

## 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 New York metropolitan area dedicated to assuring that every Jew, regardless of financial means or religious affiliation, receives a dignified, traditional Jewish funeral and burial.

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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 60,000 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.

For more information about how you can help please see page 6.

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# Chesed

## HFBA Helps

Ezra R.\* was a happily married twenty three year old man, working in an architectural firm, when his life was forever shattered.

Criminals burst into his New York City home, killing his wife and leaving him for dead with a bullet in his brain. Although he somehow survived, the traumatic brain injury forced him to live in nursing homes for the next forty years. Only one month after a recent move to an apartment in an assisted living facility, he died suddenly.

Ezra's sister, who had been in sporadic contact with him, insisted on an autopsy by the Medical Examiner to establish whether his death was caused by the brain injury sustained in the attack decades before, thereby allowing her to press further charges against the criminals who had ruined her brother's life. Only after an astonishingly long period of three months did the Medical Examiner release the body and did Ezra's sister agree to allow HFBA to bury her brother, rather than the non-Jewish agency she had initially contacted.

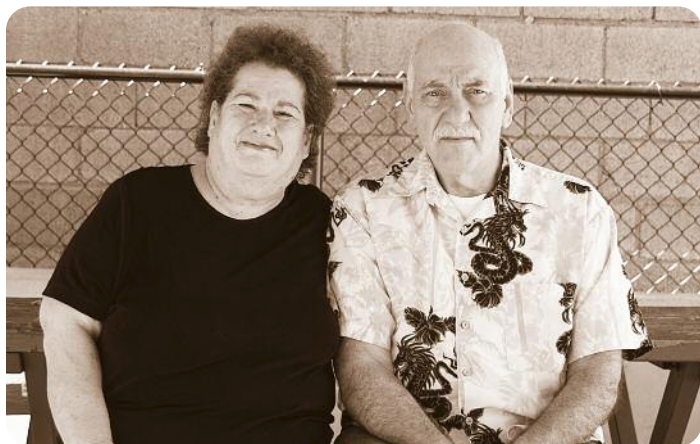
At the age of sixty three, this unfortunate Jewish man was laid to rest in the sacred grounds of Mount Richmond Cemetery. The funeral was attended by a *minyan* of HFBA volunteers from the Staten Island Jewish community.



\*Name has been changed to protect confidentiality

## Bernard and Eileen Gellman and HFBA's "Leave Your Mark" Campaign

Twenty years ago, Eileen Gellman happened upon a copy of the HFBA Chesed newsletter in her synagogue during the High Holy Days. She was moved and impressed by the unique mission of HFBA, burying poor and forgotten Jews with the same dignity and ritual with which their more fortunate brothers and sisters are laid to rest. Eileen and her husband Bernard committed themselves to, as Eileen described it, supporting the "wonderful work" of HFBA by engaging in "the highest form of charity where the receiver does not know the giver and the giver expects nothing in return."



The Gellmans were childhood sweethearts and just celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. They raised two children in Queens, NY while Bernard worked as an electrician for the New York City Fire Department and the Merchant Marine Academy and Eileen worked for the Queens Library. Contributing to HFBA gives them a great deal of satisfaction, knowing that their efforts have helped those who cannot speak for themselves, who otherwise would have been forgotten, lying in unmarked graves. They mark each holiday and family occasion, including the recent birth of their first grandson, with a charitable donation to HFBA's "Leave Your Mark" campaign. To date the Gellman's contributions have marked 67 graves!

As Eileen says, "One person at a time can help change the world and make it a better place." Certainly the

Gellmans are models of the Jewish values of *chesed shel emet* (acts of lovingkindness) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world.) We are grateful to them for their loyal, steadfast support and wish them many healthy years together enjoying each other and their growing family.

