

Opening remarks at the housewarming ceremony of "Beit Guter" held at the Penthouse in the Guter House on December 28, 2012.



Distinguished Guests -

Thank you all for coming to this very special festive event for our family.

About a hundred years ago, Benjamin and Sara Guter decided to sell whatever they accumulated in their home town of Lodz in Poland, and move to Eretz Israel. They both came from very religious Jewish families, and both converted their religious education into the Zionist determination and desire to immigrate to Israel. They also conveyed to their children the Hebrew language they learned in the Hebrew school "Tarbut" in Poland, they took part in the Maccabiah games and actively participated in building this country.

They established a factory for textile products called "Lodzia", built next to it their home on 84 Ahad Ha'am Street, which was designed by Architect Berlin and constructed by Akiva Weiss, one of the founders of Tel Aviv. They even planted an orchard in Petah Tiqva and bought Land on Mount Carmel.

But reality changed their dreams – our Grandmother, Sara Guter Kirstein, traveled to Poland to liquidate the family business, and died there at the age of 46. The factory was established, but encountered difficulties and our grandfather Benjamin had to sell his Lodzia shares to Mr. Arie Shenkar. Our Father, Shlomo Zalman was forced to give up his plans to be amongst the founders of Kibbutz Ein Shemer and was recruited to help and support the family; the daughter Pola - who came to Israel in 1938 with her son, aged 13, but had to return back to Poland to her family - died in the Holocaust with her husband and son.

I grew up in a sad environment. Grandfather Benjamin died of a broken heart and his daughter our mother Tamar Guter - Maliniak - cried endlessly about her parents, her brothers, her sister and their families - all perished.

Eli's birth - named Elyakum after our Grandfather Elyakum Maliniak - brought much joy to the house and to me especially, after being an only child for many years. We became a real family.

Over the years I heard snatches of information about the history of the family from our father in particular, and a bit from mom on the family in Poland. The other information - I collected myself from other sources.

My dreams were:

Bring the whole family to Poland, to tell them everything I know about our family history and get to visit my late grandmother's grave;

Recognize the real founders of "LODZIA", and give them proper credit as founders of Tel Aviv and the Textile industry in this country;

And especially - **to establish "Beit Guter"** in Tel-Aviv as a tribute to a Zionist family and lovers of Tel Aviv at the time when there were few like them.

We undertook an amazing journey to Poland, where we experienced excitement, we cried, we laughed, we grieved and mostly we all learned - and especially our next generation where we came from and what are our roots.

The establishment of "Beit Guter" was a most difficult and complicated dream. But finally it was realized and the dream came true!

None of this would have happened if not a number of people to whom I must express deep thanks from the bottom of my heart.

First and foremost my dear partner Uzi - For over 60 years, supporting, helping and following the project from the start all the way; Eli - my younger brother - who became involved and took the dream and its implementation, with love and special bond, and has become the heart of the project in all areas; Thanks to my sister-in-law Vardita who always helps, supports and inspires a spirit of partnership and love; Our sons Ron, Benny - Benjamin, Nir and Yuval and their spouses who have encouraged and joined us, and they are involved in the whole project from start to finish – including the financial obligations we undertook to achieve it as a "Family Project" and I sincerely hope this is how it will remain and one day, the next generation will find their home at "Beit Guter".

Many thanks to Tal and Gidi Bar-Orian, the architects who envisioned how an old house can be designed and built into something so beautiful that combines the past and modern construction into such a beautiful result.

Heartfelt thanks are also extended to Ari Leibowitz and Rober Shagrawy, the contractors who managed to realize the plans that were drawn on paper and make them into an apartments building that all passersby stop, look and marvel at.

Many thanks to the man in charge of carrying out on their behalf Elias Anak – the Project Manager – a hardworking, affable, relaxed and effective. It has been a real pleasure to work with you - Thanks from the bottom of my heart!

And how could we manage without our building inspector - Shlomo Rotlevy – a professional in all his soul and body, tough and demanding, assertive and persistent, caring and sensitive, who conducted on all this "Orchestra"- my heartfelt thanks!

Thanks to the lawyers Chaim Stern and Zachy Cohen who accompanied us all the way in all matters legal, drawing agreements and contracts, and thanks also to our accountant Miron for his help in financial management.

Thanks to Uri Zomer – whom we recruited for the great undertaking of filling Beit Guter with the right tenants.

And this unique project - we leave in the capable hands of Yair Segev of "Danya Holdings", who will monitor, supervise and handle all needs.

To the residents who came to our house we welcome to Beit Guter. I really hope you enjoy your stay, and adopt the feeling that this is also a memorial to people who love Tel Aviv, and let us always keep an atmosphere of good friendship and dignified housing culture.

Eli, Uzi and myself will continue to accompany you. We will be happy to listen, help, advise and lend a hand because it will always be our home - "Beit Guter".

(For those who are interested, the family story is presented on the board near the mailboxes in the entrance hall. As you will be able to see the family pictures are original.)

Our heartfelt thanks are sent to Michael Karp who has rented this beautiful penthouse and was generous in allowing us to use it for this special celebration, though he himself and his family are having now a holiday vacation in USA. I am sure he will be with us on other happy occasions.

Sara Guter – Davidson
28 Dec 2012

