

## In the Mail

*HFBA regularly receives letters from people who have had contact with our organization. Below is a particularly moving account.*

*My name is Scott Fink and I am a gastroenterologist practicing outside of Philadelphia. Originally from New York, I became interested in your organization when I was a medical resident. Over the years, I have given some to HFBA. I recently discovered a personal connection to HFBA.*

*People often ask me what the most difficult experience of my resident days was. Some people may hesitate to come up with a singular experience when answering that question. I can answer the question in a heartbeat.*

*I was working in the medical intensive care unit when a pleasant 60 some-odd year old woman died of metastatic breast cancer. A former teacher, she had only a single visitor, a former teaching colleague, visit her during her time with us. When she died, I did what I usually would do when a patient died- I looked for the name of the next of kin to call to notify. Unfortunately, there was no next of kin. I called the woman who had visited her who told me that she was only an acquaintance from long ago and the only family that she knew of were some distant cousins she did not speak to. I called her physician who said he had never seen her with any family members or friends. It seemed that this poor woman had died alone- no family, no friends, nobody to claim her body and to mourn for her.*

*Nothing had affected me more in residency than seeing this woman die alone. It was a profound experience that reminded me of the simple gift of connection that most of us take for granted.*

*The hospital chaplain came and told me of HFBA and its activities. The patient was given a proper Jewish burial and I have been grateful to HFBA ever since.*

*Recently, I learned of a more personal connection to HFBA. It seems that my great-grandparents, Esther and Meyer Chalfin, are buried in one of your Staten Island cemeteries. Poor immigrants from the Ukraine, they must not have had the funds for a proper burial when they died in the 1920's.*

*I would very much like to get involved with HFBA and would like to learn how I can help you with your projects. In particular, I would like to know how I could make it a goal over a period of time to contribute the funds that were required to bury my great grandparents.*

*Sincerely,*

**Scott A. Fink, MD MPH FACP**  
Merion Station, PA

### HFBA MISSION STATEMENT

THE HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION devotes its resources to performing *chesed shel emet* (the ultimate act of loving kindness). It is the only agency in the NY metropolitan area dedicated to assuring that every Jew, regardless of financial means or religious affiliation, receives a dignified, traditional Jewish funeral and burial.



# Living HFBA History: *Julian Edelman*

By Amy Koplow, HFBA Executive Director

In the fall, at one of HFBA's "school volunteer clean-up days" at Silver Lake Cemetery in Staten Island, Sara Edelman, a high school student at The Frisch School (Paramus, NJ), identified herself as being the granddaughter of a man who had grown up at the cemetery. She shared her grandfather's contact information and I subsequently got in touch with Julian Edelman, now 87 years old, living in Brookline, Mass. HFBA's landscape architect, Elizabeth Kennedy, and I went to Boston in mid-December and spent a day with Mr. Edelman, to record an oral history about his family's life at the cemetery.

Mr. Edelman's aunt and uncle, Lina and Samuel Friedman, were the caretakers at HFBA's Mount Richmond Cemetery during World War I. Mr. Edelman's father, David, a college student prior to the war who studied engineering, lived in what became Czechoslovakia. He was drafted, fought for the Austro-Hungarian Empire and was badly wounded. His recuperation was slow and painful so his sister Lina brought him and his wife to New York in 1921 and secured a job for David as caretaker of HFBA's older cemetery, the nearby Silver Lake.

The Edelmanns were observant Jews, happy to be in the Tompkinsville area in Staten Island which had a sizeable Jewish community and the resources they needed such as kosher food, synagogues and Hebrew schools. They took up residence in the house on the cemetery property, joined by Julian and his sister who were born several years after their arrival. Julian left this home when he married in 1955 and his family moved away upon David's retirement in 1957.

Julian, an engineer, had an easy time recreating the floor plan of his former house. He noted that the house had two extensions built onto the main structure- one on the rear that had the kitchen and bathroom, and one

on the side that had a public bathroom. There was also a garage and monument workshop. Interestingly, he said that the house, as well as a covered well which he remembered vividly, may have at one time been in a different location when, it is thought, the land was a farm prior to being purchased and developed by HFBA.

The fact that there was a well and a pond (evident on an old map), corresponds to our current issues with excess water near that part of the cemetery.

Julian recalled that his father had an active business making monuments, as did his uncle and aunt in Mount Richmond Cemetery, and described how his father would restore the older degrading marble

monuments by filling in the inscriptions with black paint.

