Alternate names: Brezin or Brzezin [Yid], Lowenstadt and Berental [Ger]. Brzeziny was located in Skierniewickie region and Tarnopol district. This town along the banks of the Pisza, which is a tributary of the Warta River, in Łódź Voivodeship at $51°48′N 19°45′E$ about 20 km E of Łódź and seat of Brzeziny gmina. 2004 population is 12,417.

**Gmina Brzeziny** is a rural administrative district in Kalisz County, Greater Poland Voivodeship, in west-central Poland. Gmina Brzeziny contains the villages and settlements of Aleksandria, Brzeziny, Chudoba, Czempisz, Dziercilo, Fajum, Jagodziniec, Jamnice, Moczielec, Ostrów Kaliski, Pieczyska, Piegonisko-Pustkowie, Piegonisko-Wieś, Przystajnia, Przystajnia-Kolonia, Rożenno, Sobiesęki, Wrząca, Zagórnia and Zajączki.

**Yizkor**

Town pictures

"Brzuzy" in Polish means "birch tree", hence the town name. Brzeziny, established in 1278, banned Jewish residence until 1793, when Prussian rule distributed property to the people, although Jews probably resided there from about 1530. Jewish population: 10 Jewish families in 1793, 32 in 1808; 172 in 1827; and 406 out of 1899 in 1921, and about 6,800 out of a total population of 13,000 in 1939. The Jewish community dating from 1825 included several neighboring settlements and had two synagogues, a beit midrash, and a cemetery. Most of the Jews lived and worked in the center of town and controlled the town's trade and commerce with a weekly market day. Nothing remains of that town center. The town was occupied by the Russians after the start of WWII, but on July 7, 1941 the Nazis took it and changed the name to Berental. Murder and harassment commenced. In February 1942, a ghetto was created. The May final liquidation of the ghetto that sent the elderly to Chelmo death camp and the rest to the Lodz ghetto enabled local Poles to loot their possessions left behind.

**Story** about Nazi occupation.

Journal that includes Brzeziny. [April 2009]

**CEMETERY:** Photos. The monument commemorating the Jews of Brzeziny (lodzkie province) was vandalized with graffiti on the plaque. The Jewish cemetery on ulica Reymont used until the
Shoah probably was established in the 16th century. Destroyed during WWII and after when a sand mine was begun among the graves. Witnesses claim that sand mixed with human bones was used to produce prefab apartment buildings. Many tombstones were stolen and used for paving banks of fishing ponds and similar efforts. In 1992, descendants of Brzeziny Jews had the cemetery fenced. The story of Brzeziny shtetl was described *Light in the Valley of Tears* by Sara Zyskind. [April 2009]

US Commission No. POCE000222

Cemetery: ulica Reymonta. 1991 town population: 5,000-25,000 with no Jews.

- Regional: Wojewodzki Konserwator Zabytkow, ulica Pomologiczna 10, 96-100 Skierniewice.

The earliest known Jewish community was 1557 and was affected by the Polish-Swedish War in 1656. The 1921 Jewish population was 4979. The cemetery was probably established in the 16th century, with the last known Orthodox or Conservative burials in 1939-1945. The isolated suburban hillside has no sign or marker. Reached by turning directly off a public road, access is open to all with no wall, fence, or gate (*no longer true, see below*). The size of cemetery before and after WWII is 0.5 hectares. No gravestones are visible because they were removed to line the edges of fishponds in the NW part of town. The municipality owns the unused cemetery property, which borders gravel pits and residential areas. Rarely, organized Jewish group tours and private individuals stop. It was frequently vandalized during and after World War II. No maintenance or care. Security is a slight threat.

Pawel Fijalkowski, ulica Ziemowita 11, 96-500 Sochaczew, tel. 22791 completed this survey on 26 June 1991. He visited the site in May 1990.

UPDATE: A fence was erected by some former Brzeziners in 1991. We saw it in 1992 and have pictures. Fay Bussgang at Fbussgang@aol.com