



JEWISH BURIAL GROUNDS OF LATVIA

Latgale Region





Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative

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Set up in 2006, the Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative aims to collate all known data on Europe's Jewish burial grounds and to incorporate this vast source of information in an online database so that it is readily and easily accessible to everyone.

This database now stands at over 11,000 individual records of cemeteries and mass graves and when complete may well contain details on close to 20,000 sites.

As a not-for-profit project founded by the Conference of European Rabbis with the support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), Lo Tishkach relies on the generous support of its sponsors to enable us to continue our work in preserving Jewish heritage in Europe.

From mid 2012 the supervision of the project is by the Union of Jewish Religious Organizations of Ukraine on behalf of the Conference of European Rabbis in order to bring strategic planning and operational control closer to the Northern and Eastern Europe locations where much of the field work is taking place.

The database management, quality control and legal research has relocated to Antwerp for continuing proximity to the concentration of political representation around the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

This report on the Latgale Region represents only a fraction of hundreds of Jewish cemeteries and mass graves in Latvia and many more thousands across Europe.

HOW TO HELP

Your support will enable us to further spread the geographical reach of this project, ensuring that all Europe's Jewish burial grounds are located and documented and that steps are taken to identify and preserve these valuable sites. Donations can be made to: Conference of European Rabbis, Reference: Lo Tishkach, Barclays Bank Plc, Edgware Rd Branch, London WC2, Account Number: 76537088, Sort Code: 20-65-63, IBAN: GB71 BARC 2065 6376 5370 88, SWIFT Number: BARCCGB22.

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JEWISH BURIAL GROUNDS OF LATVIA: LATGALE REGION



FRONT COVER IMAGES (clockwise from top): Karsava Jewish Cemetery, Varaklani Jewish Cemetery, Kraslava Jewish Cemetery, Riebini Jewish Cemetery, Subate Jewish Cemetery, Dagda Jewish Cemetery

Image p. 16: Vilaka Jewish Cemetery

Image p. 37: Zilupe Jewish Cemetery

Original version of Latvia map (p. 10) © Wikimedia Commons under GNU Free Documentation License.

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FOREWORD

The first Jews settled in Latvia in the late 16th century and by the eve of World War II, there were about 93,000 Jews living in the country. Jewish burial grounds existed in almost every town or borough where there was a Jewish community and currently, more than fifty of these sites are known. Most of the burial grounds were rented from the municipalities, as historically, Jews were restricted in owning real estate property.

Nazi troops occupied Latvia in early July of 1941. Currently, about two hundred mass execution sites of Jews have been identified in Latvia. More than 75,000 Latvian Jews, as well as about 24,000 Jews deported from other European countries, were exterminated here.

After the war, in many places where Jews had once lived, no one has left, and there was nobody to look after the Jewish cemeteries. The tombstones often were used by the local non-Jewish population for construction and other needs; a number of cemeteries were raised by the authorities and turned into parks or built over. It was only possible in a few towns for the handful of remaining Jews to try to take care of the cemeteries to the best of their abilities.

The majority of the mass graves remained unmarked for the entire Soviet period, and only in a few places the local authorities erected memorial signs, although these did not specify that those murdered at these sites were Holocaust victims.

Jewish life in Latvia revived from virtual non-existence during the late 1980's, with the liberalisation of the political system of the USSR. Among the goals of re-established Jewish communities, one of the main ones was the preservation of Jewish heritage and memory. Over the last twenty years, extensive research has been undertaken and currently, most of the mass graves are surveyed and marked; the cemeteries have been surveyed, and at some sites, restoration work has been conducted.

The participation of the Latvian Jewish community in the Lo Tishkach project was important for us both in evaluating the current state of Jewish burial places and in making an in-depth research of some of these sites, as well as in enabling the young generation of Latvian Jews to be in touch with their roots and the Jewish history of the region.

We hope that this project will contribute to the development and advance of the Latvian Jewish community, providing a new dimension of understanding the importance of preserving our cultural and spiritual heritage.



Arkady Suharenko
Chairman of the Latvian Council of Jewish Communities

FOREWORD

Do we need to know where Latvian Jews were buried centuries ago? And why should we, as people living in the 21st century, bother about particular sites and cemeteries destroyed long before we born? Aren't there more practical needs and problems worth expending the energies of young people? These are the questions that certainly come to the minds of many who hear about the European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative.

I will not try to answer them. Some things are impossible to explain - and one should hardly try. I am sure that most people will not need these explanations and simply feel deep respect and gratitude to those who made this important project a reality.

Latvian Jews make up an important part of European Jewry. I will not enumerate names of outstanding rabbis and warriors, we remember them. At least part of them, let's be frank.

And, like elsewhere in Europe, Latvian Jews make an important part of the history of my country, Latvia. Many - by far too many - people today tend to forget this. Or at least not to recall.

History, in the sense of the description and explanation of events of the past, depends on political fashion. But history in the sense of collective memory is much less so. Cemeteries and burial grounds embody, an ultimate truth. When they are forgotten, truth is forgotten.

Modern liberal philosophy teaches us that each person is unique and valuable. Meanwhile, each of us is a link in an endless chain from our ancestors to our descendants.

Some day, a moment comes when you realize these ties with the past - and with the future. And you wish to come to the place where your forefathers were buried. You need this to come to terms with your own life. And it is sad if you don't know where to come. This is the fate of many Latvian Jews, particularly those whose family trees were brutally cut down by the Holocaust. Many of these people, including those living now in Jerusalem, New York or Brussels, will now know where to go - thanks to Lo Tishkach and the enthusiasm of young Latvian Jews. I thank Lo Tishkach and its young activists on behalf of these people. And I add my own.



Boriss Cilevičs
Member of Latvian Parliament
Chair of Latvia-Israel Parliamentary Co-operation Group

THE LATGALE REGION PROJECT

This report on the Jewish cemeteries of the Latgale region of Latvia, is part of a number of education and research projects undertaken by the Lo Tishkach Foundation in the spring and summer of 2012.

Set up in 2006, the Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries and Holocaust Mass Graves Initiative aims to collate all known data on Europe's Jewish cemeteries and mass graves, and to incorporate this vast source of information in an online database so that it is readily and easily accessible to everyone. This database now stands at over 11,000 individual records of cemeteries and mass graves and when complete may well contain details on close to 20,000 sites.

Much of the core information for this project was gathered from multiple sources but our records cannot be truly accurate and up-to-date without details of the situation on the ground.

With the support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) for Lo Tishkach educational projects in the former Soviet Union, this material is now available for the Latgale region in Latvia.

During the spring and summer months of 2012, eighteen burial grounds in Latgale were located, visited, surveyed and photographed, creating a unique record of the region's Jewish heritage. Moreover, the surveys took place within the context of broad educational seminars for local youth and students in Latvia, building skills in leadership and volunteerism and raising awareness of Jewish history, heritage and identity.

This publication presents a summary of the data collected to provide a representation of the true state of Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust mass grave sites in Latvia today. Where necessary, the data shown in these reports catalogues and specifies also the vital work needed to preserve these sites. We are aware that this work is only the first stage in preservation and we therefore ask our readers and friends to assist us in finding the necessary resources to protect these sites. More detailed reports on each site, including a wider selection of photographs, can be found through the database on our website at www.lo-tishkach.org.

In the past, concerned individuals and organisations have sought to protect and preserve individual cemeteries based on historical and family links to these sites. Their devotion to the protection of Jewish heritage has been invaluable in the preservation of many Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust mass grave sites across Europe.

But today, with the absence of Jewish communities in most villages and former shtetls and the speed of economic development in much of post-Soviet Central and Eastern Europe, we cannot afford to choose individual sites, ignoring the many other places that may lie within just a short radius.

Remnants and records of Jewish burial sites are disappearing fast. All of these sites must be visited and this vital information catalogued before it is too late.

That is the basis of the Lo Tishkach project; to preserve the historical record in all places where Jews once lived.

This project is one of many which took place in Eastern Europe in 2011-12 and which included all Latvia's regions as well as Lithuania and a number of Ukrainian oblasts carrying on our work already undertaken in the Kyiv, Odesa and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts in Ukraine and the Masovian vovoide in eastern Poland. These survey reports will eventually complete a true and detailed mapping process of all European Jewish burial sites.

We are aware that this work is only the first stage in preservation and therefore ask our readers and friends to assist us in securing the necessary resources to protect these sites.

The sheer number of Jewish cemeteries and mass graves in Latvia and indeed throughout Central and Eastern Europe demonstrates the scale of Jewish life which was wiped out in the Holocaust. It stands as an everlasting testament to the vibrancy of Jewish communities over many centuries in Europe and is a physical reminder that we should not forget.

The Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative is indebted to the many members of the Jewish Community of Latvia and abroad who made this project possible.