Julian smiled as he reminisced about visiting the Friedmans on Sundays at the "big house," a large second floor apartment in the 1909 building in Mount Richmond Cemetery where they were raising four children. He smiled, too, describing how he learned to ride a bike and roller skate on Silver Lake's driveway and path, and how a wealthy member of the HFBA Board of Directors gave him a set of *tefillin* for his bar mitzvah. His fond memories of growing up in an unlikely place include the many visitors to the site and the sense that it was active and lively, not somber and quiet as one would expect.

The serendipitous visit of Julian Edelman's granddaughter to Silver Lake created an opportunity for me to meet a living part of HFBA's unique, interesting history. We at HFBA are grateful that he so generously shared his memories and we look forward to showing him around the restored cemetery when our restoration project is complete.



Sara and Julian Edelman

## Save the Date! Spring 2014 Community Chesed Day at Silver Lake Cemetery

**926 Victory Boulevard, Staten Island, NY • Sunday, April 6, 2014 • 10am-12pm**

Participate in the *mitzvah* of *chesed shel emet* and join us to clean and clear winter debris from the cemetery grounds. For more information, please call Andrew Parver at the HFBA office (212) 239-1662.

*Weather permitting. The most up to date information will be posted at [www.facebook.com/hebrewfreeburial](http://www.facebook.com/hebrewfreeburial)*

*Visit and help us  
clean and clear debris.*

## HFBA *Helps*



Vadim R.\*'s mother, Svetlana, called us frantically after her 52 year old son died following a 10 day coma induced by an insulin overdose. Vadim had arrived with his family from Odessa as a teenager and soon after their arrival, his parents divorced and his father and brother moved away while he stayed with his mother in New York. In his 20's, while working in a store, Vadim was the unfortunate victim of a violent robbery, never fully recovering from his stab wounds. His death leaves his 80 year old mother totally alone in this world as Vadim was pre-deceased by both his father and brother. HFBA arranged for a car service to bring Svetlana to the cemetery for the funeral of her son, provided additional Russian staff to translate the service and reserved the grave adjacent to her son's for her. Because she is frail and was unable to walk on the muddy ground to the grave, cemetery workers carried her from, and then back to, the road.

Sharon H. and her sister Lynn T. had lived together for many years despite a rocky relationship and histories of substance abuse. When Lynn died, Sharon called HFBA as she had no money to pay for her sister's

burial. Since she was homebound following surgery and unable to get to the cemetery for the funeral, Rabbi Plafker conducted the service on his cell phone so she could be part of it. Four months later, Sharon died suddenly in her home. She was buried next to her sister in the grave HFBA had reserved for her at the time of Lynn's death.

When he was a small child in the 1940's, Henri W. escaped from France with his family and came to the United States by way of Spain. Unfortunately, he developed schizophrenia as a young man and spent years shuttling from group homes to nursing homes. Except for an old family friend, Henri was completely alone and, when he died at the age of 74, his case was referred to HFBA. He now rests in HFBA's Mount Richmond Cemetery.

At the end of his life, Chaim V. was alone, isolated and withdrawn from human contact. The staff of the nursing home in which he lived assumed that he was originally from Israel since he knew Hebrew but, because of his extreme reticence, knew nothing else about him- not where he had lived, whether he had ever worked, or anything at all about his family. When he died at the age of 62, he was penniless. Buried by HFBA with our volunteer minyan in attendance, there was no one who had known him to mourn his passing from this earth.

\*Names changed to protect confidentiality.



## Thoughts for Pesach

Although he is mentioned only once in the *haggadah*, Moses' presence hovers over the entire the *seder*.

As the leader of the Israelites during the Exodus, he was, so to speak, G-d's partner in the redemption. His death, as recounted at the end of the book of Deuteronomy, occurs after G-d shows him the Promised Land, a land he will not enter. Moses' "eyes were not dim nor his natural force abated" when he died at the age of 120 years, "by the kiss of G-d," as the *Medrash* says. Moses certainly had an enviable death after a long, full life.

Although no one can choose, plan or foretell their own end, everyone would wish for a death such as Moses'.

HFBA helps those whose deaths are unrecognized, whose lives were unremarkable but who nonetheless were part of the Jewish brotherhood. Each of us, no matter how we live our lives, no matter how we die, deserves the dignity of a Jewish funeral and burial with, we hope, "the kiss of G-d."

