



# NEWSLETTER

January 2013 Issue 1

“Having survived, I owe something to the dead, and anyone who does not remember, betrays them again.” —Elie Wiesel

## From the Desk of Emil Fish Founder of the Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee



As many of you know, I founded the Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee in 2006 to preserve Bardejov's Jewish heritage by restoring the Jewish cemetery and the Jewish Suburbia, which for decades lay neglected and deteriorating; memorializing the 3,000-plus Jews from Bardejov who perished in the Holocaust; and raising awareness of the rich contributions of the Jews to Jewish and Bardejov history. We have restored the cemetery, laying new foundation under each headstone, and have posted the information for each stone on our website.

We continue to achieve success, and to diligently pursue, our mission. The May 2012 commemorative gathering and reunion in Bardejov brought together Bardejovers, their descendants, and friends from around the world. Old relationships were strengthened and new ones were formed. The event received extensive media coverage in Slovakia and internationally and has helped to set the stage for the committee's ongoing and future projects.

I look forward, with your help, to achieving all our goals in the years to come and hope to hear from you soon.

## MEMORIAL GARDEN CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Mr. Charles V. Roven and Mr. Thomas Spiegel Make It Possible

The Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee is pleased to announce the largest contribution toward the building of the Bardejov Holocaust Memorial Garden. Mr. Charles Roven and Mr. Thomas Spiegel—descendants of Bardejov families that date from the eighteenth century—have committed \$180,000 on behalf of their foundations to the memorial project. With this generous gift from the Charles V. Roven Family Foundation and the Roven-Spiegel Charitable Foundation—and with all the official permits now in place—we are ready to break ground and begin construction in the spring of 2013, as soon as weather permits, with a projected completion date of late summer.



May 15, 2012. Mr. Boris Hanuščák, Mayor of Bardejov, Slovakia, and Mr. Emil Fish, Founder of the Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee, sign the agreement for the Memorial Garden.



Street view (from Dlhý rad Street)



Inside view, showing the memorial tablets

## JEWISH SUBURBIA UPDATE

Discussions are underway between the City of Bardejov, the Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee, local Bardejov advocates, and the Central Union of Jewish Communities in Slovakia (UZZNO) to vacate the Beith Hamidrash and the Mikvah in the Jewish Suburbia and to create a museum in the Beith Hamidrash dedicated to Bardejov's Jewish history. It is the committee's hope that in the near future the Jewish Suburbia will be completely restored and that, together with the newly built Holocaust memorial honoring Bardejov's lost Jewish community, these buildings will become a cultural and educational center for both Jews and non-Jews.

# Bardejov in the News



May 15, 2012. For some it was a homecoming and for others it was a chance to meet relatives for the first time since the Holocaust. Over 500 people participated in a walk of solidarity for the Jews deported from Bardejov in 1942. (Photograph by Corrie Siegel)



Pavol Hudák on Slovakian national TV in front of the Old Synagogue at the Jewish Suburbia.

## Bardejov and the Jewish Suburbia on Slovakian National TV

In August 2012, a production team from Slovak national TV visited Bardejov to film a historical documentary segment. It was the first time ever that Jewish Bardejov and the Jewish Suburbia appeared on national TV. Link to this video via our website at [www.bardejov.org](http://www.bardejov.org).

## United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Visits Bardejov

In September 2012, the head of the Slovakian Witnesses Documentation Project of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., Mr. Nathan Beyrak, visited Bardejov. Pavol and Peter Hudak, our associates in Bardejov, took an active role in conducting video interviews with non-Jews about the fate of Bardejov's Jewish community. Four elderly residents provided testimonies about the Holocaust era and Bardejov's pre- and post-war periods. These oral histories will become part of the museum's audiovisual collection, accessible to anyone who wants to study Bardejov's Jewish history.



(Photograph: Komarno Kehilla)

## Peter Hudák Honored

On August 26, 2012, the Jewish community in Komarno, Slovakia showed its appreciation to Peter Hudak by awarding him the KEHILA-haver díj 2012-5772 for his work on behalf of Jewish communities at the regional level. Hudak also won the Student of the Year 2012 award for his efforts to document and research Bardejov's Jewish community and to preserve the town's Jewish heritage. Through their workshops and lectures, Peter and his father Pavol are gaining a reputation as the foremost local scholars of Jewish studies.



## Spreading the Word

In Kosič, a large group of Bardejovers—most of them seniors—often meet together to reminisce. When they heard about recent events at the Jewish Suburbia, they invited Pavol Hudak to speak to them about our May 2012 reunion and the fate of Bardejov's Jewish community.

It was an emotional exchange, as names of Bardejovers were called out—many of them neighbors and classmates. We hope the excitement of hearing news about their old friends will inspire these seniors to attend future Bardejov reunion events.



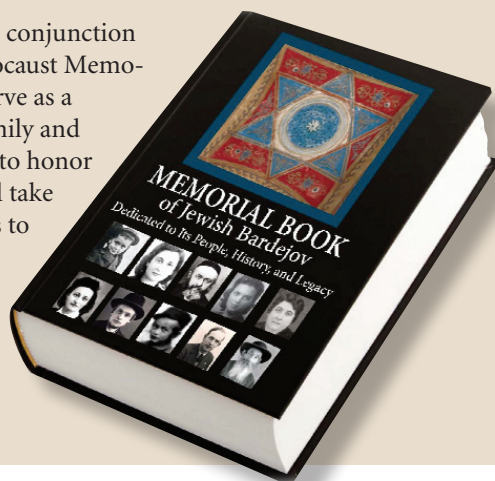
Peter Hudak (fourth from right) joins Slovakian educators at Yad Vashem.

## Slovak Holocaust Seminar at Yad Vashem

On December 2–10, 2012, our Peter Hudak joined 22 Slovakian educators at Yad Vashem to participate in a seminar for teaching the Holocaust to non-Jewish students. His certificate of completion will facilitate plans to establish an official Holocaust and Jewish history curriculum in Bardejov's elementary and high schools. Following the seminar, Peter conducted research about Bardejov at the Yad Vashem archives and Heichal Shlomo in Jerusalem, where he discovered many items from the Old Synagogue, documents and photographs, and 56 audio testimonies.

## Honor Your Bardejov Family & Friends in Our Memorial Book

We are publishing a memorial book in conjunction with the building of the Bardejov Holocaust Memorial Garden. The book not only will serve as a permanent tribute to our Bardejov family and friends, but also will provide a chance to honor your loved ones. We also hope you will take advantage of a variety of opportunities to help support the memorial's construction. We will be mailing you a flyer in the coming weeks describing the memorial project and sponsorship opportunities.



## Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee

### What's New at the Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee?

This is our first newsletter. We welcome your suggestions, comments, and contributions of stories, photos, and news related to the Bardejov family around the world.

### Our Staff

Diane Siegel is no longer with BJPC, and we wish her well in her new endeavors. Orit Stieglitz is back in the office after a three-month absence. Annette Nicole Perry continues to serve as our Holocaust Memorial Garden construction coordinator under the guidance of our internationally renowned architect Giora Solar.

### Facebook

We launched a Facebook page, so please stop by and post your comments, stories, and photos to help grow our virtual Bardejov Jewish community. Our page can be accessed by simply typing *Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee* in the Facebook search box. We look forward to your participation.

### Our Bardejov Film?

What happened to all the footage we filmed during the May 2012 gathering? We are asked this question often! The answer is that we have not yet edited the raw footage. We are now thinking of producing a full-length documentary and will update you on future developments.

### We Want to Hear from You!

As always, you can contact us with any questions you may have through our website, by email, and by phone. In addition to our U.S. phone number, you can call us from Israel using a local phone line that connects directly to the Pasadena office.

Emails: [info@bardejov.org](mailto:info@bardejov.org)

or [ostieglitz@bardejov.org](mailto:ostieglitz@bardejov.org)

U.S. phones: (626) 773-8804 or (626) 773-8808

U.S. fax: (626) 773-8820

Israel phone: 03.763.5525



Web address: [www.bardejov.org](http://www.bardejov.org)



## THE FUTURE MEMORIAL GARDEN AND THE EXISTING JEWISH SUBURBIA

The site plan (left) shows the future Memorial Garden adjacent to the existing Jewish Suburbia. The Old Synagogue has been restored and is used for cultural purposes. Beith Hamidrash and the Mikvah hopefully will be restored in the near future and will become a cultural and educational center.

### LEGEND:

-  Jewish Suburbia
-  Memorial Garden

**BARDEJOV**



**JEWISH PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

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905 S. Fair Oaks Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91105  
USA