We wish to express our special thanks to the project's local coordinator, Gita Umanovska, Executive Director of the Jewish Community of Latvia and to its fieldwork coordinator, Irina Olekshishina. Our gratitude also goes to various experts who provided much of the educational material in the pre-survey seminars and to the intense research work undertaken enabling the surveys to take place; Ilya Lensky, Director of the "Jews in Latvia" museum in Riga and researcher, Eytan Shlomo Stackelberg. We are also very much indebted to the assistance provided by Meyer Meler in providing us with material he has gathered together over many years about the history of Jewish burial grounds in Latvia. Field work and research activity for this project was undertaken by dozens of young people from Latvia's Jewish communities.

The Lo Tishkach Foundation also acknowledges the financial support and political will of its founders and continuing sponsors—the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany and the Conference of European Rabbis, without which our work would not be possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Bindinger".

Elimelech Bindinger
Program Manager
Lo Tishkach Foundation

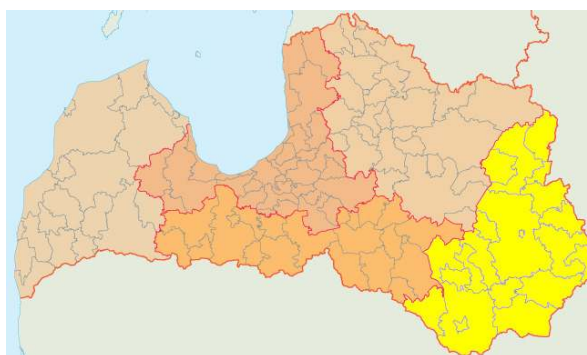
JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN LATGALE

Early History: The Origin of Jews in Latgale

The first Jews came to Latgale in the sixteenth century as they fled from Muscovy and the repression of Ivan the Terrible. The families settled in the present-day Kraslava district. When Latgale was acquired by Poland in 1562, the more favorable Polish laws for Jews took force in Latgale. A larger number of Jews came to Latgale in the 1600's as refugees from Poland. That is a century later than in Kurzeme or Vidzeme. They fled mistreatment in Ukraine and Belorussia during the time of the uprising of Bogdan Hmelnicky. They set up communities in Krustpils, Daugavpils and Kraslava. These Jews spoke Yiddish, which had been widely used in Poland and were religiously Orthodox (much more so than the German Jews) and strictly observed the Jewish traditions.

Jews in Latgale worked as customs collectors on the country's borders and were merchants in cities and traders in the rural areas. Most of them worked in trades and crafts and small commerce although some worked in agriculture. By end of the 1600's Latgale had about 5000 Jews. In 1784 there were 3698 Jews registered as permanent residents.

In comparison to the Jews of Kurzeme those who came to Latgale were less educated people. They spoke a Polish-influenced Hebrew and were strict in their observance of religion in their traditional life. The cultural center of these Jews was in Vilna whose rabbis conducted the religious matters of Latgale's Jews.



MAP OF THE REGIONS OF LATVIA; LOCATION OF THE LATGALE REGION INDICATED IN YELLOW

In Latgale since Jews could not own land they concentrated on crafts, trade and commerce. Some were in agriculture. Jewish occupations included: tanners, tailors, blacksmiths, locksmiths, shoemakers, watchmakers, glaziers, bakers, carpenters, butchers, weavers, fullers, storekeepers, merchants, pharmacists, and doctors. More enterprising Jews ran inns and pubs, produced alcohol and made beer. Some Jews also made their living by distributing goods to remote rural areas as peddlers carrying their merchandise in a box or on their back or with a horse.

There were Jews who rented the estates of the Polish noblemen. These renters tried to run the estates rationally in order to earn good money. Peasants on these estates were more exploited. This caused dissatisfaction and even hatred of these Jews. The same issue occurred for Jewish money-lenders or creditors.

The situation of the local Jews was determined by their legal division into two classes: merchants and middle-class people. The former obtained the right to take part in the elections of city councils. In the late 18th century about one-half of the urban residents in Latgale were Jews. In Daugavpils, 1373 of the city's 2200 residents were Jews.

The decree issued by Catherine II in 1791 that restricted Jews to the Pale of Settlement affected Latgale in a peculiar way. The movement of Jews from rural areas to towns and villages was forcibly stimulated. The life of town-dwellers was particularly difficult.

A significant factor in the history of 19th century Latgale is the development of Jewish economic power where Jews were business owners, traders, moneylenders and even beer hall owners. But there were many Jews of modest means and many Jews who were quite poor.

19th Century

As of 1804 Jews residing in Latgale were restricted solely to cities and villages. The aim was to drive Jews out of farming and agricultural commerce in order to assist their Polish and Russian competitors. The Jews who were forced to live in the towns frequently found themselves in need because it was difficult to find work. They lived in cramped quarters, often fell ill and were at the times the poorest Jews in Latvia. But they endured all of these difficulties, and developed large families. They maintained a strong religious practice and faith in their Jewish national identity, regarding it as a God-given duty.

In 1839 of 4313 inhabitants in Daugavpils city, 2111 were Jews. The city had 7 Jewish prayer houses.

Until 1844, in Latgale, the Jews had their own self-governing institutions, the kagali which collected taxes, maintained order, supervised observance of civil and religious law. In 1848 there were about 11,000 Jews in Latgale with 7,471 Jews in the Daugavpils district.

Latgale, as a part of the Vitebsk guberniya or province, was within the Pale of Settlement which is why it had more Jews than Courland or Livonia where Jews were forbidden from permanent residence. In the latter, they could stay for only a six-month period to conduct trade or commerce. In 1897 there were 47,832 Jews in Latgale. The total population of Jews in the Vitebsk guberniya was 240,000.

In middle of the 19th century there were about 15,000 to 20,000 Jews in Latgale but the numbers increased significantly to 64,256 in 1897. The Jewish population continued to increase until shortly before WWI when the number had grown to about 80,000. In prewar Latgale Jews were in the majority in every major city in Latgale and in many towns while the rural population was mostly Latvian. The war caused a general depopulation of Latvia and many of its inhabitants became refugees. The number of Jews declined significantly during the war.

Independent Latvia

In the first years of independent Latvia, Latgale had the largest concentration of Jews. In 1920 there were about 30,000 Jews in Latgale out of a total Jewish population of 79,368 in Latvia. But the population shift over two decades would result in Riga having the majority of Latvian Jews.

Of the largest towns in Latgale, Daugavpils, Rezekne and Kraslava all were heavily Jewish. In Daugavpils before the war 55% of its inhabitants were Jews. In 1920 11,824 of the total 28,938 were Jews. The city had 30 synagogues. Kraslava, the second largest town in the Daugavpils district, had a majority of Jews.

In 1925 there was still a high percentage of Jews in cities and towns. For example in Daugavpils (Dvinsk or Dunaburg) 40.8% of the inhabitants were Jewish while in Rezekne the figure was 41.5% and in Ludza 40.6%.

By 1935 the number of Jews in Latgale had decreased to 27,974 Jew in Latgale (29.9%).

Cultural Autonomy

The most significant aspect of Jewish life in independent Latvia is that Jews had cultural autonomy. It was the only country in world with such an arrangement. Lithuania had a system with substantial differences.

Z. Michelson has noted: "nowhere in the world was there a more impressive and far-reaching resurrection of the Hebrew language and culture between the two world wars" like in the Baltic States (including Israel). He remarked that "the Jewish community in Latvia did not have conditions of a long-standing cultural network yet it contributed so much to the Hebrew cultural renaissance despite its size. This was largely due to the cultural autonomy accorded to it by independent Latvia". ^(footnote 1)

One of best sources for the Jewish view of conditions for Jews in Latvia is the report (written in 1941 by Latvian Jews in America). It was submitted to the U.S. Department of State by the American Jewish Committee Research Institute. This report states: "The Latvian constitution...established the equality of all citizens before the law without specifying details. When admitted into the League of Nations, Latvia pledged fair treatment of her minorities and lived up to her obligations."... "religious freedom never constituted a problem, either under the democratic rule or under the authoritarian regime established on May 15, 1934." ^(footnote 2)

Revisionism

Latvia is considered by many to be the cradle of Revisionism. The youth group Betar was started there. In 1923 Vladimir Jabotinsky visited Riga, Daugavpils, Rezekne, Ludza, and Liepaja. Jabotinsky was enthusiastic about his visit to the Baltic. In Riga he was greeted at the railway station by a large crowd and he was received enthusiastically by the university student academic society Hasmonaea (which was Zionist). He was impressed with conditions for Jews in Latvia describing it as an "oasis" and he liked the young society that was evolving there. He also wrote later: "when I was in Lithuania and Latvia I saw a young generation that is worth believing in. I will try to organize them for the cause." He returned to Latvia in 1925 as part of his lecture tour of Eastern Europe.

Political Life

Hebrew parties were very effective in municipal elections. In Latgale Jewish candidates had the greatest success. In some cities such as Ludza and Rezekne Jewish figures held as much as 50% of the seats. Jews were the mayors of various towns in Latgale.

