

# ***Klishkivtsi Cemetery Project***

## ***Khotin uezd, Bessarabia***

**Klishkivtsi**, today in southern Ukraine is one of the oldest Shtetels in this area. Having been established in the late 17th century as a penal colony by the Turkish Ottoman Empire ruled this area at that time. The prisoners among other things developed various agricultural projects including the planting of the fruit trees that this area is so well known for.

At the end of the Napoleonic wars in Europe around 1815 this area was put under the rule of Imperial Russia and the entire area was called Bessarabia.

At the end of World War One around 1920 Bessarabia and parts of Austria-Hungary Bukovina were put under the rule of Romania. In 1939-40 for one year this area was under Soviet Russian rule. Then it went back to Romania that sided with the German Nazis during WWII, the Holocaust SHOAH period.

Towards the end of WWII around 1944 this area came under Soviet Russia rule again and split up the area into two parts. Northern Bessarabia and Bukovina became part of Ukraine SSR and Southern Bessarabia became part of Moldavia SSR. After the fall of the Soviet empire they are still part of their respective countries, Ukraine and Moldavia,

Klishkivtsi Jewish presence was from the start of its establishment in the 17th century when it was a "Shabbat" station, for Jewish merchants, who were plying the route between the Persian Gulf and Poland. The Jewish presence continued to grow in Klishkivtsi and by the beginning of WWI the Jews were a majority in the town.

During WWI the Jews of Klishkivtsi and other rural villages nearby were expelled from their homes, because they were too close to the then enemy Austria Hungary.

After WWI only about 20 per cent of the Jews from Klishkivtsi returned to the town. The remaining 80 per cent tried their luck in the towns they had resettled in, or new towns in Europe, North and South America.

During WWII the Jews of Klishkivtsi together with Jews from the entire area were forcefully taken from their homes and forced to march by foot, to Transniester, where most of them were murdered or died from malnutrition, and diseases.

After WWII only a handful of survivors from the Holocaust returned to Klishkivtsi. The last Jew left Klishkivtsi in the early 1960s. Since then there is no Jewish presence in Klishkivtsi.

Klishkivtsi being one of the oldest if not the oldest Jewish settlement in this area established a Jewish cemetery close to when it was established in the late 16th century. At first it was the only Jewish cemetery for the entire area. Later on the residents of Shteitels near Klishkivtsi continued to bury their dead in the Jewish cemetery of Klishkivtsi. (A partial list of such towns on the Chernivtsi-Khotin road, West: **Kolinkivtsi, Hrozyntsi, Bochkivtsi, Shylivtsi, Malyntsi**. East: **Shyriivtsi, Zarozhany, Vladychna, Nedoboivtsi, Rushyn**).

In the early 1880s the Jewish cemetery had no more space for burials, so a new cemetery in Klishkivtsi was established, there were burials there from the 1880s till the last Jew left Klishkivtsi in the 1960s.

Today these two "orphan," Jewish cemeteries are in a terrible shape, and are in an immediate danger of being demolished if they are not properly restored. No one really knows how many graves are on these cemeteries, definitely - in thousands, I presume we will need to do highly sophisticated technological pictures of what is going on underground the cemetery. That should give us a true picture of the cemetery since parts of the old and new cemetery have been totally erased.

Anyone, descendants of original residents of Klishkivtsi, and towns on the Chernivtsi-Khotin road (including the ones mentioned above) willing to help in anyway in the restoration, documentation etc, will be most welcomed. This includes ideas, knowhow, deep pockets funding, anything and everything to get this project moving. Please contact me at [sabaisio@yahoo.com](mailto:sabaisio@yahoo.com).

Here are just a few pictures of the sorry state of the two cemeteries.

All the best,  
Aizic Sechter  
Rishon Le Zion, Israel



P1010273.jpg



P1010278.jpg





P1010266.jpg



P1010261.jpg



P1010290.jpg





P1010271.jpg



P1010275.jpg



P1010284.jpg



P1010286.jpg

### Photo comments

P1010266.JPG One of (many) some broken burial stones.

P1010271.JPG Many stones like this are unreadable and are hidden under over waist high shrubs and tall trees.

P1010273.JPG Another broken burial stone with beautiful Jewish artistic carvings of 17th-18th or 19th century not seen too much today.

P1010275.JPG This is how the previous broken burial stone lies among other broken burial stones.

P1010278.JPG Another picture of hardly visible burial stones at the old cemetery.

P1010284.JPG A bunch of burial stones piled up one on top of the other.

With no or unreadable writing.

P1010286.JPG This is a view of the entrance to the old cemetery, no wall, no gate, no stones visible here. Some one probably buried them deep in the ground so they could cut the shrubs to use as fodder for their animals. As can be seen part of the shrubs have been cut for fodder. Below is the main road Chernivtsi-Khotin towards the right is a gas station bordering with the cemetery. In the background can be seen part of the buildings of town Klishkivtsi.

P1010290.JPG The only fenced in part of the cemetery by neighbors. Who probably live on part of the old Jewish cemetery. And would probably want to annex the land of the old Jewish cemetery for agricultural purposes. As can be seen some one cut the shrubs to use as fodder for animals.

Following are pictures of the new Jewish cemetery. As you can see there is quite a lot of work that has to be done.

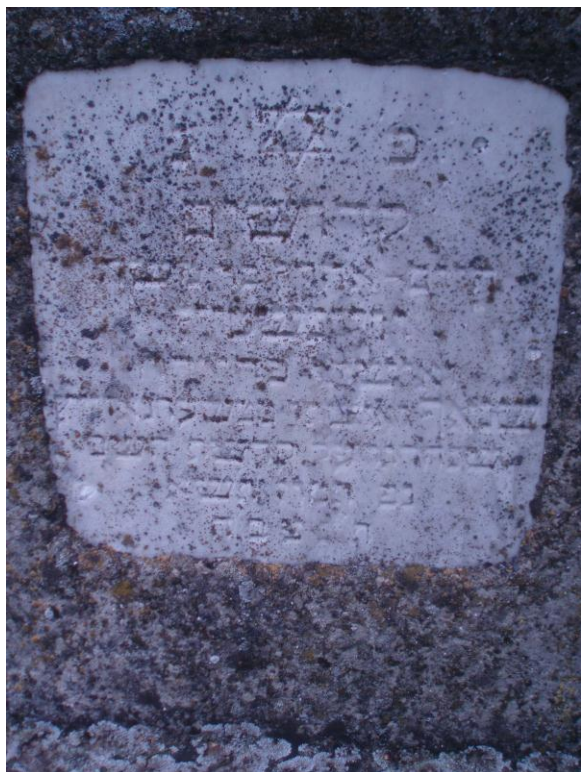


P1010061.jpg



P1010070.jpg





P1010092.jpg



P1010080.jpg



P1010077.jpg

P1010061.JPG Entrance to the New Cemetery. shrubs in some places above waist. As can be seen no wall, fence or gate. In the background can be seen some gravestones and in back of that can be seen shrubs and wooded area making it impossible to see or go near gravestones there.

P1010070.JPG Gravestone for martyrs killed by Nazi collaborators during the Holocaust SHOAH when Jews were forcefully driven out of Klishkivtsi 1941. Please notice the gravestones in the background including in the wooded area.

P1010092.JPG Another gravestones for martyrs killed by Nazi collaborators.

P1010080.JPG More gravestones before and inside the wooded area. Some of the stones are unreadable.

P1010077.JPG Another gravestone that is barely readable and in need of a lot of restoration, to make it readable again.