



ETZLEINU

Bulletin of the Association of Latvian and Estonian Jews in Israel - abridged English Edition

FALL 2007

Issue no. 14

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Annual meeting

The annual general meeting of the Association took place in Shfaim on 12 October 2007. The Chairman, Mr. Elijahu Valk, reported on the main activities conducted during the current year.

The Association treasurer, Mr. Arie Grinman, presented the financial report for the year 2006: despite the fact that the Association collected last year more than 50,000 shekels in memberships' dues (35% more than in the year 2005), we have completed that year with a deficit. The main reason for it was the necessity to cover debts that accumulated over the previous years, such as municipal taxes, etc.

The Vice-Chairman, Mr. Solomon Feigerson, presented the Association's working plan for coming year. In addition to our regular activities (the Memorial assembly, the archives activities, the "Memory & Roots" tour to Latvia, the laying of the wreath at Yad-Va'Shem in Jerusalem, maintenance of connection with the Jewish community in Latvia and the embassies in Riga & Tel Aviv, the plan for 2008 include:

- a meeting of Latvian Jews exiled to Siberian in 1941;
- a meeting of Jewish Chorus that acted in Riga at the end of the 1950-ies;
- a course in the history of Latvian Jewry (for second generation members).

The plan presentation was followed by a lively debate.

Three new members of the Association Council were elected and a Control Commission was appointed.

The Association Council convened at 25 October to appoint a number of commissions and to discuss the preparations for The World Reunion of Latvian Jews due to open on 27 November 2007 in Tel Aviv.

Activities conducted in the pas year

November 2006 – October 2007
as reported at the annual meeting on Oct. 12th

- ✓ 3 issues of the bulletin "Etzleinu" were issued;
- ✓ the Association leaders met with the Latvian Foreign Minister to discuss the question of payment of compensation for nationalized Jewish propriety, erecting memorials, etc.;
- ✓ our representatives participated in international consulting meetings on the above compensation payments;
- ✓ our representatives met with the Consul of Estonia, who arrived in Israel on a brief visit;
- ✓ a meeting of former Estonian Jews took place with more than a hundred participants attending;
- ✓ a wreath in the name of the Association was laid at Yad - Va'Shem on Holocaust Day. Our Holocaust survivors also met with a group of members of Israeli youth organizations;
- ✓ the Association participated in the activities of the Centre of Organizations of Holocaust survivors. A list of our members who had survived concentration camps and the ghetto has been prepared;
- ✓ modest allowances were granted from the Rabinovich Family Fund;
- ✓ A list of Latvian Jews exiled from Latvia to Siberia on 14 June 1941 by the Soviet authorities was prepared. It is available for reference (also by phone) at our office;
- ✓ The film "The Melodies of Riga Ghetto" was shown in the Shfaim Centre and at a members' meeting in Kiryat-Motzkin;
- ✓ 49 new memorial stones bearing names of Jews who perished in Riga were erected in Rumbuli in cooperation with the Jewish community in Latvia;
- ✓ Former residents of Bauska have continued their efforts to erect a memorial to the Jewish community in that town;
- ✓ A group of Association members residing in the north made a trip to Galilee;
- ✓ Work continued by our volunteers in the Association archives in Shfaim. Material is being collected on the different Jewish communities some 600 new files have been opened.

י"ד

אליהו ולק

סגני י"ד

זאב גולדשמידט

סולומון פייגרסון

גזבר

אריה גרינמן

מזכרה

ז'ניה טולשינסקי

אחראי ארכיון

יצחק גל

חברי ההנהלה

גמזו בתיה

היימן אליהו

ולדשטיין אוולין

כהן מנחם

למברג פרידה

מורין דוד

צמח ישראל

קרטין יעקב

ריבק מרק

רפפורט מרים

English:

Ella LONDON



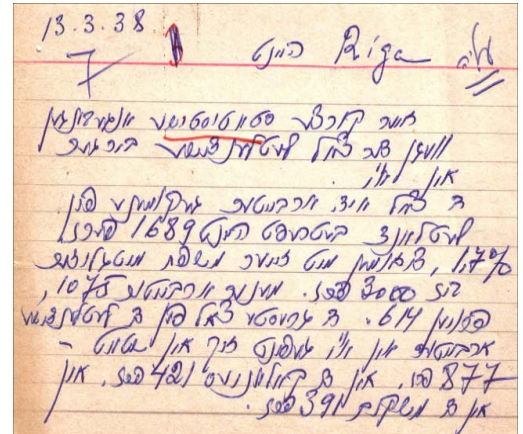
Government Assistance for Holocaust Survivors

On 4 November 2007 the Israeli government decided to extend major material assistance to Holocaust survivors residing in Israel. The total sum of additional benefits and payments will amount to more than 1.5 billion shekels. This will include payment to those who lost everything while escaping to the mainland Russia, so called "Holocaust refugees".

Some Historic Data

Some statistics on the number of Jews residents of Latvia, who arrived in Palestine in the 1920's were found in an excerpt from the Yiddish newspaper "Haint" published in 1938. The excerpt discovered in the Shfaim archives confines on Latvian Jews living in the various cities, agricultural colonies and Kibbutzim in Palestine. There were a total of Jewish workers arrived in Palestine by the end of 1937 was 1689 (about 3000 incl. members of families). Of that number 977 settled in the cities, 421 in the moshavim and 391 – in the kibbutzim.

