



Alternate names: Koźmin [Pol], Koschmin [Ger]. [51°49' N, 17°27' E](#) , 46 miles SSE of Poznań (Posen), 8 miles N of Krotoszyn (Krotoschin). Jewish population: 588 (in 1871), 135 (in 1932).

[Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego \(1880-1902\), IV, pp. 569-570: "Koźmin" #1](#)

. Gmina Koźmin Wielkopolski is an urban-rural administrative district in Krotoszyn County, Greater Poland Voivodeship in west-central Poland with its seat in the town of Koźmin Wielkopolski. 2006 total population was 13,820 (town of Koźmin Wielkopolski population was 6,707). Gmina Koźmin Wielkopolski contains the villages and settlements of Biały Dwór, Borzęcice, Borzęciczki, Cegielnia, Czarny Sad, Dębogóra, Dębówiec, Dymacz, Gałązki, Góreczki, Gościejew, Józefów, Kaniew, Klatka, Lipowiec, Mogiłka, Mokronos, Mycielin, Nowa Obra, Orla, Orlinka, Paniwola, Pogorzałki Małe, Pogorzałki Wielkie, Psie Pole, Sapieżyn, Serafinów, Skałów, Staniew, Stara Obra, Suśnia, Szymanów, Tatary, Walerianów, Wałków, Wrotków and Wyrębin. Jews first appear in Koźmiń documents regarding the Jew Daniel from Poznan, a witness for the sale of land by Bartosz Sokołowa Mościcowi Przepelkowi to Stęszew in 1419. Another transaction in 1469 , the Poznan Jew, Jonah Jukubowi, whose family left Koźmin. In the 17th century, Jews were 6.5% of the population. In the 18th century, Prussian Jews were less than 20% of the population; 68 Jewish families lived at the present Szkolnej and Przyjemskich streets. The largest Jewish population was 722 persons about 1850, who moved to urban areas after 1838. In the first election, Jew Moses Czapski was elected to the town council. [May 2009]

OLD CEMETERY: The first Jewish cemetery was established at the end of the 18th century near the newly built wooden synagogue. Due to the large population increase as well as epidemiological risk, in the 1772 - 1791 the municipality owner Kazimierz Nestor Sapieha created a Jewish new cemetery near **Orla** village in the forest called "**Koszewiec**". The final decision to liquid the old cemetery was in 1872 in conjunction with the construction of a new stone synagogue. After exhumation, the remains were buried in mass grave in the new Jewish cemetery.

NEW CEMETERY: The new Jewish cemetery is one of the largest and best-preserved cemeteries in the Jewish Wielkopolski with about 250 matzevot dating from the beginning of the 19th century in very good condition with the oldest from 1806. The last and only post-WWII gravestone is that of Nathan Mościewicz, one of two Jewish survivors, dated 1969. The fairly regular rectangle site measures about 80x70 m with common matzevot arranged in dense rows.