Leonard Latkovski, Ph.D

Professor of History and International Studies
Director, Latgale Research Center
Hood College
Frederick, Maryland, USA

Footnotes:

- 1) Z. Michaeli (Z. Michelson), "Jewish Cultural Autonomy and the Jewish School System" in M. Bobe, *Jews in Latvia*, Tel Aviv, 1971. p. 186.
- 2) The American Jewish Committee, Research Institute on Peace and Post-war Problems, "Jews in Latvia" in *Jewish Communities of Nazi-Occupied Europe*, July 1944. US Department of State, Decimal File

USING THE CATALOGUE

The Lo Tishkach Foundation sees as its principal function the preservation of the historical and physical record of Jewish cemeteries and mass graves throughout Europe. The burial grounds featured in this report are therefore graded by Lo Tishkach according to objective physical factors which determine the nature of the threat to their present and future existence. The level and type of assistance needed is also stated.

These factors fall under three distinct categories:

- *Identification:* Jewish cemeteries must either be identifiable as such or, in the event of their destruction, should be identified with a marker. Mass graves should be marked with a memorial mentioning the Jewish victims.
- *Demarcation/protection:* The boundaries of both Jewish cemeteries and mass graves should be demarcated and securely walled or fenced.
- *Maintenance:* All sites should receive at least occasional care.

SERIOUSLY THREATENED: Cemeteries and mass graves that do not meet the necessary criteria in any of the above categories are coded RED. Sites that meet one of the above criteria only and which, according to Lo Tishkach, are seriously threatened, are also coded red.

THREATENED: Cemeteries and mass graves that fulfil two of the above criteria, particularly those that are clearly identifiable but lack either protection or maintenance, are colour-coded AMBER. Sites that have been built upon but which feature an identifying marker are also coded amber, as are mass graves that are identified, protected and maintained, but which feature no details of the Jewish victims.

NOT UNDER THREAT: Identifiable cemeteries and appropriately identified mass graves with demarcated, protected boundaries that receive maintenance (even if, in the view of Lo Tishkach, this is insufficient) are colour-coded GREEN.



CATALOGUE OF JEWISH CEMETERIES

BALVI JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Balwa | Bolwen | Baloffsk | Bolva | Bolwen | Bolwe | Bolwi | БАЛВИ | Боловск | בולווי | בולווי

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5987

ADDRESS: Within town, Balvi municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: Early 20th century
PRESENT USE: Jewish cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: -

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The Jewish cemetery is located within the city boundaries and behind the former meatpacking factory on Brivibas Street, 300 meters to the left of Salmani cemetery.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in a suburban location, on flat land, separate, but near other cemeteries. No visible remains of the cemetery have been preserved. No wall or fence surround the cemetery. The cemetery was abandoned in 1941. Access is open to all.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: It is alleged that around 100 people are buried at this cemetery, although no gravestones remain to be found at the site.

CEMETERY HISTORY: According to the book by M. Meler "Jewish cemeteries in Latvia", in 2006 there were about 20 tombstones visible, half of which were not in their original places. When this survey was made, the cemetery remains were not found. The territory is heavily overgrown with vegetation, but local residents show it as a Jewish cemetery site.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: 1903
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 379 (1935)
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: None

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: Jews from surrounding villages, mainly from Verpuleva, began to settle in Balvi after the introduction of the "Temporary Rules" in 1882, which prohibited Jews to live in the countryside. In 1919, 26 Jews from Balvi served in the Latgale Rifles Regiment of the Latvian army, some of them as volunteers, and took part in the war against the Bolsheviks. One of these soldiers, Jacob Zilberbrand, became an officer. A Jewish house in Balvi was also used as a military hospital.

In 1920, there were 441 Jews in Balvi (54% of the total population); in 1935 - 379 (19%). Most of the Jews were involved in trade and Jews owned about half of the shops and enterprises in the town.

Until July 2, 1941, Soviet authorities prohibited evacuation from Balvi and only gave permission when the German troops were 20 kilometers away from the town. On the same day, the town was occupied. Balvi Jews who failed to leave, were placed in a ghetto in the so-called Gypsy Quarter and on August 9 of the same year, were executed in Tselminsk forest, 6km outside the town. A list of Balvi war victims records the names of 362 people and includes the names of 20 who died at the front as soldiers of the Red Army. Only one Jew from those remaining in Balvi survived, since he was protected by the local priest. In 1946, two Jewish families lived in Balvi. Today, there are no Jews in the town.

Most of the town's Jews (around 19% of the population) perished in the Stahlecker phase of the Holocaust in August 1941.

CURRENT STATE: The local municipality owns the cemetery. Overall condition is derelict. Very serious weather erosion threat and vegetation threat. The cemetery territory is overgrown with forestation. No maintenance or care are in place.

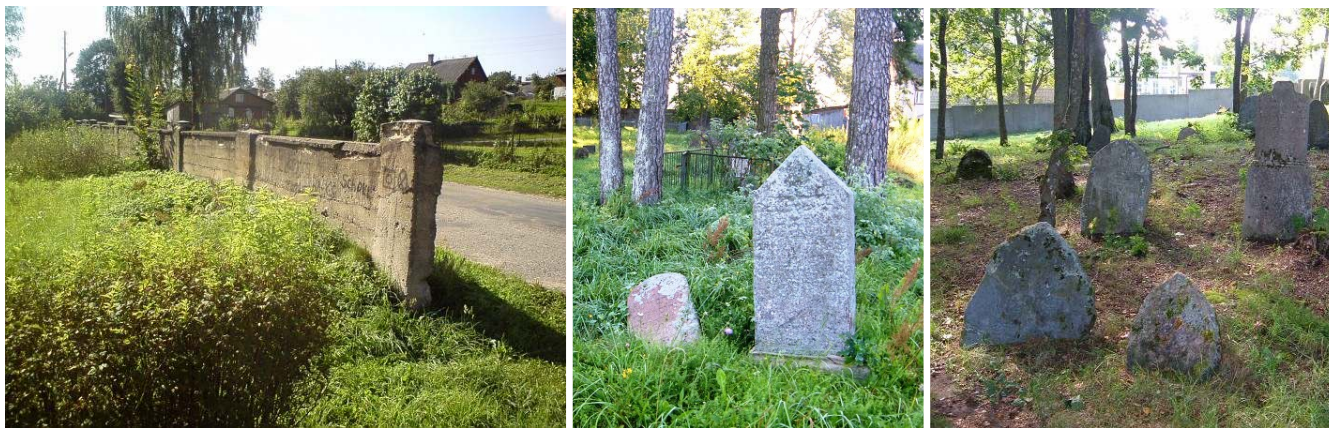
DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: The cemetery should be cleared of trees, followed by regular maintenance and care. This may uncover graves or missing gravestones. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

DAGDA JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Dagden

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5309

ADDRESS: Plavas Street 7, Dagda, Dagda municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED:

Early 19th century

PRESENT USE:

Abandoned cemetery

CURRENT SIZE:

160 x 63 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The Jewish cemetery is located on Plavas Street 7 (Opposite Meza Street). To reach the cemetery follow Pjavi Street, on the bank of the Naruta river. Access is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban setting, on flat land. It is not currently in use. There is a fragment of a stone fence on the street side. A Soviet-time concrete fence separates the cemetery from a factory territory.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: There are about 100 gravestones with Hebrew inscriptions at the site made from marble, granite and other materials. The oldest known gravestone is dated 1860, and the last known Jewish burial took place in 1945.

The cemetery contains a memorial monument in memory of Holocaust victims. A marked mass graves within the cemetery confines is said to contain the remains of 135 people who are believed to have been buried in this mass grave.

The oldest found tombstone bears the inscription: "הבחור שמואל שרגא פייביש ב"ר גדליהו אידלסאן, נפטר בר"ח אב תר"כ."

Translation: "A boy Shmuel-Shraga-Fayvish, son of Gedalyahu Idelson, passed away on Av 1, 5620 (20 July 1860)."

CEMETERY HISTORY: The cemetery was abandoned in 1941. In mid-20th century, a one-storied building was constructed on the unused part of the cemetery. Jewish groups or individuals abroad contributed to the restoration and maintenance of the cemetery in Dagda.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:

Most probably during the 1820's

PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:

589 (1935)

CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:

None

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The first reliable data on the Jewish population in Dagda dates back to 1847 when 77 Jews were recorded as living in the town. In 1897, the Jewish population had already reached 1,026 Jews, making up 68% of the total population. In 1935, 589 Jews (53% of the population) lived in Dagda. Out of the 209 houses in the town, 121 belonged to Jews who also owned almost all the shops and workshops (85 of 89). After Ulman's Putsch in 1934, the economic activity of the Jews diminished, because of the establishment of a regional peasants' cooperative which became a serious competitor to the Jewish merchants. The town also suffered from fires; in the autumn of 1933, 20 Jewish houses and 15 shops burned down.

