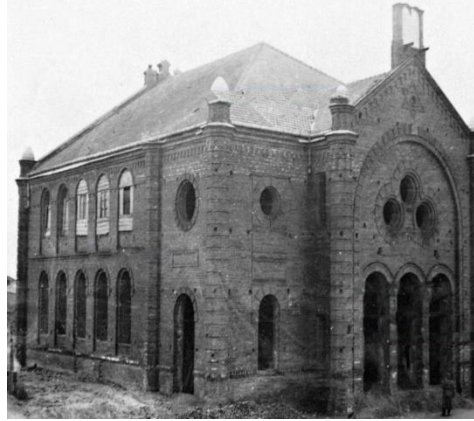




Existing Memorial
Kałuszyn Cemetery



Main Jewish Synagogue of Kałuszyn
Destroyed May 5, 1942



Rare Colored Jewish Headstone (*Matseiva*)
Unearthed in Kałuszyn in Recent Years

Kałuszyn Update

New Monuments Under Construction in Kałuszyn Jewish Cemetery – Joe Gellman

With great satisfaction, I can report to all friends of Jewish Kałuszyn that on April 21, 2021 we began the second stage of our efforts to memorialize the Jews of Kałuszyn. Presently, we are in the final process of construction of three new monuments, designed by artist Ken Goldman, who also designed the existing monument pictured above.

Let me describe the process that we have managed on a long distance basis – due to Covid – with our colleagues and friends in Poland. Over the past year, we conducted two additional rounds of geo-radar testing on the Jewish Cemetery property. The purpose was to identify potential locations for the new monuments. Since all gravestones were removed and mostly destroyed during World War II, and since the exact location of the mass graves on the Cemetery is not known, the concern and fear are of course disturbing the remains of

The Challenge of Memorializing Jewish Kałuszyn – Ed Goldberg

When Joe Gellman and I began the efforts to raise funds and begin the development of the Kałuszyn Cemetery memorial project a number of years ago our goals were more like dreams. Now that they are partially realized, we are pleased that many visitors have been there physically and seen that the Jews of Kałuszyn have been memorialized.

Our progress has included building a striking memorial on the Cemetery property with an explanatory marker next to it. We also did a major “cleaning” of the property, part of a maintenance process that will be ongoing. Maintenance over time will cost more than the development projects we undertake, but more on that in a minute. Presently, we are placing three more monuments on the property. Because of their placement quite close to a main highway, they should attract more visitors to the site. Our original goals also

our ancestors. The geo-radar process facilitates the search for areas in the Cemetery that have no evidence of proximate burials. The results of the second testing showed that an area meters away from the Warsaw highway - literally front and center - appeared to be free of graves.

So, the April 21 process was, first and foremost, to confirm that there was no evidence of burial at the 0 to 40 cm. depth level in the location we hoped to build the monuments. The only way to confirm is to carefully excavate. The excavation was supervised by a young man retained by the Rabbinic Commission. He was present during the excavation and to our relief, no evidence of burials was found. The digging, therefore, continued and the borders of the foundation of each monument were demarcated. Below is a post-excavation picture of the site taken that day.



Since April 21, the construction has progressed and we are near completion.

Now allow me to address the concept of the new monuments. For perspective, scroll up to the top of the page and look again at the existing monument that we unveiled on September 14, 2017. Note the aperture of the existing monument -- what many have called the "key hole." Now scroll down and see the aperture in an early Ken Goldman conceptual sketch of what is now the existing monument.

included putting historic markers on the former sites of the "Old" Jewish Cemetery and the main synagogue, and placing a memorial marker in the town square. We are also currently exploring ways to mark the corners of the property of the Cemetery.

These additional projects are still in our sights but the most complicated endeavor is providing for continuing maintenance of the property. We are fortunate enough to have funds for the three new monuments, but as I said above, maintenance will ultimately cost more than the monuments. So our goal must be a perpetual funding source. That simply means that we wish to raise enough money so that at least the care of the property can be funded until a time when we are able to find a way to pass its care to another group, organization or body. We don't know how or when that might happen but it is reasonable to set as our goal maintenance of the Cemetery for at least 100 years from the date the Cemetery was destroyed. That's another 20 years or so and in terms of money about \$60,000 to \$80,000. Therefore, my appeal to you is to help us fund maintenance and future projects with a goal of \$75,000. That is roughly what we have raised since 2016-17. It is ambitious and it is also important!