## Did You Know?

At 20% of HFBA burials, HFBA's officiating rabbi, **Rabbi Shmuel Plafker** uses his cell phone so that family members who could not come to the cemetery can hear the service.

## HFBA Annual Breakfasts

### The Staten Island Parshat Vayechi Community



**Breakfast** on Sunday, December 8th was a great success. Guest speaker Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom was greeted by an enthusiastic standing-room only crowd.

*(l-r) Charles Greinsky, Bryan Alter, Paul H. Nagelberg, HFBA Board members; Amy Koplow, Executive Director; Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom, guest speaker; Rabbi Shmuel Plafer, Cemetery Chaplain; Andrew Feinman, HFBA Board member.*

### The Annual HFBA Riverdale Breakfast, held on Sunday, March 2nd honored Dr. Judah and Gail



Schorr. This well-known, widely respected and philanthropic couple was feted by a large group of community members, friends, family and admirers.

*(l-r) Andrew Feinman, HFBA Board member; Amy Koplow, Executive Director; Robert Marcus, event chair; Dr. Judah Schorr, honoree; Paul H. Nagelberg, HFBA Board president; Gail Schorr, honoree; Paul Lowenthal, Anna Kleyman, Bryan Alter, Charles Greinsky, HFBA Board members.*

## HFBA Again Achieves Coveted 4-star Rating from Charity Navigator



*for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency. In their letter to us they wrote:*

*In this competitive philanthropic marketplace, Charity Navigator, America's premier charity evaluator, highlights the fine work of efficient, ethical and open charities. Our goal in all of this is to provide donors with essential information needed to give them greater confidence in the charitable choices they make.*

*Based on the most recent information available, we have issued a new rating for your organization. We are proud to announce Hebrew Free Burial Association has earned our second consecutive 4-star rating. Receiving four out of a possible four stars indicates that your organization adheres to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chance of unethical activities and consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way. Only 19% of the charities we rate have received at least 2 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Hebrew Free Burial Association outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Hebrew Free Burial Association from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust.*

## Mount Richmond Cemetery Hours of Operation:

### Passover Holiday

Monday, April 14	9AM – 1PM SHARP
Tuesday, April 15	CLOSED
Wednesday, April 16	CLOSED
Monday, April 21	CLOSED
Tuesday, April 22	CLOSED

YIZKOR is recited on **Tuesday, April 22nd.**

THE CEMETERY ALWAYS CLOSSES AT 1PM ON FRIDAY.

### Shavuot Holiday

Tuesday, June 3	9AM – 1PM
Wednesday, June 4	CLOSED
Thursday, June 5	CLOSED

YIZKOR is recited on **Thursday, June 5.**

## Расписание работы кладбища Mt. Richmond

### ПЕСАХ

Понедельник, 14 апреля	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM строго
Вторник, 15 апреля	ЗАКРЫТО
Среда, 16 апреля	ЗАКРЫТО
Понедельник, 21 апреля	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник, 22 апреля	ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва **изкор** читается во вторник, **22 апреля.** ПО ПЯТНИЦАМ КЛАДБИЩЕ ВСЕГДА ЗАКРЫВАЕТСЯ В 1PM.

### ШАВУОТ

Вторник, 3 июня	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Среда, 4 июня	ЗАКРЫТО
Четверг, 5 июня	ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва **ИЗКОР** читается в четверг, **5 июня.**

# РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

BELOW ARE TRANSLATED SUMMARIES OF THE ARTICLES  
APPEARING IN THIS ISSUE OF CHESED.

## Нам пишут

*HFBA регулярно получает письма от тех, кто пользовался услугами нашей организации. Ниже мы приводим отрывки из рассказанного в одном из писем.*

...Я работала в реанимации госпиталя Маунт Синай, когда в одну из смен скончалась от рака груди обаятельная 60-летняя женщина, бывшая учительница. В больнице её навещала только одна женщина, с которой они были коллегами. Я попыталась сделать то, что всегда делается в случае смерти пациента – оповестить по списку всех ближайших родственников. Но у умершей таковых не оказалось. Я позвонила женщине, которая навещала усопшую в больнице, но та сказала, что знает только дальних родственников, с которыми не общается. Тогда я позвонила лечащему врачу покойной, но и тот заявил, что ничего не знает о её родственниках или друзьях. Получалось, что бедняжка скончалась в одиночестве, так что некому было позаботиться о похоронах и некому было скорбеть о ней.