On July 25, 1941, some of Dagda's Jews were sent to the Daugavpils ghetto and those who remained in the town were shot on August 1, 1941 at the Jewish cemetery.

CURRENT STATE: The local municipality currently owns the cemetery. Overall condition is unacceptable. Some restoration undertaken.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: The cemetery should be adequately fenced and cleared of vegetation, followed by regular maintenance and care. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

DAUGAVPILS JEWISH CEMETERY I (OLD)

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Двинск | Dyneburg | Džvinsk | Дзвінск | דיניסבורג | דינענבורג | דענענבורג

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10744

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Daugavpils, Daugavpils City, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: Late 18th century
PRESENT USE: Abandoned cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: -

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The Jewish cemetery is located at the Lake Gubishche, Daugavpils. Access is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: This old cemetery used to be in a park at the 13th and 15th high schools, near Gubishche Lake; the original cemetery is no longer in existence.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: One hundred marble, granite, and other materials gravestones with Hebrew Inscriptions can be found in the cemetery; the oldest known gravestone is dated 1860, and the last known Jewish burial took place in 1945.

CEMETERY HISTORY: The cemetery, founded at the end of the 18th century, was totally destroyed by the Soviets in the 1970's, but as a result of local self-management and awareness that well-known people were buried there, many graves and a few old tombstones, were relocated from this cemetery to the separate Jewish section of the Municipal cemetery of Daugavpils, where today local Jews are buried.

Included in the re-internment were the graves of some famous rabbis, amongst them Rabbi Yosef Rosen commonly known as the Rogatchover Gaon (1858-1936) and Rabbi Meir Simcha HaKohen, also known as Ohr Sameach (1843-1926).

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: 1750 - 1770
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10,000 - 25,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: Documents dating from 1772 mention 136 Jewish taxpayers in the town. The first reliable data on the number of Jewish population dates back to 1784, when 1,773 Jews were registered. Then known as Dinaburg, the city was then the largest population centre in Latvia. From 1784 onwards, the city had a large and active Jewish population with prominent personalities and from 1785, Jews held elected posts in the local government structure. In 1815, 1,559 Jews lived in the city, making up 57% of the total population. In 1823, Jews expelled from the villages of the Vitebsk gubernia began to arrive in the city with Jewish artisans and merchants attracted by the location of the important Dinaburg castle, which became an important source of income for many Jews. This was to make the city one of the most prominent Jewish centers in the Russian Empire. According to the Russian census of 1897, out of the total population of 69,700, Jews constituted 32,400 (44%).

As part of the Russian Empire, the town was called Dvinsk (1893-1920). It was renamed Daugavpils in 1920 as part of the newly-created independent Latvia. The city was the site of the Battle of Daugavpils from 1919 to 1920. Daugavpils was part of the Soviet Union from 1940-41 and 1944-1991 and occupied from 1941-44.

In 1904, a group of armed members of the Bund movement, led by Mendel Deitch, repelled a pogrom in the Jewish quarter. In October 1905, there was a new pogrom attempt. A self-defence brigade led by Shlomo Pokroy and a group of Jewish butchers chase away pogrom organizers. In 1914, 55,680 Jews lived in the city making up nearly half its population.

CURRENT STATE: Condition of this now unused cemetery is unacceptable. The site was totally liquidated during the Soviet-era.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: The cemetery site should be adequately fenced and identified. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

DAUGAVPILS JEWISH CEMETERY II (COMMUNAL CEMETERY)

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Двинск | Dyneburg | Džvinsk | Дзвінск | דיניסג | דינעבורג | דענענבורג

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10829

ADDRESS: 220 November 18th Street, Daugavpils, Daugavpils City, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: Late 1970's
PRESENT USE: Jewish cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 1,000 meters²

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The Jewish cemetery is located on 220 November 18th Street, Using public transport, the cemetery can be reached alighting at the "Komunalie kapi" tram stop. Access is open at all times.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is in an urban location, on flatland, and is part of a municipal cemetery. The cemetery contains a mass grave of fifteen families, originally buried on the old cemetery. We do not know whether reburial took place, or only the tombstone was transferred. No wall or gate surround the site. The Jewish section is located in the middle of the municipal Christian cemetery.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: 400 people are said to be buried at this cemetery, 300 marble, granite, and other materials gravestones with Hebrew inscriptions remain at the site. The oldest known gravestone is dated 1913. Within the cemetery confines are marked mass graves and an ohel. The cemetery is still in use. Burials at this site are indexed and can be viewed at the administration of the municipal cemetery. The cemetery is maintained by Daugavpils municipal authorities and benefits from a regular caretaker.

Translation of the Hebrew inscription on the oldest found tombstone: "Hanoh ben Binyamin Natanzon, passed away on Kislev 4, 5674 (December 3, 1913) at the age of 34".

CEMETERY HISTORY: The Old cemetery was desecrated by the Nazis and later liquidated during the Soviet era. The territory was used by the Soviets as a sports field. Many graves and tombstones from the old Jewish cemetery were transferred to this site after the Old Jewish cemetery was destroyed in the late 1970's.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: 1750 - 1770
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10,000 - 25,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: In 1914-1918 as the front line moved close to the city, the majority of Jews left. In December 1918, units of the Red Army took the town and initiated a reign of there. Seventeen Jews were executed and Rabbi Meir Simcha Hakohen, a leading Torah scholars of his generation, who had refused to leave the community, was arrested and barely avoided execution. In the mid-1920's, activists of the Latvian National Club attempted to organize anti-Jewish riots but were repelled by Jewish butchers and balagulas (wagon drivers). There were 174 Jews among those deported by Stalin's regime on June 14, 1941. On June 26, 1941 Daugavpils was occupied by the German army. The first victims of the Holocaust in the city were 1,150 Jews executed at the beginning of July. On July 15, 1941, orders were issued to establish a ghetto in the castle. On October 28, 1943 survivors from Daugavpils were sent to Riga.

NOTABLE NATIVES OF THE LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY: Rabbi Meir Simcha HaKohen of Dvinsk (1843-1926), author of Ohr Somayach and Meshech Chochma; the Rogatchover Gaon, Yosef Rosen (1858-1936), author of Tzafnath Paneach, a rabbi in the city and a prominent Talmudic scholars in the early 20th century, known for his photographic memory and razor-sharp mind.; Solomon Mikhoels (1890-1948) - actor and director; Mark Rothko (1903-1970) - artist; Oscar Strok (1893-1975) - composer; Paul Mintz (1868-1941) - lawyer and statesman and Vladimir Mintz (1872-1942) - surgeon.

CURRENT STATE: The local municipality currently owns the Jewish cemetery site. Overall condition of the site is good.

GRIVA JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Двинск | Dyneburg | Džvinsk | Дзвінск | דיניסג | דינעבורג | דענענבורג

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10749

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Daugavpils, Daugavpils Municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: Late 18th century
PRESENT USE: Jewish cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 1,000 meters²

DETAILS OF ACCESS: To reach the cemetery, go from Daugavpils across the railway bridge on Daugava river. The cemetery site is on the right of the road A13, within Jeruzaleme farm yard. Access is open at all times.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated agricultural/fields setting on flat land. No remains of the cemetery are visible. The cemetery was abandoned in 1941. No road or entrance sign mark the site and no wall or gate surround the site.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: No gravestones remain to be found at the site.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: 1750 - 1770
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10,000 - 25,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The settlement was called Jerusalem (Jeruzaleme), while it was founded in 18th century by Jewish traders and craftsmen. In the early 19th century, the residents were resettled to Griva (a town located 3 km away), but the cemetery remained in Jeruzaleme. The local residents recall that in 1941 German soldiers broke the tombstones and used them for road construction. Currently no remains of the cemetery are visible, they are probably overgrown with trees.

In 1914-1918 as the front line moved close to the city, the majority of Jews left. In December 1918, units of the Red Army took the town and initiated a reign of there. Seventeen Jews were executed and Rabbi Meir Simcha Hakohen, a leading Torah scholars of his generation, who had refused to leave the community, was arrested and barely avoided execution. In the mid-1920's, activists of the Latvian National Club attempted to organize anti-Jewish riots but were repelled by Jewish butchers and balagulas (wagon drivers). There were 174 Jews among those deported by Stalin's regime on June 14, 1941. On June 26, 1941 Daugavpils was occupied by the German army. The first victims of the Holocaust in the city were 1,150 Jews executed at the beginning of July. On July 15, 1941, orders were issued to establish a ghetto in the castle. On October 28, 1943 survivors from Daugavpils were sent to Riga.

NOTABLE NATIVES OF THE LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY: Rabbi Meir Simcha HaKohen of Dvinsk (1843-1926), author of Ohr Somayach and Meshech Chochma; the Rogatchover Gaon, Yosef Rosen (1858-1936), author of Tzafnath Paneach, a rabbi in the city and a prominent Talmudic scholars in the early 20th century, known for his photographic memory and razor-sharp mind.; Solomon Mikhoels (1890-1948) - actor and director; Mark Rothko (1903-1970) - artist; Oscar Strok (1893-1975) - composer; Paul Mintz (1868-1941) - lawyer and statesman and Vladimir Mintz (1872-1942) - surgeon.