*Thank you, Eileen and Bernard.*

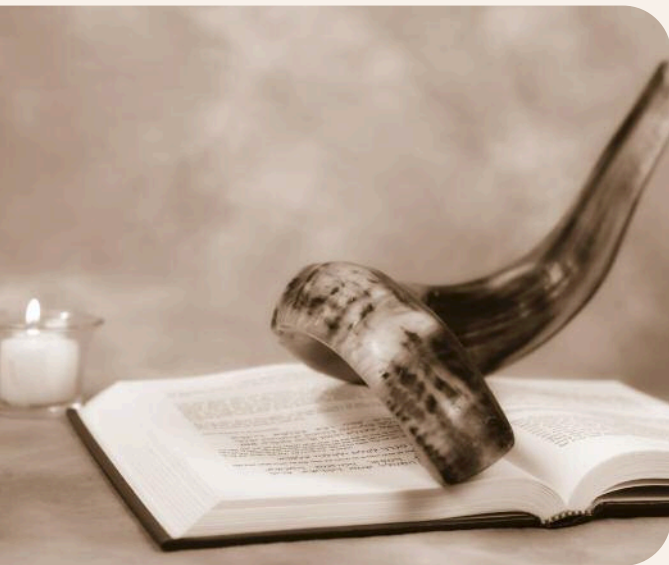
"LEAVE YOUR MARK" by sponsoring a grave marker for an unmarked grave for a donation of \$150 and you will receive a framed certificate. Sponsor four markers and a plaque with your name will be added to our roster at the Weinberg Chapel at Mount Richmond Cemetery.

We are pleased to announce that the following names have been added to our

### Leave Your Mark

Donor Plaque in the Weinberg Chapel at Mount Richmond Cemetery:

NAOMI AND HAL DORFMAN  
ZEV AND JOY FELDSTEIN  
RABBI ELIEZER GEVIRTZ  
SEYMOUR AND RHODA KATZ  
STUART AND VIVIANE KOENIG  
DAVID MASLANSKY  
THOMAS H. MAUPIN  
NECHEMIA AARON OBERSTEIN  
FRIMA AND NEIL PETERS  
RALPH L. SCHWARTZ  
SHANI AND DAVID SCHWARTZ  
DIANE A. TOHN  
LILLIAN ZEIDES



**As the High Holy Days** approach, Jews are exhorted to repent for their misdeeds, to pray and to give charity to avert an "evil decree," beseech God's mercy and face the future confident that the coming year will be filled with blessing.

In that spirit, we hope that you will consider a generous contribution to help HFBA perform its sacred task of burying poor, isolated and forgotten Jews. This act of *chesed shel emet* towards the deceased is considered the highest form of *tzedakah* (charity) in Jewish teaching.

**We wish all HFBA supporters, their families, and the entire Jewish community a happy, healthy New Year!**



## Dear HFBA

*There are truly no words that could ever express my deep gratitude to Hebrew Free Burial Association. Brad's burial was done so very compassionately and was so very beautiful. It provided a sense of great comfort to me and I am so very thankful that he was laid to rest in your cemetery. It will remain among my most precious of memories. The beautiful ceremony uplifted the spirits of everyone... Thank you again to ...the loving (HFBA) staff in helping to bring Brad to his place of rest... With much gratitude, thank you always.*

P.N.

*I just wanted to thank you for your help and patience- it is really important to know that a person is not alone when facing the death of a loved one... Your organization is doing a really blessed job of helping grieving people to lay to rest someone very dear. Our special thanks to Rabbi Plafker...his words of compassion were so kind and wise...that it made it almost bearable to say our last good-byes.*

I.F.

*We cannot thank you enough for all the time and effort you devoted to bringing our neighbor Carol Lowy to rest beside her mother... After a sad life, Carol died, as she had lived, unhappy and alone, but you...brought her to a final and dignified end, making it possible for her to rest in peace beside her beloved*

*mother. It is a mitzvah beyond compare... Enclosed, with our heartfelt thanks, is our own contribution in Carol's memory.*

B.H.

*I wanted to take a moment to thank you for the service your company provides. Having had to make arrangements once before and experienced the insensitivity of some people and institutions, it was a weight lifted off my already burdened shoulders... Thank you, thank you, from the bottom of my heart.*

V.E.

**(The following letter was written by a rabbi, a member of the staff in a hospice, who had to overcome resistance to burying a deceased patient in a Jewish cemetery.)**

*Thank you for your loving care of Mrs. Theodore. The staff was very moved by the service and explanations the Rabbi shared. I truly believe that G-d had a hand in bringing her to you. The kindness (the staff) received from their initial call to Hebrew Free Burial, to the professionalism of the man who picked her up and the personalization and education from the Rabbi... It is my prayer that Jewish patients' plans will be handled in a more respectful manner thanks to all that you and your organization accomplished.*

Rabbi R.R.

*\*Names have been changed to protect confidentiality*

# Baruch Dayan Emet



HFBA mourns the loss of Anna Leist who passed away on July 15th at the age of 87.

Anna worked with HFBA from the late 1960's until her retirement in 2002. Although she first worked as a clerk in the office, she eventually assumed the job of coordinating funeral arrangements for HFBA clients.