Over the past five years many have been generous! It has been impressive to see the effort that you and we have accomplished and I believe through outreach we can reach many more people who will help.

There are literally thousands of descendants around the world from Kałuszyn who are not aware of this project. I've personally talked to hundreds who have shared stories or relationships.



That key hole is in fact the design of each of the three new monuments, creating artistic and conceptual harmony between the 2017 monument and the 2021 monuments.

Construction and painting of the three new monuments should conclude in a matter of days or weeks. Here is a recent picture of the construction of one of the new monuments:



Our hope is that the process of placing content on the new monuments will begin shortly following construction but that is of course a function of funds available.

What is the planned content? Ed and I have a current working plan for each of the three monuments, although the plans are certainly subject to refinement and change.

One of the new monuments will contain the names of the thousands of Kałuszyn holocaust victims. The names are already in digital format for final editing and transfer to a plate that will be overlaid on the structure of one of the new monuments. Ken Goldman and I plan to soon meet with a

Some have said they would never put money into anything in Poland.

To those who share that emotion I have a few responses. First, our ancestors and brethren absolutely deserve to be memorialized and we will not be deterred from doing so.

Second, Joe and I have spent quality time in Kałuszyn. We've walked the streets, visited Jewish and other sites, talked to Polish citizens and town officials and have come to the conclusion that our cause has struck a positive chord within Kałuszyn. It is remarkable that Kałuszyn has an annual event, attended by hundreds, to commemorate the Jewish history and past of the town. In brief, the time is right to establish Jewish memorials in Kałuszyn. On this point I'd like to add that just before the pandemic, in September 2019, Joe and I were invited to large ceremony in Kałuszyn marking the 80th anniversary of the beginning of WWII. In the opening days of September 1939, a major battle took place in Kałuszyn, in which Jewish and non-Jewish Poles fought together. Joe and I stood and were formally recognized as representatives of the Jews of Kałuszyn. Applause was the only sound we heard. We were invited to a small private reception afterwards with Polish civilian and military representatives. We were warmly received.

Third, Joe and I work diligently to ensure that all funding raised is used efficiently, with focus, and in a way that enhances understanding of our mandate.

Last, and more personally, I say that the difficulties our ancestors experienced, including making their way to a different land, perhaps paved the way for the fulfilling life that I, and many of you, have

company that has the capability of etching the names on a custom sized plate. The second new monument will have three minimalistic QR codes so that the youth will be able to scan the codes with smartphones and then hear a streaming audio file of the history of Jewish Kałuszyn in their choice of languages: Hebrew, English or Polish. We hope that the Polish voice will be that of the Mayor of Kałuszyn.

The third monument will memorialize and honor the victims buried in the mass graves on and near the Cemetery property. Each monument will have a small Star of David.

This work is being executed by an Israeli NGO: “The Dr. Avraham Gamzu Kaluszyner Society of Israel (R.A.)” The work is in cooperation with FODZ - the Foundation for Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland, and its Director, Mr. Piotr Puchta. The Israeli NGO has exceptionally low administrative expenses, has no employees, has never paid a single salary, and enjoys volunteer assistance in Israel and in Poland. Even the accountant and bookkeeping firms do ongoing work on a pro bono basis.

In pondering the unrelenting efforts, made possible by so many of you, to perpetuate the memory of Jewish Kałuszyn and the Kałuszyn Jews murdered in the Holocaust, Ed and I are reminded of a passage from *Ethics of the Fathers*: “We are not required to finish all of the work that must be done, but at the same time we are not free to disregard the work that can be done.”

Together, we can get this done.

Yours,

Joe Gellman

today. I believe the least I can do for those ancestors who died in Kałuszyn, either by natural death or by Holocaust genocide, is to honor and remember them.

I hope that you will consider our work and the maintenance of their grave sites as a meaningful way of honoring their memory.

Raising money for a project some of you will only see in pictures or videos is an arduous task. Large donations are great. Small donations are also great – they add up.

Every large or small donation will be appreciated. You can make your donation by credit card or PayPal through “Friends of Jewish Heritage in Poland” and it will be tax deductible in the United States. Simply navigate to our Web page on the Jewish Heritage in Poland site:

<https://jewishheritagepoland.org/Kaluszyn.html>

and click on the “Donate” button. When using this site please be sure to indicate that your donation is for the Kałuszyn project.

If you wish to make what you consider a large gift, or if you want any guidance or information, please feel free to call me at: Country code (011-1) 404-805-6010.

Thank you!

Ed Goldberg