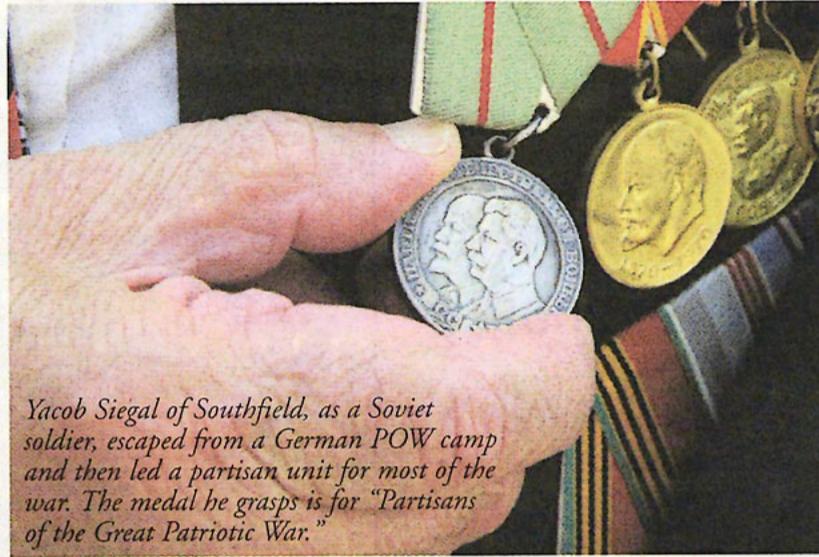




Leonid Erlich of Southfield, who entered the Soviet army at the very beginning of the war, chats with a friend. Erlich came from Odessa where many of his relatives died in the camps during the German occupation.



Yacob Siegal of Southfield, as a Soviet soldier, escaped from a German POW camp and then led a partisan unit for most of the war. The medal he grasps is for "Partisans of the Great Patriotic War."



Left; Lev Kuperstein of Southfield addresses the ceremony in Russian. As a soldier, he worked in the headquarters of Red Army leader Marshal Georgy Zhukov. Kuperstein is an active member of the Detroit Association of World War II Jewish Veterans, which will celebrate its 25th anniversary in August. Seated behind him are State Sen. Gilda Jacobs, Oak Park Mayor Gerald Naftaly and JCC President Hannan Lis.

Kuperstein, a member of the Russian veterans' association since its founding in August 1980. As a soldier, he worked in the headquarters of Soviet Army leader Marshal Georgy Zhukov.

Heroic Destinies

Abraham Reznik of Oak Park took part in the fiercest battles for Stalingrad and was heavily wounded.

Alexander Kalish of Southfield began his military service in Finland two years before the war with Germany broke out. Later, he took part in the battles in Hungary, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. He came home from the army in 1948.

Mira Rozova of Southfield volunteered in the army in 1942 was wounded in action. Presently, she is an active member of the veterans' association.

From the first days of the war, Lyuba Sherman of Southfield was an inmate of a ghetto in the Ukraine. It took tremendous will and courage to escape and, after much hardship, find her way to a partisan unit. She became a scout and bravely fought against the fascists until the war's end, as did her future husband, Leonid Sherman.

I could continue this list. Every veteran had his own destiny, but all of

them were united by the urgent will and desire to liberate their country. That was the source of their heroism.

Jews Remember

Among all the oppressed peoples of World War II, there was only one people that the fascists tried to extinguish. That is why we, as Jews, must never forget the importance of this victory, which led to another historic victory of the Jewish people — the founding of Israel, the Jewish homeland, on May 14, 1948.

The idea for the local monument originated among the leaders of the Russian veterans' association, which collected money for it. It became possible due to the initiative of the association's leader, Anatoliy Granovsky of Southfield.

It also became possible thanks to the active assistance of many people, including the managing director of the JCC in Oak Park, Leslee Magidson; the director of the Russian program of the JCC, Maria Bruell; Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit property manager Randy LeCompte; and the veterans' association members and board including Vladimir Kapitulsky of Southfield, who was responsible

for the preparation of the technical documentation for the monument.

Among the dignitaries at the ceremony not previously mentioned were Peter Alter, president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit; State Sen. Gilda Z. Jacobs, D-Huntington Woods; Oak Park Mayor Gerald Naftaly; JCC President Hannan Lis; translator Ida Kogan; and veterans association member Leonid Berkovich of Oak Park.

On May 10, about 220 members of the Russian Jewish community, friends and relatives held a festive celebration of the 60th anniversary of Victory Day at Congregation Beth Shalom in Oak Park. Steve Weiss, the synagogue's executive director helped facilitate the event. □

Lev Peransky of Berkley volunteered in the Soviet army before the war at age 16. He wanted to be a pilot, but became a paratrooper. He served in an elite group that was subordinated to the high command and took part in the war in Byelorussia. After the war, he served in the Soviet occupation group in Germany, working in the building where the German High Command signed the Act of Unconditional Surrender in May 1945.



Listening to an entertainment program after the monument dedication are, from right, Dimitri Ressin of Southfield, a military driver during the war; Lyusya Kuperstein of Southfield; and veteran Lev and Larissa Peransky of Berkley.



Posing in front of the monument are Lyuba Sherman and Zelda Selector, both of Southfield, who survived the 900-day siege of Leningrad. On the right is Zelda's husband, Lazar Selector, a Russian navy veteran.