

PROFILE: VLADIMIR BERNSHAM

Vladimir Bernsham was born in 1952 in the city of Kharkov in the Ukraine into a family of physicians. His father entered the Kharkov Medical Institute after the demobilization from the Soviet Army in 1946, where he served in an anti-aircraft artillery unit of the Red Army from 1939 through WWII on the front lines. It was at the Medical Institute where Vladimir's father met his mother, who had entered the Institute after graduating from secondary school. A strong connection to being Jewish was instilled in Vladimir as a young child from his grandfather, with whom the family lived. Every evening, Vladimir would sit with his grandfather who would listen to a radio program, "Voice of Israel," in Russian.

As a child, Vladimir became involved in becoming a collector through his father, who had started collecting coins at the end of the war in Poland. Together, they began to collect stamps and stamps of Israel in particular. As far back as Vladimir can remember, he and his dad attended a local club of collectors every Sunday where they would search for items needed for their collections. They even managed to acquire some coins from Israel when coins from Israel did not appear anywhere in the Soviet Union until the late 1980s.

It was in 1969 that Vladimir entered the Physics Department of the Kharkov State University and graduated in 1974 with Honors. In 1983, he received a PhD degree in physics and mathematics from Donetsk State University. During his college years, Vladimir met and married Tamara in 1973. Together they have two children, one grandson and one granddaughter. Tamara tolerates his hobby of collecting with a lot of understanding, and together, they have assembled several collections. In Vladimir's own words, "they do everything together."



Vladimir and Tamara Bernsham enjoying collecting with their grandchildren.

The family emigrated to Israel in 1994, and it was in that year that Vladimir joined the Plasma Physics Laboratory of the Weizmann Institute of Science, where he works still to this day. To date, Vladimir has coauthored more than 50 articles in various scientific journals and has 24 inventions.

To Vladimir's regret, it was not possible for him to bring his collections to Israel from Russia, so he has had to start over gathering new coins, banknotes, and stamps. He has also begun collecting badges and insignia of the Israel Defense Forces, and medals and tokens connected with the history of Israel and Jews of the Diaspora. He has also added First Day Covers to enhance his stamp collecting.

In the last few years, Vladimir has started to collaborate with a Russian magazine for collectors entitled, "The Petersburg Collector," in which he has published nearly 10 articles on the collecting of Israeli medals, tokens, and other collection materials.

He has delivered numerous lectures on numismatics and bonistics for children, and together with experts in the field, has taught about the use of coins and banknotes in his teaching of mathematics. But most of all, Vladimir enjoys teaching and sharing his numismatic knowledge with his two grandchildren.

Written by Donna J. Sims, NLG

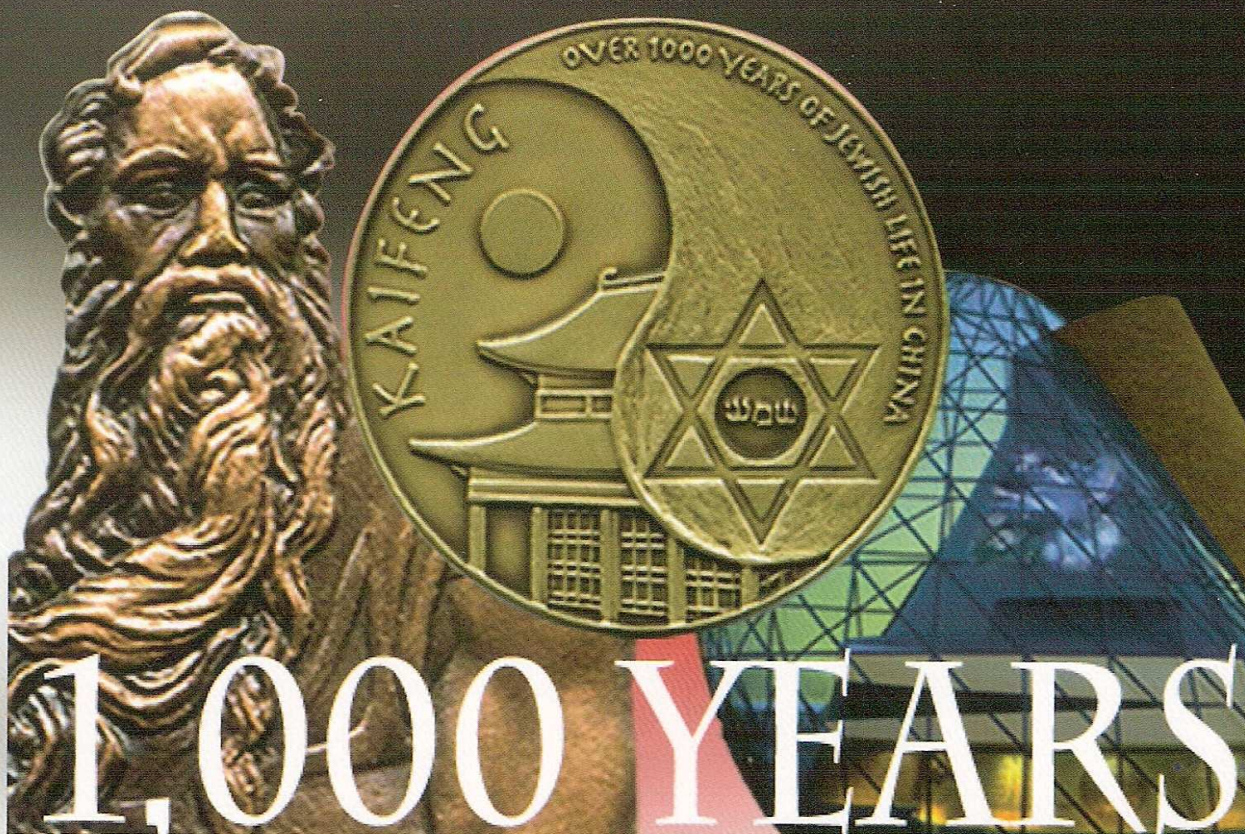
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