CURRENT STATE: A private individual currently owns the Jewish cemetery site. Overall condition of the site is derelict. The exact location of the site has not been defined. No maintenance or care are in place.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: A more thorough examination of the territory should be carried out in order to accurately demarcate the cemetery. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

KARSAVA JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Karsau | Korsowka | Корсовка | Korsovka | קארסאווקע | קארסאווקע

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5989

ADDRESS: 220 November 18th Street, Karsava, Karsava municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: 1820
PRESENT USE: Unprotected Jewish cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 132 x 82 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: To reach the cemetery, go along Vienibas Street from downtown, pass the railway crossing, turn to avenue P48 and go towards Salnava (there is a road sign) for several hundred meters. The cemetery will be on your left, within a field. Access is open at all times.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated suburban location, on flat land. No remains of the cemetery are visible. No road or entrance sign mark the site. A gate that does not lock is at the entrance of the site.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: 3297 people are alleged to be buried at this site, however, only 100 to 500 marble and granite gravestones are in their original locations. The oldest known gravestone is dated 1890. The last known Jewish burial was in 2005. More than one ohel can be found within the cemetery confines.

Inscription on the oldest found tombstone: "איש תם וישר ר' זאב ב"ר יהיאל-מיכאל אלכסנדראוויץ נפ' ... ימים לח' שבט שנת תר"ן". Translation: "An honest and righteous man, rabbi Zev, son of rabbi Yechiel Michel Alexandrovich. Passed away on ... Shevat, 5650 (Jan / Feb 1890)". The post-war burials register is at the office of the Karsava municipality.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: 1820
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: -

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The Jewish community was established in what was then known as Korsovka by merchants coming from surrounding shtetls. By the late 1830's, the number of Jews in the town reached 700. The first rabbi of the town was Wolf Tsiyuni, a scion of the famous Lucin dynasty. In 1843, Shadursky, the Polish landlord of this area, expelled all the Jews except for four merchants and their families. Complaints sent to the governor of Vitebsk did not help although the governor did prevent Shadurski's attempt to plough over the Jewish cemetery. Jews again settled in Korsovka twenty years later. The "Temporary Rules" of 1882 restricted the growth of the community. These restrictions were lifted in 1903. In 1897, 609 Jews from Korsovka made up 47% of the total population. By 1914, this number had increased to 2,400 (60%). During the war with the Bolsheviks in 1919, sporadic groups of Latvian peasants looted Jewish shops and homes and two Jews were killed. During the first Latvian Republic, Jews always represented a majority on the local administration with eight out of fifteen members in the City Duma. In 1924, activists from the Latvian National Club tried to organize anti-Jewish riots in Karsava, but were beaten up by Jews and had to flee the town. Other anti-semitic acts occurred in the 1930's when drunk soldiers of the Latvian army attacked local Jews. They were arrested before there were any serious results.

In the early days of WWII, half of the Jewish population left Karsava. Two hundred Jews were also mobilized in the Latvian Division of the Red Army. The town's rabbi, Aryeh-Dov Olshvang died in the evacuation. The Karsava ghetto was established on several streets around Sports Street. On August 23, 1941, the ghetto's inhabitants were shot in Naudas Kalns, 3km outside the town. Only four Jews survived, three of them rescued by Alfred Bankovic.

After 1944, 10-20 Jewish families settled in Karsava. A minyan gathered in one of the houses and a shochet came from Ludza. The last burial in the Jewish cemetery, which was restored after the war, was in 1980.

CURRENT STATE: The local municipality owns the Jewish cemetery site. Overall condition of the site is acceptable. Some restoration undertaken. Several ohels are partly ruined. The grass is mown irregularly and not everywhere.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: The cemetery site should be adequately fenced and protected. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

KRASLAVA JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Krāslava | Kraslawe | Kreslau | Kreslavka

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5314

ADDRESS: Liela Str., 45, Kraslava, Kraslava municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED:

18th century

PRESENT USE:

Jewish cemetery

CURRENT SIZE:

210 x 123 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The cemetery is situated at the end of Liela and Spidolas Str., on the bank of the Daugava river. Access to the site can be arranged with the cemetery keeper.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban location, on flat land. The cemetery is surrounded by a stone wall - partly destroyed, brick poles, as well as metallic rods. The gate is locked. Several local Jews have the key, and so do officials at the municipality.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: 600 marble and granite gravestones can be found at the site, only few of which are legible. The oldest known gravestone is from the mid-19th century. The last known Jewish burial was in 2008. An ohel can be found within the cemetery confines. The post-war burials register can be found at the office of the city council. The newer part of the cemetery is well-maintained. Local municipal authorities clear the cemetery of garbage from time to time. The cemetery contains a monument to Kraslava Jews, who were killed in battles of WWII, and a monument to Holocaust victims.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:

1764

PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:

1,000 - 5,000

CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:

10 - 1,000

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The community was founded by few dozen Jewish families from Vilnius in 1764. Until the end of the 18th century, all the Jews in Latgale region were registered in the Kraslava community. In 1897, Jews made up 51% of the total number of 4,051 persons in Kraslava. In the 1935 census, there were 1,444 Jews (34% of the total).

During the Russian revolution of 1905 in Russia two members of a Russian Jewish revolutionary organization killed the head of the police in Kraslava. One of these revolutionaries escaped across the border, another - Eliyahu Elchik, was sentenced to death, but later commuted to life imprisonment. He was released in 1917.

One of first leaders of the Kraslava town council was Moisei Rabinovich, who designed the Kraslava coat-of-arms. In the 1920's eight of the twenty deputies on the city council were Jews who worked together as one faction, despite belonging to different political parties. In 1933, a few local farmers tried to organize an attack on the Jews on a market day but they were thwarted by Jewish self-defence activists, thereby preventing a pogrom. (Another version of this story says that it was avoided because of cavalry troops sent to Kraslava by the government). In 1934, the town's newly-elected mayor started to express anti-Semitic views and to oppress the local Jews.

With beginning of WWII, around 200 Jews managed to escape to Russia, 89 of which joined the Red Army. Fifty-two of these Jews died at the front. When the army occupied Kraslava in July 1941, some of the local Jews were executed in the town, others were transported to the ghetto in Daugavpils and mostly killed there. After WWII, around 40 Jewish families returned to Kraslava. The synagogue was opened and the cemetery operated. In the course of time, most of these Jews moved to Riga or emigrated and the census of 2001 shows only 21 Jews still living in the town though there is no organised community.

CURRENT STATE: The local municipality owns the site. Overall condition of the site is acceptable. Some restoration work has been undertaken. Vegetation is a serious threat.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: The territory of older burials needs to be cleared of vegetation. The cemetery site should be adequately fenced and protected. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

LIVANI JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Lievenhof | Livengof

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5991

ADDRESS: Mezha Street, Livani, Livani municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED:

Mid 19th century

PRESENT USE:

Abandoned cemetery

CURRENT SIZE:

177 x 73 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The cemetery is situated within the town, on Mezha Street, to the right of the road A6, Jekabpils-Daugavpils. Access to the site is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an urban location, on a hillside. A historic stone wall and a wooden fence surround the site. The Jewish cemetery is separated from a municipal cemetery by a gauze fence. The entrance gate is locked. A framed paper affixed to the gate bears the following text: "Ebreju kapi (Jewish cemetery) Atjaunojuši brīvpriekšinieki no Latvijas, Vācijas, Izraēlas un Nīderlandes. (Restored by volunteers from Latvia, Germany and the Netherlands)".

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: About one hundred granite and sandstone gravestones, with inscriptions in Hebrew, can be found at the site. Only few of the inscriptions on the gravestones are legible. The oldest known gravestone is dated 1902. The last known Jewish burial took place in 1940. The cemetery was abandoned in 1941. In summer 2007, a group of students from Latvia, Germany and Netherlands led by pastor Klaus-Peter Rex restored the cemetery.

Translation of the inscription on the oldest found tombstone: "Here lies a righteous man Aharon Feibush, son of Reb Yitzchak who died in the year 5662, 26 Tevet [5 January 1902]. May his soul be bound in the bond of life".

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: A part of the territory was allocated for construction of a residential building, which is currently inhabited. Some burials were destroyed during construction.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:

Early 19th century

PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:

10 - 1,000

CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:

-

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The first Jews settling in Livani came from Lithuania. With the beginning of WWI, on November 9, 1915, and before the approach of German troops, the commander of the Russian Fifth Army, ordered the immediate evacuation of Livani's Jews. After the war, only two-thirds of the Jews returned to the town.

In 1935, out of 3,527 residents, 28% were Jews. They owned almost half of the town's small businesses. By the end of the 1930's, economic situation of the Jewish dealers had deteriorated due to government promotion of the establishment of peasant cooperatives.

