thick, wild growth of trees, thorny bushes and grass. The stones are toppled, partially covered with dirt, and in very poor shape.

The Mass Grave, near the Jewish Cemetery, where the first group of 38 Jewish victims was gunned down and buried in August, 1941, is not even marked with a Stone.

On Krave Street, where the Jewish population of the shtetl was slaughtered and burned on August 30th, 1942 there is a memorial which states, only in Russian, the death of "2000 Soviet Citizens" totally ignoring the fact that all of the victims were Jews.

During our visit we discussed with our guide, Ms. Regina Kopilevich, the following needs:

1. Renovation of the Jewish Cemetery
2. Erection of a Stone at the site of the 1941 Mass Grave and
3. Addition to the Krave Street Memorial stating clearly in English, Hebrew and Russian that all of the victims were Jews and were murdered by the Nazis and their local collaborators.

At the time of our visit we also saw other shtetls in this region and found many new Jewish Memorials erected by families and descendants who mainly live in the US and Israel.

Recently Regina told us that she took Ms. Zane Buzby (a descendant of the Podbereski Family) on a tour of Vishnive. At that time they talked with the Director of Culture in Vishnive. She told them that she could organize a cleaning and maintenance project for the Jewish Cemetery. In exchange for this project she asked for a \$1000 contribution for the heating and renovation of the local kindergarten.

We volunteered to help in this important project by trying to collect donations from Vishnive families and descendants who live in Israel. Ms. Zane Buzby volunteered to collect donations in America. If we succeed in collecting more than \$1000, we will pursue the Krave Street Memorial Addition and the 1941 Mass Grave Stone.

Regina is a Jewish resident of Vilna. She speaks the local languages in addition to English and Hebrew. She frequently guides Israeli and American visitors to Vishnive. She volunteered to be the contact person between us, Ms. Buzby and the Director of Culture in Vishnive, and to oversee the execution of the project.

So far several hundred dollars have been collected. Your donation is requested. We ourselves have donated \$100. Any amount contributed will be thankfully accepted.

LET'S ACT NOW! LET'S NOT PROCRASTINATE BECAUSE THIS OPPORTUNITY MAY BE LOST!

We will inform you of the progress of our mission.

If you know other Vishnive descendants, please let them know what we mean to accomplish.

Ms. Zane Buzby: cbmail@earthlink.net

Dvora & Uri Helberg: helberg@netvision.net.il

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