Only in the NW part that contains the graves of children are gravestones set loosely, but in a regular order. Increased density and subsequent tight arrangement happened in the 20th century due probably to the lack of space and in accordance with Jewish tradition that the grave is inviolable and could not be used as the resting place of multiple people. In the next phase, gravestones differ in form and material, carved tombstones similar rectangles, modest and cost-effective with large fields for Hebrew inscription surrounded by a flat, linear ornamentation. Sometimes the only decoration is the crown in a semicircular helix, bows, or triangular form resembling the shape of stylized horns with various ornamentations from simple stripes to rosettes or characteristic Jewish sepulchral art. The most common is broken flowers or trees or broken candles, Levite or Cohan blessing and Torah rolls (for particularly devout persons). With time, inscriptions changed. Gradually, the Latin alphabet joined Hebrew in the 19th century. Very often in German provided information like the name of the deceased and date of birth and death. Sometimes they are accompanied by wishes for eternal rest. Gradually, these inscriptions became rich. more accurate descriptions of a person (Unser Vater, Mutter, etc.). The volume of the inscription in Hebrew alphabet diminished compared to German, some only in German. One tombstone was inscribed in English, that of Nathan Mośkiewicza, the last Jew in Koźmiń. Besides the very popular sandstone matzevot are examples of white marble in the form of oval boxes for inscriptions. In some matzevot empty oval recess without inscription. Black granite was used in a stylized, flat rectangular gravestone or obelisks either with a total lack of ornamentation and simple inscription, modest and very strict with inscriptions in German in the upper part of the tomb with the Hebrew alphabet on the pedestal. Another group of black granite matzevot decorated with linear and convex ornamental inscription and ornamental initials had minimal Hebrew in trace elements like single words or phrases with a total domination of the German language. Among the simple are also exceptions koźmińskim with interesting and unique forms. One is in the shape of a stylized matzevot portico with two simple columns made of black granite based on the tip portion, a semi-circle tympanum. The crown and lug was used in sandstone filled with a blank rectangular box. Gravestones clearly reference the classicist fashion in Christian cemeteries as do tombstone in the form of fractures in the column. The third example is a pair of matzevot worth noting, horizontal form. This stylized sarcophagus is closed on one end, broad and flat with German inscriptions. Existing buildings that previously performed functions associated with burial rites are currently private residential buildings. The Jewish cemetery in Koźmin owes its present excellent state of preservation to Jerzy Fornalikowi,

teacher at the Special Szkolno Center - Education in Borzęciczkach, leader of

["Antyschematy"](#)

in which students organize and volunteer at Jewish cemeteries. The cemetery is located at ul. Wierzbowej. Leaving the city in the direction of Jarocin, turn right into ul. Floriańską. After a few dozen meters, turn left into ul. Wierzbowe and go to the very end - to the parking lot.

[photos](#)

[Map](#)

[May 2009]

US Commission No. POCE000467

Located in Kaliskie at 51°49' 17°27', 82 km SE of Poznan. Present town population is 6859 with no Jews.

- Town: Urząd Miasta i Gminy, St. Rynek 11, 63-720 Kozmin. Tel. 56088.
- Preservation authority is PSOZ-WKZ, ul. Frauciszkauska 3/5, 62-800 Kalisz.
- Local or regional authority: Osrodek Szkolno-Wychowawczy, Borzeczki 63-722 region Tel. 56993.
- Cemetery caretaker with key: Kazimiera and Franciszek Szaramowicz, Wierzbowa St., Kozmin who live in a house adjacent to the cemetery.

The first mention of Jews was 1419. The community was formed before 1715. 1921 Jewish population was 135. The cemetery was established around 1800. The last Hasidic, Sephardic Orthodox or Progressive/Reform Jewish burial was 1969. The isolated suburban flat land has no sign but has a menorah on the gate. Reached by turning directly off a public road, access is open with permission. A fence is under construction. The gate is locked. Approximate size of cemetery is 55 ha. The approximate number of gravestones is 550. 1-20 are stacked in order to be fixed. Less than 25% are toppled or broken. The cemetery is divided into rows. The oldest gravestone dates from 1806. The marble, granite, sandstone and lastrico finely smoothed, inscribed, flat stones have carved relief decoration, double tombstones, or multi-stone monuments with Hebrew Polish and German inscriptions. There are no known mass graves. Municipality owns property used for Jewish cemetery only. Properties adjacent are agricultural. Frequently, organized Jewish group tours or pilgrimage groups, and private visitors stop. The cemetery was vandalized during WW II. A non-paid caretaker maintains the cemetery. Restoration is being performed by Jewish individuals abroad and the (Special School) Specialny Osrodek Szkolno-Wychowawczy in Borzeczki, 8 km from Kozmin, a non-Jewish group: stones repairs, vegetation cleared, new wall construction, and the gate being repaired. There are no structures.

Michał Witwicki, Dembowskiego 12/53, 02-784 Warszawa, Tel. 6418345. completed this survey. Eleonora Bergman and Michał Witwicki visited site on 10/17/1991. Kazimiera Szaramowicz was interviewed on 10/17/1991.