At the outbreak of WWII, 50-60 people were able to evacuate to Russia. Others reached Varaklani, but moved back on the advice of district rabbi, Yitzhak Gavartin. The killing of Jews took place in several stages and in different places, probably supported by local members of the Perkonkrusts group. The final shootings took place on September 3-4, 1941. After the war seven Jews returned to Livani, others settled in Riga.

NOTABLE NATIVES OF THE LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY: Among the notable natives of this community was Rabbi Natan Barkan (1923-2003) - Chief Rabbi of Latvia 1989-2003.

CURRENT STATE: The local municipality owns the site. Overall condition of the site is unacceptable. Livani municipality takes some care of the cemetery. Vegetation at the cemetery has been cleared.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: In light of the cemetery site already violated by urbanization, further nearby construction must be precluded. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

LUDZA JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Lucyn | Ludsen | Lutsi | Lytsin

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5922

ADDRESS: J.Sojkna Str., 22, Ludza, Ludza municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: First half of the 18th century
PRESENT USE: Jewish cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 8,910 meters²

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated by Mazais Ludzas lake. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban location, on flat land. Adjacent territory is used for agricultural needs and as residential area.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: Four hundred granite and sandstone gravestones can be found at the site, most of which bear legible inscriptions. The oldest known gravestone is from the mid-19th century. The last known Jewish burial was in 2010. The post-war burials register can be found at the office of the city council. Some restoration has been performed at the cemetery. Besides the Ludza municipality, the local Jewish community takes care of the cemetery. At the older part of the cemetery, vegetation needs to be cleared.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: 18th century
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 1,000 - 5,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: In the first half of the 19th century, the Ludza community grew rapidly because Jews were forced to leave areas of the local countryside. In 1835, several families moved to the agricultural colonies of Kherson and Ekaterinoslav provinces. Dozens of other families went to the same areas in 1846-1848. According to some sources, in 1768, a tailor, Moshe Ben David, was burnt at the stake for refusing to be baptized after getting into a religious dispute with a farmer who had accused him of defaming Christianity. In 1883, the Jewish community was threatened when a Christian woman who had previously served in a Jewish family named Lotsove, disappeared. Later, her body was found in a pond. The local Catholic clergy claimed that she had been killed by the owners in order to use her for matzah. In 1938, Ludza was heavily damaged by fire, which burned 212 homes and 117 shops and stores. Most of the burned properties belonged to Jews. 140 families lost everything. Other Jewish communities and the Latvian government helped them. In 1935, there were 1,518 Jews living in Ludza, or 24% of the total population.

On June 14, 1941, Soviet authorities deported 13 Jewish families from Ludza to Siberia. In the early days of the war, a local former police officer, Virze, advised his fellow Jews to go to Rabbi Don Ihe and persuade him to leave Ludza and to call on the community to leave. However, the rabbi refused to leave the city. A ghetto was set up in a small area between the streets of Latgale, Baznicas and Ventspils to the Kr. Barona Street. The majority of Jews were shot on August 17, 1941 at Lake Cirma some 7 km from the town. The next mass shootings took place on August 27. The remaining Jews were killed on May 2, 1942 in a forest not far from the town. The community was re-established in 1944-1945. There were around 100 Jews in town and the synagogue was re-opened. A rabbi served the community also acting as shochet. After his departure, Nathaniel Shmukler took over these responsibilities. The Jewish religious community of Ludza was re-constituted in 1991 and became a member of the Council of the Jewish Communities of Latvia.

Currently, the synagogue in Ludza is abandoned due to lack of a minyan, although it is in the possession of a community consisting mostly of elderly people. Today only fifteen elderly Jews still live in Ludza.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is unacceptable. Although some restoration work has been undertaken, there is a moderate threat of vegetation overgrowth.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: At the older part of the cemetery vegetation needs to be cleared. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

PREILI JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Preil | Preiliai | Prely

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5525

ADDRESS: Cesu Str., Preili, Preili municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: 1820
PRESENT USE: Abandoned cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 90 x 71 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The cemetery site is situated in the south-western outskirts of the city. The cemetery is open to all. There is no entrance sign marking the cemetery, however, there is a sign marking a Holocaust victims memorial which is located next to the cemetery. The inscription reads: "Holokausta upuru piemineklis, 0,1" (Translation: Monument to Holocaust victims, 100 meters).

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban location, on flat land. A stone wall has been preserved on one side of the cemetery. Adjacent territory is used for agricultural needs and as residential area.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: Three hundred granite and marble gravestones can be found at the site, most of which have inscriptions in Hebrew. The oldest known gravestone dates back to 1861. The last known Jewish burial was in 1946.

Inscription on the oldest found tombstone: "האשה הצ' מרים בת ר' יצחק נפט' ... שנת תרכ"ב"

Translation: "A modest woman, Miryam bat R' Yitzhak, passed away on ... 5622 (1861/1862)".

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: Early 19th century
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: Less than 10

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The first Jews settling in Preili were the timber trader Skutel and the blacksmith Cemel. In the mid-19th century, the community was one of the largest in Latgale region. In 1847, there were 284 Jews in the town and by 1897, this number had reached 1,375.

In 1902, the disappearance of a Christian boy led to the threat of a pogrom, but this was prevented by the Daugavpils district authorities following a request by Rabbi Meir David Grodsky.

In 1920, Red Army soldiers, retreating after a short occupation, looted all the property of the town's inhabitants. Assistance was made available to the Jewish community from the "Joint".

In 1935, the Jewish population was 847 persons, being 51% of the total population. There was a six-grade Jewish school and four synagogues in the town.

In 1940, following the Soviet occupation, Jews held senior positions on the town council with Reuven Arsh serving as mayor with Michael Kagan as his deputy. During the Nazi occupation, two Jews - Skutelsky and Schechtner - tried to burn the Gestapo building, but they were arrested and executed. On July 28 and August 8, 1941, about eight hundred local and refugee Jews were executed.

A few dozen Jewish families settled in Preili again after 1944, though the community was not officially re-formed.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is derelict. The land belongs to the local municipality. The cemetery is not maintained at all and is seriously threatened with vegetation overgrowth.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: A lot of restoration work is required at the cemetery, most pressing is the need to clear the excessive trees and bushes. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

REZEKNE JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Rāisaku | Rezica | Rositten | Rzeżyca | Резекне

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5526

ADDRESS: A. Upisa Str., Rezekne, Rezekne municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED:

1786

PRESENT USE:

Jewish cemetery

CURRENT SIZE:

74 x 451 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated on the outskirts of the town, along A. Upisa Street. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban location, on a hillside. A partly preserved stone fence surrounds the older part of the cemetery. On the opposite side of the cemetery, at the newer section, which is still used for burials, there is a gauze fence and gate.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: Six hundred granite and sandstone gravestones can be found at the site, most of which bear inscriptions in Hebrew and German. The oldest known gravestone is from the year 1866. The burials register can be found at the office of the city council. Some restoration has been carried out by the Rezekne municipality and the Rezekne Jewish community. In the mid 2000's, the local Jewish community demolished the semi-ruined brick arch at the older part of the cemetery and restored the metal gate. On top of the gate, the original inscription in Hebrew was restored. Translation of the inscription: "Eternal memory! With the generosity of rabbi Yakov-Leib and his wife Feiga Gruns. Erected on Shvat 2, 5693" (29 January 1933)."

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Compared to other cemeteries in Latvia, the territory of Rezekne cemetery is huge, while the Jewish population of town numbers a mere forty people, who cannot take care of the whole burial site.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:

Late 18th century

PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:

1,000 - 5,000

CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:

10 - 1,000

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The first mention of Jews in Rezekne was in 1712 and a community was founded in the last quarter of the 18th century. In 1784, mention is first made of the existence of a Jewish house of worship and by 1864, there were six synagogues and prayer houses in the city. In 1851, Jews were allowed to settle in the new city, but not near the Orthodox church on the main street. In 1815, there were 1,072 Jews (90% of the total population) in Rezekne; in 1897 - 6,478 Jews (54%), and by 1914 - over 11,000, around half of the city's inhabitants. In the early 20th century, the city had 270 Jewish businesses and shops, compared with 93 owned by non-Jews.

In 1918, during the short occupation and rule of the Soviets, the local commissar (also a Jew) ordered the closure of all of the synagogues. This order was cancelled after Rabbi Lubotzky persuaded the commissar to change his mind. Before the Bolsheviks left the city in February 1918, they looted many houses with the help of some local farmers and criminals. A delegation of significant Jewish leaders subsequently asked the incoming German army to restore order in the town and this was soon achieved. In January 1920, following the final expulsion of the Red Army and before the Latvian state authority took over control of the city, looting continued. Jewish butchers and 'balagoles' (wagon drivers) organized resistance and drove away looters. In 1922, there were 13 Jewish members of the city council out of a total of 30.