Ничто так не задело меня за годы ординатуры, как эта одинокая смерть. Я по-новому осознала важность связей между людьми, которые мы часто воспринимаем как нечто само собой разумеющееся.

Затем появился капеллан госпиталя и рассказал мне о Еврейском Благотворительном Похоронном Бюро (HFBA) и услугах, которые оно предоставляет. Моя пациентка была похоронена по еврейскому обряду, и с тех пор я испытываю благодарность к вашей организации.

Недавно я узнала, что и моя семья связана с HFBA. Мои прадед и прабабка, Меир и Эстер Чалфин, похоронены на одном из ваших кладбищ на Стейтен Айленд. Они были бедными иммигрантами с Украины в 1920-х, и скорее всего у них не было денег на похороны.

## HFBA помогает

Нам позвонила Светлана, мать 52-летнего Вадима Р\*, который скончался после десятидневной искусственной комы. Вадим подростком приехал с семьёй из Одессы. Вскоре после приезда его родители расстались. Отец и брат Вадима переехали, а он с матерью остались в Нью-Йорке. В двадцать лет Вадим работал в магазине и стал жертвой вооружённого ограбления. За многие годы после этого он так до конца и не оправился от своих ножевых ран. После смерти Вадима его 80-летняя мать осталась совсем одна, поскольку и отец и брат Вадима уже умерли. HFBA заказало машину для Светланы, чтобы отвезти её на похороны сына, прислало русскоговорящего сотрудника в качестве переводчика и зарезервировало для неё могилу рядом с сыном. Светлана была слишком слаба, чтобы пройти к могиле, поэтому работники кладбища несли её от дороги к месту погребальной церемонии и обратно.

*\* имена изменены*

## Живая история HFBA – Джулиан Эдельман

*Написано Эми Коплоу, исполнительный директор HFBA*

Осенью HFBA проводит день уборки кладбища Сильвер Лейк на Стейтен Айленд силами школьников и студентов-добровольцев. В один из таких дней некая Сара Эдельман, ученица ешивы Фриш в Нью-Джерси, объявила что она внучка человека, который ребёнком рос на этом кладбище. Сара оставила адрес и телефон, и позднее я связалась с её дедом, Джулианом Эдельманом, которому теперь 87 лет. Вместе с Элизабет Кеннеди, ландшафтным

архитектором HFBA, в прошлом декабре мы поехали навестить Джулиана в Бруклайн, штат Массачусетс, чтобы записать его рассказы о связи его семьи с кладбищем Сильвер Лейк.

Дядя и тётя г-на Эдельмана, Лина и Эмюэль Фридманы, во время первой мировой войны работали смотрителями на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд, также принадлежащем HFBA. В 1921-м году Лина пригласила в Нью-Йорк своего брата Давида с женой и обеспечила ему работу смотрителя за кладбищем Сильвер Лейк неподалёку.

Эдельманы были соблюдающими евреями и были счастливы поселиться в районе Томпкинсвилль на Стейтен Айленд, где в то время была большая еврейская община, а значит были и кошерная еда, и синагоги, и еврейские школы. Пара поселилась в домике на территории кладбища, и вскоре у них появились Джулиан и затем его сестра. В 1955-м Джулиан женился и уехал из домика на кладбище, а в 1957-м уехали и остальные, когда Эдельман-старший вышел на пенсию.

Джулиан улыбался, вспоминая посещения по воскресеньям «большого дома» своих дяди и тёти, где подрастали четверо детей. На самом деле Фридманы жили в квартире на втором этаже в доме, построенном на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд в 1909-м году. Джулиан также с радостью вспоминал, как учился кататься на велосипеде и на роликовых коньках по дорожкам кладбища, и то, как один зажиточный член совета директоров HFBA подарил ему тфиллин на бар-мицву. В его воспоминаниях о детстве, прошедшем в столь необычном месте, сохранились многочисленные посетители кладбища, которое в то время было скорее оживлённым, чем спокойным и торжественным.

## А знаете?

Примерно в 20% случаев официальный раввин HFBA, рав Шмуэль Плафкер, использует свой мобильный телефон во время погребального обряда. Это делается для того, чтобы родственники, которые не смогли приехать на кладбище, могли бы тем не менее слышать церемонию похорон.

