

May 8, 2002

Dear Members and Friends of the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP,

Ron Doctor and I would like to update you on the progress of the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP and to appeal to you for a renewed push of volunteerism and donations. As you know from our February update, we successfully arranged with the LDS and the Ukraine National Archives to digitize all the vital records of Kremenets that the Mormons have microfilmed (1870-1907). The LDS provided us with these digitized records on a set of 7 cd-roms. This substantially reduces our costs, since we no longer have to make and mail paper copies to our translators. Instead we can just send our translators a copy of the cd-rom that contains the records they are transliterating. In return we will provide the church with copies of our English transliterations. As they become available, we will post the completed transliterations in a searchable database on the JRI-Poland website (<http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/>) for free use by all. Our Agreement with the LDS requires us to complete the translations within two years.

A number of our members have volunteered their time and energy to work out a system for transliterating the records and templates to record the findings. They also have completed transliterations of the 1870 Birth records and 1870-1872 Death records. For their volunteer efforts in these activities we owe our thanks to Al Bell, Adam Bronstein, Yael Driver, David Dubin, Gary Khusidman, Rick Liftig, Peggy Pearlstein and Alan Shuchat.

Recognizing that we need to accelerate our translation efforts, a couple of months ago I posted an inquiry on JewishGen seeking bids from professional translators and skilled nonprofessionals, who would be interested in continuing the work our volunteer translators began. Based on estimates that I have received so far it looks as if it will cost us about \$5000 to complete the transliterations within our two-year time frame. This is an approximate amount as the records also contain paragraphs and notes that need to be translated. In addition, we will need to set aside about \$2,500 to edit and proofread the transliterated records. Through your generosity, we already have raised \$1,508. So, we need an additional \$6,000 to be assured of completing the transliterations.

At this time I ask for your help. If you possess the skills to transliterate Russian or Hebrew/Yiddish and would like to volunteer to help translated the records it would help us reduce the cost of hiring professionals. If you don't possess that wonderful skill, we want you to know that this would be a great time to consider making a financial donation to the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP. The speed with which we get this project done depends on our success in raising money for professional translators, and

in finding volunteer translators. Ron and I wish to offer some incentives to encourage you to make a donation to this very worthy cause:

- For your donation of volunteer translation services, we will send you two spreadsheets for each one year spreadsheet you complete (birth, marriage or death for one year).
- For each \$100 donation, the donor gets a spreadsheet containing all the translated birth OR death OR marriage record data for one year of his/her choice.
- For each \$250 donation, the donor gets a spreadsheet containing all the translated birth OR death OR marriage record data for five years of his/her choice.
- For each \$500 donation, the donor gets spreadsheets containing all the translated birth AND death AND marriage record data for ten years of his/her choice.
- For each \$1000 donation, the donor gets spreadsheets containing the entire set of translated birth OR death OR marriage record data.
- For a \$2000 donation, the donor gets spreadsheets containing the entire set of all translated birth, death, marriage and divorce record data.

The spreadsheets will be sent to our donors as each is completed, edited and proofread. Keep in mind that all data will continue to be available free on-line, but only in a searchable format. That is, you will see the data that satisfy your search criteria, but you will not be able to see the entire set of data at once. By making an appropriate donation, you will be able to see all the data in the spreadsheet and to browse through it at your leisure. If you have already donated to this effort, your past donations will be credited toward the incentives noted above.

All donations are tax deductible in the U.S., since the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP is part of JRI-Poland, a 501(c)(3) organization. None of the individuals involved in coordinating the CO-OP will handle the money that is donated, and none will benefit financially from the money you donate. ALL of your donation will be used to pay professional translators for their work on our records.

How to donate?

Make your donation to JRI-Poland and specify that it is for the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP. Your donation can be by check, bank draft, money order, or Visa Card.

See <http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/visa.htm> for additional information.

Checks should be made out to “Jewish Records Indexing - Poland,” and you should write “Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP” on the check. Send your contributions, or address your questions concerning donations, to:

Jewish Records Indexing, Inc. c/o Sheila Salo, Treasurer 5607 Greenleaf Road
Cheverly, MD 20785 USA

Telephone / Fax: (301) 341-1261 E-Mail: ssalo@capaccess.org

Visa contributions also may be telephoned to Sheila Salo. (Only between the hours of 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Eastern Daylight/Standard Time, please).

Remember, Jewish Records Indexing - Poland, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. The Employer Identification Number for JRI-Poland is 52-2101869. Contributions to Jewish Records Indexing - Poland are tax-deductible in the U.S. to the extent permitted by law.

Let me remind you again to specify that your donation is for the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP. Otherwise Sheila Salo, JRI-Poland’s Treasurer, will not know that the money is earmarked for our use. Also, to enable us to rack contributions, please send me an e-mail message at ssroth@pacbell.net or to rondoctor@earthlink.net, or a letter telling me how much you have donated.

Updates on our other projects

Vital Records: CD-Rom Record Number Indexing Project

Thanks to our volunteers Daniel Katz, Michael Port and Celia Starr, we have completed record number indexing for three of our seven cd-roms. Record number indexing is in progress for two other cd-roms.