Rezekne was occupied by the Nazis on July 3, 1941. The first mass shootings of Jews occurred already the next day at the Jewish cemetery in the village of Ancupani. Those Jews able to work were separated and transported to the Daugavpils ghetto and later to the Kaiservald labour camp in Riga. Only two adults and a few children from Rezekne survived. After the war, some Jews returned to Rezekne and by the 1950's, the Jewish population had reached a few hundred people.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is unacceptable. Although some restoration work has been undertaken, vegetation overgrowth poses a serious threat.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Clearing of vegetation and restoration of the stone fence at the older part of the cemetery. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

RIEBINI JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Ribiniski

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10885

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Riebini, Riebini municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: 1830's
PRESENT USE: Abandoned cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 40 x 40 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: To reach the cemetery site, at the end of Darzu Street turn right into the forest. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated suburban location, on flat land. Adjacent territory is overgrown with forest. The cemetery is not fenced, but there are remains of stone walls and a gate.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: Forty five granite and sandstone gravestones can be found at the site, most of which bear legible inscriptions in Hebrew. The oldest known gravestone is dated 1880, whilst the most recent Jewish burial took place in 1940. Some maintenance has been carried out at the cemetery. There is no garbage and the grass has been mown.

Translation of the inscription on the oldest found tombstone: "Aba Yehuda b. (son of) Shrago, died 1880".

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: Early 19th century
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: -

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The Jewish community of Riebini was founded in the first half of the 19th century on land belonging to a local landlord. Rabbi Zeev Volf Zioni was appointed the community's first rabbi in 1843. In 1897, there were 533 Jews in Riebini, making up 91% of the town's total population.

In the late 19th century, many Jews were unable to pay off their debts to the local landlord, the famous Polish engineer and builder of the Trans-Siberian railway, Stanislav Karbedza, so they were forced to work for him.

In the 1920's the community was quite poor, there was no mutual aid network and even the Mikveh was only repaired with the assistance of the Joint. At this time, local Jews owned 66 out of the 88 houses in the town. The local Jewish school had five grades, to gain minimum education necessary according to Latvian law. Students who wished to continue their education went to Preili. By 1935, the number of Jews in Riebini had decreased to 317, representing 68% of the town's total population.

At the beginning of WWII, a few dozen Jews managed to escape to Russia and more than twenty joined the Red Army. Following the Nazi occupation, a few Jews, notably leftist activists, were arrested with the collaboration of the local Aizsargi organization and executed in Preili prison. Some families were killed in revenge for old conflicts and debts. The remaining Jews were gathered in the synagogue and executed in the nearby forest of Aizupe (4km from Riebini) between August 23-26, 1941. The names of the 274 victims have been recorded.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is acceptable. The land belongs to the local municipality. There are no apparent threats to the cemetery.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: General maintenance work should be carried out more frequently. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

SUBATE JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Subbath

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5977

ADDRESS: Jelgavas Str., Subate, Ilukste municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: 1820's
PRESENT USE: Abandoned cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 6,900 meters²

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated at the end of Jelgavas Str., across the bridge on Dzirnavupite river. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in a suburban location, on a hillside. Adjacent territory is overgrown with forest. The cemetery is not fenced, but there are several stone poles.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: About one hundred granite and dolomite gravestones can be found at the site, few of which have legible inscriptions in Hebrew. The oldest known gravestone is from mid-19th century, while the most recent Jewish burial took place in 1939. Some maintenance work has been carried out at the cemetery; the grass is mown, and the site is clean.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Besides the graves from the pre-1941 Jewish community of Subate, within this cemetery are also buried people from a number of neighbouring Jewish settlements (shtetls). Next to the cemetery there is a mass grave of Holocaust victims. The land belongs to the local municipality.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: Early 19th century
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: -

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: In 1897, there were 978 Jews in Subate, who constituted almost half of the total population. With the beginning of WWI, the Jews of Subate were deported to the inner regions of Russia. After the war, about two thirds of the community returned to the town. In 1920, 533 Jews lived in Subate, or 38% of the total population, but by 1935, this number had decreased to 387 (26%).

In the 1920's some anti-Semites from a Latvian youth organization (name unknown) tried to disturb Jews during their festivities. The police intervened and restored order.

In 1928, Jews founded the bank "Halvan Vehisahon" (Loans and savings) along with a Jewish craftsmens' society and a pawnshop.

Those Jews who remained in Subate when the Nazis invaded in 1941 were executed in the summer or autumn of that year.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is acceptable, however, vegetation overgrowth in the cemetery is a serious seasonal problem, disturbing access and graves.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Regular clearing of vegetation should be implemented. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

VARAKLANI JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Warkelen

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5974

ADDRESS: Kapsetas Street, 10a, Varaklani, Varaklani municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED:

Late 18th century

PRESENT USE:

Abandoned cemetery

CURRENT SIZE:

8,600 meters²

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated within the town, at Kapsetas Str., number 10a. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban location, on flat land. No road sign marks the site. There is a red brick arch at the entrance of the cemetery. The gate itself is made of wood, and so is part of the fence. On other sides there are different remains of the fence and walls.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: About two hundred and fifty granite and sandstone gravestones can be found at the site, most of which bear legible Hebrew inscriptions. The oldest known gravestone is from the year 1829, while the most recent Jewish burial took place in 1988. Some restoration work has been carried out; stones have been collected and vegetation cleared. The cemetery contains a monument to 540 Holocaust victims killed in 1941 and later reburied here.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The Hevra Kadisha (Jewish burial) society was formed early-19th century.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:

Late 18th century

PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:

10 - 1,000

CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:

-

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: A Jewish community started to form in Varaklani after 1772. In 1897, there were 1,375 Jews in the town, making up 75% of the total population. After the Bolsheviks were driven off in 1920, some of the locals accused the Jews of collaboration with them and a pogrom broke out in which 4 Jews were killed and their shops were looted. Soon, local Baptists tried to convert the local Jews though they only succeeded with one lonely and disabled person. Later, Rabbi Grodsky was invited by the local pastor to take part in a religious dispute. He agreed, on the sole condition that the New Testament would not be disputed and the location for the debate would not be religious, but neutral. The pastor refused to accept these conditions and the dispute was cancelled. In 1925, five students from Riga took part in anti-Semitic activities in the town. Initially, the students requested that the police remove shop signs from Jewish shops, on the grounds that they were written in incorrect Latvian. The next day the students took away some shop signs and started to abuse elderly Jews on the streets and to offend young girls swimming in the river. When the police failed to respond to Jewish complaints, they organized resistance. The students in turn called the police and 22 Jews were arrested. The case caused an international outcry and two deputies of the Latvian parliament (Dubin and Meisel) intervened and nine Jews were released, while another 13 faced trial in May 1926 in Daugavpils.

During the years of the first independent Republic of Latvia, the number of Jews in Varaklani decreased. In 1935, Jews numbered 952 or 58% of the total in the town (compared with 1,402, 74% in 1920). Nevertheless, Varaklani was still the most Jewish town in Latvia.

Following the Nazi occupation, a few hundred Jews managed to escape the town but the remaining Jews were executed on August 4, 1941. During the 1960's, about 20 Jewish families lived in Varaklani but by 2006, there was just one Jew left in the town.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is acceptable. The site is owned by the local municipality. Jews native to Varaklani pay to have the cemetery maintained.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Further restoration works to the fence around the cemetery is recommended. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

VILAKA JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Vilyaka | Viliaki | Marienhausen | Виляка

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10879

ADDRESS: Yaunatnes Street, 16, Vilaka, Vilaka municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED:

Late 18th century

PRESENT USE:

Abandoned cemetery

CURRENT SIZE:

36 x 24 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated within the town, at Yaunatnes Street, 16. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban location, on flat land. There are two stone poles (remains of the original fence) with Stars of David on them.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: Only one gravestone remains to be seen at the site. The cemetery was abandoned in 1941. In 1993, local municipal authorities established a memorial sign with a Hebrew inscription, on the site of the cemetery.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:

Late 18th century

PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:

10 - 1,000

CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:

-

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The Jews first began to settle in Vilaka after the region was annexed to Russia in 1772. The local Polish landowner became interested in expanding this tiny village and he tried to attract Jews to live around his estate. During the first 70 years of the nineteenth century, around 23 Jewish families settled in the area. At the same time, an inflammatory article against the Jews was circulated in the Russian anti-Semitic journal, "Golos," in which the Jewish merchants living in the town were accused of tax evasion. When the "Temporary Regulations," which prohibited Jews from settling in village communities, were introduced in 1882, the authorities removed Vilaka's status as a town, and any additional Jews were forbidden to live there. However, in 1892 its status as a town was restored, and many Jewish families from the surrounding area immediately moved in. By 1903, the Jewish community numbered 102 families, or 540 individuals. For a long time the Jews formed the majority of the town's population. Some of them came from the nearby village of Kalishes, where they had worked the land.