According to data from Latvian source 4 200 persons left for Palestine before 1935. Some 6 500 Latvia Jews arrived to Erez Israel before establishing of Israel.



The Annual Memorial Assembly (Azkara)

The annual assembly commemorating the victims of the Holocaust who perished in Latvia and Estonia will take place on 30 November 2007 at the WIZO Hall at 38 David Hamelech St., Tel Aviv.

The meeting will start at 10:30, with the ceremony starting at 11:00.

The memorial meeting will be conducted under the aegis of Mrs. Tova Ben-Dov, the chairwoman of WIZO International.

A Book Seeking Support for Murderers

It has been reported in September 2007 in Latvia that a well-known Latvian lawyer, A. Grutups, published a book "the Scaffold", in which he presented Nazi officer as man of honor and claimed that no evidence had ever been found by German sources about Latvians having taken part in the murder of Jews in the Rumbula forest.

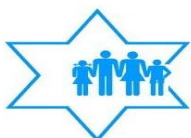
Grutups claimed that the trial of 7 Nazi officers in Latvia in 1946 was unjust, that the stay procurator Zavyalov (who was allegedly Jewish) was just another Communist and that the German officers were "unjustly and unfairly tried sentenced".

Despite the fact that the Nazi officers were presented in the book as "man of honor and intellectuals, etc.", despite the

fact that book is full of praise for the Nazi General F. Gebbeln, who was known for his "efficiency" regarding the number of Jews murdered per day and his "grave-packing system", no Latvian official at any level condemned in the book. Moreover the author A. Grutups was allowed to visit a number of schools, where he handed out some 200 copies of his book to the students. Among those who condemned the book publication was Mr. Margiers Westermans, the Jewish historian and the head of Jewish Museum in Riga. He also expressed his great disappointment that Latvian Society did not find a way to express its views on this publication.

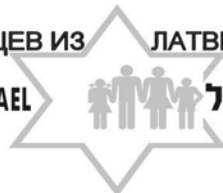
From "Telegraf", Riga

WELCOME THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE



World Reunion of Latvian Jewry

27.11.2007 – 02.12.2007



A Present-day Neo-Nazi

The paper "Chas" published in Riga, reported in mid-March 2007 (on the eve of the Legionnaires` Day) that a certain A.Jordans, who described himself as a Neo-Nazi, took part in one of the meetings focusing on the occasion. When asked about his organization's attitude towards Jews and Gypsies, Jordans stated that they were "non-humans" ("untermenschen") and should be killed. Two deputies of the Riga Municipal Assembly who attended the meeting, appealed to the City Prosecutor's office, protesting against the incident, but the reply they received stated, that the views expressed by Jordans were his private views and he was entitled to express them as part of his evil nights. The two deputies applied to a high-ranking official at the Riga Procurator's Office, but he supported his colleague's position. The two deputies are preparing an appeal to the State Procurator's Office.



Jewish Daugavpils Today

The Jewish community of Daugavpils (Dvinsk) at present (fall 2007) numbers about 200 members. Some of which belong to the local Orthodox Congregation and the rest to the non-religious communal structure. (Some members belong to both). The community maintains a number of services, both social and cultural. It has also been taking care of the local Jewish cemetery. The graves of the famous local rabbis have been restored and memorial stones were placed on the sights where Dvinsk Jews were shot and buried during the war (behind the city prison and in Mezhtziens). The social institutions active in town include a women`s club, a "Maccabi" sports club, a regular discussion club and a small Jewish museum. The museum is called "The Museum of Daugavpils and Latgaleh Jewry" is financed by a Dutch Jewish foundation and it is now in its organization stage, in the renewed synagogue building. The museum is in urgent need of material (written memories of former residents of Daugavpils and Latgaleh, of former ghetto survivors, and Jews who fought during WWII, etc.) and also of photographs of Jewish life especially in small towns around Daugavpils.

Materials should be sent to *Rochko, Mihoelsa iela 3-43, LV-5403 Daugavpils, Latvia*, or to rochko@inbox.lv

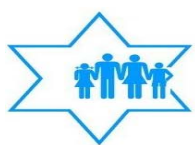
A Memorial Meeting in Dundaga

A placement ceremony of a stone memorial commemorating the place in Dundaga (in the Talsi region), where a Nazi concentration camp was situated in 1943-44, was held in the beginning of October 2007. The head of the local municipal council said in his speech that most of the 6000 Jews brought there from Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, Hungary & other countries, were murdered. The Nazis were planning to build in Dundaga a training & sports centre for the SS

corps. The ceremony was attended by the Israeli Ambassador in Latvia & Lithuania Mr. Chen Ivri, representatives of the Latvian Foreign Ministry & foreign diplomats.

The Executive Director of the Council of Jewish communities, Mrs. G. Umananovsky, stated that similar memorial signs will be placed on all the sights in Latvia, where Jews had been murdered during WWII.
Communicated

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אצלנו / בטאון איגוד יוצאי לטביה ואסטוניה בישראל • גליון מס' 14 • סתיו 2007 / חשוון תשס"ח
המערכת: אלי ולק, מלכה נדרה, אריה גרינמן; הגהה עברית: נורית דגן
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