Anna's life was a hard one. After the death of her mother and her father's expulsion from their home in Germany, she and her six siblings were placed in an orphanage and then sent to another orphanage in England, arriving with the *kindertransport*. She immigrated to the United States after the war, married and had two sons. Unfortunately, she soon became a single mother of young children and, having to support them, found a job, and her calling, with HFBA.

Anna dedicated her life's work to *chesed shel emet*. May her memory be a blessing.

## Q&A

**Q:** *Is there a suggested phrase to recite upon learning of a death?*

**A:** Yes, "*baruch dayan ha-emet*," "*Blessed is the true judge*." This implies acceptance of the Divine will even during a time of hardship.



**To make a secure online donation from our website, you can scan this QR Code with your smartphone.**

# Silver Lake Cemetery Restoration Project Update

An important non-invasive geophysical survey of the cemetery was completed, resulting in the identification of 223 rows of marked and unmarked graves. In most locations, individual graves could not be precisely designated although the rows of burials were easily detected. An archaeologist is verifying and consolidating the information from the new surveys with HFBA's archival data, and will prepare an index to identify specific graves as holding particular remains. However, because the cemetery was filled with thousands of graves spaced closely together over a relatively short period of less than twenty years, and because it appears that small graves for children were inserted between graves for adults, the accuracy of the historic record is unclear. It is hoped that with more research, it will be possible to erect memorial markers with the names of the decedents buried in each row, if not in a particular grave.



HFBA 1901 archival image

We hope you, our supporters, will generously support this effort to restore the dignity of those interred in the cemetery's sacred grounds as well as help to complete the restoration of this historic Jewish burial ground.

*To discuss opportunities to underwrite major portions of this project, please contact Amy Koplrow, HFBA Executive Director.*

# РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

## HFBA помогает

В свои двадцать три года Эзра Р\* уже работал в архитектурной фирме и был счастливо женат. И все это рухнуло в ту ночь, когда грабители ворвались в нью-йоркский дом Эзры, убили его жену и были уверены, что убили и самого Эзру. Он выжил, но из-за ранения головы стал инвалидом и следующие сорок лет провел в клиниках и домах для престарелых. Наконец он смог переехать в отдельную квартиру в доме с постоянной сиделкой, но всего через месяц после переезда Эзра скоропостижно скончался.

Сестра Эзры, которая изредка навещала его все эти годы, настояла на проведении вскрытия городским прозектором, чтобы доказать, что смерть была вызвана повреждением мозга в результате давнишнего нападения. Это позволяло ей усилить обвинения против преступников, которые разрушили жизнь ее брата. Через долгих три месяца городская администрация выдала тело Эзры, и его сестра, которая изначально планировала похоронить Эзру через нееврейскую организацию, согласилась, чтобы погребение была проведено Еврейским Благотворительным Похоронным Бюро (HFBA). Этот несчастливый еврейский мужчина был похоронен в возрасте шестидесяти трех лет на освященной традицией земле кладбища Маунт Ричмонд. На погребении присутствовал мишьян добровольцев HFBA из еврейской общины Стейтен Айленда.

\* имена изменены

## Новости проекта по восстановлению кладбища Сильвер Лейк

Была закончена дистанционная геофизическая съемка кладбища Сильвер Лейк, которая позволила выявить 223 ряда как отмеченных, так и неотмеченных могил. Ряды могил выделялись очень ясно, но отдельные могилы внутри рядов редко можно было идентифицировать. Работник архива подготовил список большинства похороненных здесь, но кладбище заполнялось очень быстро (тысячи могил менее чем за двадцать лет), к тому же много небольших детских могил было вставлено между взрослыми могилами, поэтому точность этого списка не стопроцентна. Мы надеемся, что, благодаря дополнительным исследованиям, будет возможно установить мемориальные таблички с именами всех, похороненных в каждом ряду могил, если уж невозможно определить каждую отдельную могилу.

Мы очень надеемся на вашу поддержку и щедрое пожертвования, чтобы восстановить достоинство всех, кто погребен на этой земле, и чтобы помочь завершить реставрацию исторического еврейского кладбища Сильвер Лейк.