The community's first rabbi was Rabbi Benzion Don Yichiye of Lutzin (Lodz), who was appointed to the rabbinate in 1900. Before him, Rabbi Moshe Dovid Golnedsky served as the local scholar. He was a great Torah scholar who ruled on questions of kashrus and other issues. In the community's only shul there was a separate prayer room (kloiz), which was used by a small number of Chassidim. During the decade immediately preceding the First World War, before a Jewish school was established in the town, several affluent members of the Reform movement would hire private tutors from outside the area to teach their children modern Hebrew and general subjects. However most of the community's children attended two local chedolim.

During the years of the First World War, only a few families left Vilaka. At the same time, the community absorbed a number of Jewish refugee families who had fled from Western Latvia. During the period of Soviet rule (1940-1941), most of Vilaka's Jews remained there. After war broke out between the former Soviet Union and Germany in June 1941, they decided to stay where they were. A short while later, when the Germans came, the Jews were expelled from their homes and herded into a ghetto, located in a poor part of town. At the beginning of August 1941, a group of German security officers arrived in the town. After separating the Jewish men from the women and children, the Germans first murdered the men and then the women and children, who were killed in a separate pit about 1,5 km from the town.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is derelict. Some restoration work has been undertaken and the grass has been mown. Adjacent territory is used for agricultural needs and as residential area.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: To secure the cemetery, the site requires demarcation and appropriate signage. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

VILANI JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Vilon | Wielona | Welonen | Велены

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 5973

ADDRESS: Rezeknes Str., Vilani, Rezekne municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: -
PRESENT USE: Abandoned cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 3,000 meters²

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated at the intersection of Rezeknes and Alejas Streets, opposite the municipal cemetery. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in a suburban location, on flat land, separate, but near other cemeteries. No road sign marks the site. The cemetery is not fenced, but there are stone poles with remains of a gauze fence. Adjacent territory is used for agricultural needs and as residential area.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: There are about eighty visible gravestones at the site, made of marble, granite and other materials. Few of them are legible, with inscriptions mostly in Hebrew. The oldest known gravestone is from the year 1911, while the most recent Jewish burial took place in 1946.

The cemetery gets almost no proper maintenance or care, although grass is occasionally mown.

Inscription on the oldest found tombstone: "הרב המופלג ... יז סיון תרע"א".

Translation: "A prominent rabbi ... passed away on Sivan 17, 5671 (13 June 1911)"

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: -
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: -

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: In 1935, the Jewish community of Viļāni had around 400 members. After the Soviet Union occupied Latvia in 1940, Jewish life was subjected to severe restrictions - also in Viļāni.

In July 1941, following the German invasion of Latvia, Latvian nationalists murdered a small group of Jews on the banks of the Malta river.

On August 3, 1941, members of the SS chased the Jewish residents of Viļāni into a school building. On the following day the men, women and children were shot in a forest close to Viļāni. Their bodies were buried in previously prepared pits. The shooting was conducted by a unit of the Arājs Kommando, which had arrived from Riga. This unit consisted of anti-Semitic Latvian nationalists under the leadership of Victor Arājs. The Arājs Kommando closely cooperated with Einsatzgruppe A (mobile killing unit).

Almost the entire Jewish population of the town was shot in 1941 by Latvian nationalists on orders of the SS. There are several monuments on the site of the mass shootings dedicated to the victims.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is unacceptable. The site is owned by the local Municipality.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Vegetation needs to be cleared, fallen monuments re-erected, and the surrounding fence restored. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

VISKI JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Vishky | Wyschki | Wyszki | Вишки

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 6518

ADDRESS: Aglonas Street, Viski, Daugavpils municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: Early 19th century
PRESENT USE: Abandoned cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 90 x 75 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated along Aglonas Street, 200 metres from the last house, between the lakes Dodkas and Vishku. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated urban location, on flat land. Adjacent territory is used for agricultural needs. The cemetery is surrounded by a stone wall and a gate that doesn't lock.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: There are two hundred and ninety granite and sandstone gravestones at the site, most of which have legible Hebrew inscriptions. The cemetery was abandoned in 1941. The oldest found tombstone is from 1843, while the most recent Jewish burial took place in 1979.

Inscription on the oldest found tombstone: "Here lies the woman Sarah, daughter of Reb David, who died 29 Kislev 5604 (22 Dec 1843)".

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Jews from Somerset (now a part of Aglona) also used this cemetery.

In 2008, Klaus Peter Rex, a German priest, with a group of young people, came to restore the cemetery in Viski. They cut the grass, cleared some vegetation, restored some fallen stones, and made a map by documenting every stone.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: Late 18th century
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: -

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: Jews began to settle in Viski in the late 18th - early 19th century. From the end of the 19th century until the Holocaust, the Jewish community comprised the majority of the inhabitants. The institutions at the service of the community were: a hevra kadisha, a public bath house and "bikur cholim". From the second half of the 19th century for a period of 90 years, the officiating rabbis were from the Plachinski family.

During WWI, many members of the community fled to the interior of Russia. On their return, after the war, many Jews found their homes damaged or destroyed. They were repaired with the assistance of the community council which was elected in 1920, as well as by the "Joint". In 1921, a Jewish elementary school with four classes was opened. Yiddish was the teaching language. During the years 1920-1940, Viski was part of independent Latvia.

After WWI, despite welfare grants by the "Joint", many of the young Jews left the place because of the lack of opportunities for earning a living. In 1935, of the 58 businesses in Viski, 50 were Jewish owned. In 1935, there were 423 Jewish residents in a total population of 750. In the summer of 1940 a Soviet government was installed. The new regime nationalized businesses and shops, and Jewish public life was liquidated. On the outbreak of war between Germany and the USSR (June 22, 1941) a number of young Jews escaped to the East. A few days later German forces captured the town. On June 28 the Jews of the town and nearby towns were sent to the Daugavpils ghetto. After several days they were taken to the Pogulianka forest and murdered in the "provincial action".

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is unacceptable. No maintenance or care are in place. Weather erosion poses a serious threat to the cemetery. No further care has been given to the site since the restoration work in 2008.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: The surrounding wall and entrance gate ought to be secured and regular maintenance and care implemented. Grass should be mown annually. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.

ZILUPE JEWISH CEMETERY

Other names: Rosenhof | Rozinovsk | Rozenovskoe | Rosenau

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10887

ADDRESS: Within town, Zilupe, Zilupe municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



CEMETERY ESTABLISHED: 1920's
PRESENT USE: Abandoned cemetery
CURRENT SIZE: 33 x 24 Perimeter - Linear Meters

DETAILS OF ACCESS: The site is situated at the end of Berzu Str. The cemetery is open to all.

LOCATION & DEMARCATION: The cemetery is situated in an isolated suburban location, on flat land. Adjacent territory is used for agricultural needs and as residential area. The cemetery is not fenced, and no road or entrance sign denote the site. The local municipality owns the land.

GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES: There are twenty granite and sandstone gravestones at the site, most of which have legible Hebrew inscriptions. A further twenty graves do not have gravestones. The oldest found tombstone is from 1926, while the most recent Jewish burial took place in 1964. There is also an ohel within the cemetery confines. At the cemetery is also one mass grave for twenty six victims of the Holocaust.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED: Early 20th century
PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION: 10 - 1,000
CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION: -

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: The Jewish community began circa 1900 with the founding of the town and grew to number around five hundred between the World Wars. The Jewish population dropped from 70-75% to 20% of the total when surrounding villages became part of the municipality in the mid-1930's. Jews owned 59 of the town's 69 stores and a few merchants were engaged in the grain, flax, and lumber trade. A Jewish public school was opened in 1923. The Zionists with their youth movements were the dominant force in the community, sending a few dozen pioneers to Palestine. Under the nationalistic Ulmanis regime (from 1934), anti-Semitism began to manifest itself publicly, and Jewish businesses were undermined by government support of the peasant cooperatives.

Russian rule (1940-41) brought nationalization of Jewish enterprises.

The Germans arrived around the end of June 1941. A number of Jewish families managed to flee to the Soviet Union. The rest were killed with Latvian participation.

CURRENT STATE: Overall condition of the site is unacceptable. Zilupe municipality clears the vegetation regularly.

DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED: The cemetery site should be adequately fenced and identified. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.



A unique record of the Jewish heritage of Latvia, this publication provides a summary of the current state of eighteen Jewish burial grounds in Latvia's Latgale Region.

Produced in co-operation with the Jewish Community of Latvia, and with the support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), it presents the results of fieldwork and historical research carried out during the spring and summer months of 2012.

Detailed individual surveys, including a selection of photographs of each site, can be found on the Lo Tishkach Database of European Jewish Burial Grounds (accessible at www.lo-tishkach.org).



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Established in 2006, the Lo Tishkach Foundation aims to guarantee the effective and lasting preservation and protection of Jewish burial grounds throughout Europe.