## Высший балл

HFBA снова удостоилось высшей оценки (4 балла) от организации Charity Navigator, которая оценивает финансовую стабильность и прозрачность в отчётности тысяч благотворительных организаций Америки. Вот выдержки из письма этой организации в наше Бюро:

*Основываясь на последних данных, мы с гордостью заявляем, что Еврейское Благотворительное Похоронное Бюро заслуживает нашу высшую оценку – 4 балла – второй год подряд. Только 19% благотворительных организаций, которые мы оцениваем, получают эту оценку два года подряд, показывая, что Бюро «обгоняет» большинство американских благотворительных организаций. Таким образом, наша оценка «отлично» выделяет Еврейское Благотворительное Похоронное Бюро среди подобных организаций и показывает что Бюро достойно доверия общественности.*

## Размышляя о празднике Песах

Имя Моисея упомянуто в пасхальной Агаде лишь однажды, но оно пронизывает весь седеер как имя вождя израильтян во время Исхода. В Торе сказано, что после того, как Вс-вышний показал Моисею Землю Обетованную, Моисей завершил свой земной путь посредством «Б-жественного поцелуя». Хотя никто не в силах выбрать или предвидеть час собственной кончины, каждый желал бы отойти как Моисей.

HFBA помогает тем, чья жизнь была мало кому интересной, а смерть могла бы пройти и вовсе незаметно. Каждый из нас, независимо от образа жизни и обстоятельств, достоин погребения по еврейскому обряду и, как все мы надеемся, при участии «Б-жественного поцелуя».

## We Thank the Following for Their Generous Bequests to HFBA:

**Julius A. Epstein**  
**Peryl Gottesman**

**Barbara H. Guggenheim**  
**James Solomon Reiner**  
**Gisela Zamora**

*For more information about how your legacy can  
help sustain HFBA's important work, please call  
Amy Koplow, HFBA Executive Director.*

## Meet HFBA's New Board Members:

**Richard Fishman**, Suffern NY  
**Anna Kleyman**, Riverdale, NY

*If you would like to get involved  
with HFBA's important work,  
we would appreciate hearing from you!  
Please call Executive Director  
Amy Koplow at the HFBA office.*

# Chesed Shel Emet – HOW YOU CAN HELP

**REMEMBER** to include HFBA in your will with a bequest.

**ESTABLISH** an HFBA Forever Gift Annuity or Charitable Trust Plan. In addition to the guaranteed income and tax benefits, these plans ensure that HFBA's promise of a Jewish burial to future generations of indigent Jews will be fulfilled.

**CELEBRATE** a *simcha* or commemorate a loss with HFBA cards. Cards cost \$18 and can include a personalized message.

**CONTRIBUTE** to HFBA to ensure an annual *Yahrzeit* reminder for your lost loved ones.

**INSTITUTE** a perpetual *Yahrzeit Kaddish* for your loved one for a donation of \$180.

**ARRANGE** for *kaddish* to be said for the eleven month mourning period following a death of a relative or friend for a donation of \$360.

**DONATE** unused graves. If the graves are not part of a burial society or family plot and are located in New York or New Jersey, please consider donating them to HFBA and receiving a tax deduction for your gift.

**SPONSOR** perpetual grave care for an indigent's grave for \$600.

**ENROLL** a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in our "Mitzvah Circle" by suggesting a gift to HFBA to your guests. The generous child who shares his/her *simcha* in this way receives a framed certificate.

**VOLUNTEER** with your friends, classmates, fellow group members, or family at our cemeteries as part of our Cemetery Clean-Up Project.

**GET INVOLVED** as a professional with HFBA by donating your expertise and skills in an area that can help us.

### Donate Your Vehicle



**Perform the  
GREATEST MITZVAH!**

Help every Jew receive a dignified  
traditional Jewish funeral and burial.

IRS tax deduction as allowable by law. Free towing!

**(212) 239-1662**  
info@hebrewfreeburial.org  
www.hebrewfreeburial.org

**The Hebrew Free Burial Association**

## PLEASE HELP OUT TODAY BY SENDING A DONATION IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE.

THE HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION was formed in 1888 on Manhattan's Lower East Side by a group of philanthropic and community-minded Jews who were committed to burying their indigent dead according to Jewish tradition, rather than having them buried in a mass grave in City Cemetery. Since its inception HFBA has interred over 65,000 Jews in its two cemeteries. HFBA is also committed to retrieving the identities of those interred and is attempting to provide a gravestone for each unmarked grave.



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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