The Yizkor Book Translation Project

Another ongoing project has been the translation of the two Yizkor books and 18 Booklets published by the Organization of Kremenets Emigrants between 1954 and 1982. In total we have about 2,000 pages to translate. (A complete bibliography is available on our website). Our volunteers have done 110 pages in the Stein book so far. Special thanks to Aya Betensky, Shalom Bronstein, David Dubin, Rabbi and Mrs. Ben Friedman, David Goldman, Rob Goldstein, Sari Havis, Alan Hirshfeld, Jack Horbal, Peter Kardon, Barbara Lipkin, Thia Persoff, Elliott Raisen, Aviv Tzur, Steve Wien and David Wilk for their efforts on the Yizkor Book project.

In addition, as a result of our February 2002 Update, Peggy Pearlstein sent us copies of the Booklets that the Library of Congress has but that were missing from our collection. Now we need only one more Booklet to complete our collection. If any of you have or can locate Booklet #17, published in 1980 or 1981, please let Ron know about it (rondoctor@earthlink.net).

Kremenets Cemetery Project

In our February Update, Ron outlined a potential new project to document, restore and maintain, the Jewish Cemetery of Kremenets. Recall that there are readable tombstones in that cemetery that date back to the 16th century. Since then, we have been in contact with Dr. Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, Director of the Center for Jewish Art (CJA) in Jerusalem. Dr. Cohen arranged to send us samples of their documentation of the old section of the Kremenets Jewish Cemetery. Their work is quite impressive. CJA's documentation includes a photo of the tombstone, locational information, physical description, the Hebrew inscription and an English translation of the inscription. We have asked for permission to post the samples on our website.

This is a unique and incredibly rich resource for us. However, CJA lacks funds to complete processing of the documentation they obtained during their 1997 expedition to Kremenets. When funds become available, they will finish processing and computerizing the tombstone documentation and will make it available. We are looking into the possibility of applying for a foundation grant to help CJA complete this work. Carolyn Manosevitz, one of our members, has agreed to work on the Kremenets Cemetery Project. We need others who can help. We particularly need volunteers who have the contacts and experience that will help us obtain a financial grant to get this project completed. Please contact Ron if you can help.

In addition, Ron has been in telephone contact with the US commission for Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad. The Commission will help us in our efforts to restore and maintain the Kremenets Jewish Cemetery. We'll have more to report on this effort in the next update.

As many of you know, Kremenets was a "District Center" during the 19th century. That means that life cycle events for people from other surrounding towns were documented in Kremenets. Many of our "Kremenets" families resided in those surrounding towns. Some of those towns have Jewish cemeteries. So, another part of our project is to identify the Jewish cemeteries in nearby towns so that we can include them in our Kremenets cemetery project. We need a volunteer or two to begin this part of the project.

Other Projects "on the drawing board"

Restoring our Kremenets heritage makes sense not only to remember and honor our ancestors, but also to help us in our personal family history pursuits. Here are some of the other projects we will get underway when volunteers step forward:

- Document the tombstones in the Kremenets sections of New York's Jewish cemeteries. There are five sections of four different cemeteries dedicated to Kremenetsers. In addition there are 5 sections for Yampol, one for Pochayev, and two for Shumsk. All of these are nearby towns included in the Kremenets vital records. We need volunteers (preferably from the New York area) to obtain the cemetery records for these sections and to take readable photographs of the tombstones in these cemetery sections.
- Identify Jewish points of interest in Kremenets, and determine whether or not these have tourist potential. If they do, we may be able to establish working arrangements with the Kremenets leadership to help us accomplish our other goals.
- Work with local Kremenets officials to accomplish our objectives. Ron has been in communication with Tamara Sienina, who is associated with the Kremenets Museum. She sent us two current photos of the Kremenets Jewish Cemetery (they'll soon be on our website) and she wrote, "... I have been investigating the history of the Jewish people for along time. You may rely upon my help in the future." Tamara has published articles about Kremenets Jewish history in a Journal and in newspapers and she took part in a conference on the Jews of Ukraine. She says, "there will be many publications on the 60th anniversary of the Jewish shooting in Kremenets." Ron will continue this contact and will meet with Tamara when he visits Kremenets in September.
- Determine what records exist other than those microfilmed by the Mormons. Miriam Weiner lists several resources in her book. There may be other records as well.

22nd IAJGS Conference on Jewish Genealogy

As many of you know the 22nd IAJGS Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Toronto, Canada on August 4-9. Ron and I are planning to attend and would like to know if any of you are also planning to attend. If there is enough interest we would like to arrange for a 'birds of a feather' meeting. It will be a wonderful opportunity to meet with members of our CO-OP and others interested in Kremenets and the surrounding towns. We also will have copies of our Yizkor Book and Vital Records translations available for you to review. Please contact me if you are planning on being at the conference. For more information about the conference please see their website at <http://www.jgstoronto2002.ca/> .

And finally, let me note that our website (<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kremenets/>) was recently updated. If you have not visited recently, be sure to have a look when you get the chance. Material is added regularly.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, Sheree Roth

Co-coordinator

Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP