

*The Felshtin Society  
Alan H. Bernstein, President  
48 Tompkins Place  
Brooklyn, New York 11231  
Phone:718-237-5744 Fax:718-237-9610  
[abernstein@albernconsulting.com](mailto:abernstein@albernconsulting.com)*

*Remarks by Society President, Alan Bernstein at the dedication of the monument in the town of Gvardeskoye May 21, 2010.*

*To the assembled:*

*Thank you for coming to join us today. Your presence here and now and the welcome we received in the school earlier today have added enormously to this event. We had no reason to believe that we would be joined by so many of you who have thoughtfully planned for our day here in your town, once our own. We are deeply grateful that you have chosen to be here with us at our dedication.*

*Our stories are full of tragedy and misery. However, our monument to those who died is beautiful and sits here in this wonderful place in the heart of this beautiful land that my ancestors loved. We will tell our stories to heal our souls and realize personal and familial closure. Our histories are alive within us. We bring them back to this town for the sake of their perpetual remembrance and for us to continue to heal our hearts in the name of peace, love and understanding.*

*We come to our ancestral home this day to dedicate our monument with a message of peaceful remembrance for those who are no longer with us. What we have carried forward from their legacy represents nothing less than the triumph of the human spirit and our inheritance of millennia of human determination to survive and thrive.*

*We also come here with a wish to close a circle of hate and violence that occurred here almost 100 years ago and to establish a tide of renewal based on a sharing of culture, history and friendship. That such behavior continues to occur all over the world troubles us more than others who do not carry the burden of survivors. While we*

*individually did not feel the pain of such violence we inevitably felt the turmoil carried forward from generation to generation. It is not in the human spirit to forget such tragedy and impossible to eradicate the effects of such events. So we wish our peaceful presence here today to be a symbol of what the future may hold for mankind.*

*We all suffer when a tragedy befalls our fellow man. Regardless of who may be the victim, the perpetrator also loses – there may never be true human ascendancy and progress over the blood of others. As a descendant of victims lost to this unimaginable human cruelty and ignorance – we believe that what was lost was not in vain as we stand here in living testimony. However, we must also ask how much the world and our families and we as individuals would have benefitted if their lives had taken a more normal course.*

*We do not accept these events as natural but aberrant and wrong no matter how many times such events may occur in human history. As testimony to this we offer our presence here to build a bridge between our worlds to support our Ukrainian brothers and sisters who are here, the good cause of peace, understanding, learning and sharing.*

*Thank you*

*Alan Bernstein*