*Если Вы хотите обсудить возможность оплатить существенную часть этого проекта, просьба обратиться к Эми Коплоу, исполнительному директору HFBA.*

## Приближающиеся праздники

По мере приближения торжественных праздников – Нового Года и Йом Кипур – евреи стараются раскаяться в своих прегрешениях, молиться и больше давать на благотворительность, чтобы избежать «сурового приговора» в Йом Кипур, снискать милость Вс-вышнего и встретить наступающий год в уверенности, что он будет наполнен благословениями. В свете всего этого мы надеемся, что вы запланируете щедрое пожертвование, чтобы помочь HFBA в исполнении священного долга – хоронить бедных, часто одиноких и позабытых евреев. Это деяние хесед шель эмет (милость к усопшим) считается высшей ступенью цедэки (благотворительности) в еврейском учении.

Мы желаем всем, кто нас поддерживает, их семьям, и всей еврейской общине счастья и здоровья в Новом Году!

## Нам пишут

Я просто хочу поблагодарить за вашу помощь и терпение – так важно было чувствовать, что ты не одинок, когда покидает любимый и близкий человек. ... Ваша организация делает воистинно благословенную работу, помогая скорбящим отправить в последний путь кого-то, кто был бесконечно дорог. ... Наша особая благодарность раввину Плафкеру за его добрые и мудрые слова сочувствия. Они сделали нашу утрату и последнее прощание не столь невыносимыми.

И. Ф.

Мы не можем в полной мере выразить нашу благодарность за ваши усилия и время, потраченные на погребение нашей соседки Кэрл Лоуи рядом с ее любимой матерью. Кэрл скончалась одинокой и несчастной, но вы сделали все возможное, чтобы ее проводили в последний путь с достоинством и согласно традиции. Теперь она покоится в мире рядом с близким ей человеком. Это – мицва, несравнимая с другими добрыми делами. ... С нашей глубочайшей признательностью мы прилагаем наше пожертвование в память о Кэрл.

Б. Х.

# Mount Richmond Cemetery Hours

## JEWISH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE — Fall 2012

Throughout the year, the cemetery **closes at 1:00 PM every Friday.**

Sunday, Sept. 16	Erev Rosh Hashana	9AM-3:45PM
Monday, Sept. 17	Rosh Hashana	Closed
Tuesday, Sept. 18	Rosh Hashana	Closed
Tuesday, Sept. 25	Erev Yom Kippur	9AM-1PM SHARP
Wednesday, Sept. 26	Yom Kippur	Closed
Sunday, Sept. 30	Erev Succot	9AM-3:45PM
Monday, Oct. 1	Succot	Closed
Tuesday, Oct. 2	Succot	Closed
Sunday, Oct. 7	Hoshanah Rabbah	9AM-3:45PM
Monday, Oct. 8	Shemini Atzeret	Closed
Tuesday, Oct. 9	Simchat Torah	Closed

*YIZKOR* is recited on **Yom Kippur, September 26,** and **Shemini Atzeret, October 8.**

# График работы кладбища Mt. Richmond

## в еврейские праздники - Осень 2012 г.

Пожалуйста, имейте ввиду, что **по пятницам,** кладбище **всегда закрывается раньше, в 1:00 дня.**  
**В субботу** кладбище **всегда закрыто на Шаббат.**

Воскресенье, 16 сентября	канун Нового Года	с 9:00 утра до 3:45 дня
Понедельник, 17 сентября	Новый Год	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник, 18 сентября	Новый Год	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник, 25 сентября	канун Йом Киппура	с 9:00 утра до 1:00 дня
Среда, 26 сентября	Йом Киппур	ЗАКРЫТО
Воскресенье, 30 сентября	канун Суккота	с 9:00 утра до 3:45 дня
Понедельник, 1 октября	Суккот	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник, 2 октября	Суккот	ЗАКРЫТО
Воскресенье, 7 октября	Хошана Раба	с 9:00 утра до 3:45 дня
Понедельник, 8 октября	Шмини Ацерет	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник, 9 октября	Симхат Тора	ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва ИЦКОР читается в **Йом Киппур (26 сентября)** и на **Шмини Ацерет (8 октября)**

## CHESED SHEL EMET—HOW YOU CAN HELP

**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.

**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 \$15 and can include a personalized message.

**PLACE** HFBA *tzedakah* boxes in a house of *shiva* or in your home, school or local kosher establishment.

**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.

**DONATE** your property, used vehicle or boat to HFBA and receive a generous tax deduction.

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

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

**GIVE** us your old *talleisim* for use as part of the dress for deceased men who HFBA will be called upon to bury.

**USE** your clerical skills in our midtown office as a volunteer.

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

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