

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.

תורת אבות חסד של אמת
The Hebrew Free Burial Association

Chesed

VOLUME 15, NUMBER 3 • PESACH 5769 • APRIL 2009

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 Potter's Field. Since its inception HFBA has interred nearly 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 8.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bryan Alter, Esq.	Richard Miller
Lawrence Askowitz	Yitzhak Pastreich
Herbert Block	Minna Monte Seitelman
Andrew Feinman	Ilya Temchenko, Esq.
Jack M. Gross	Jack Weiss, Esq.
Andrea Harris	Daniel Werlin
Gary Katz	

RABBINIC ADVISOR

Rabbi Elchonon Zohn

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Amy Koplow

CEMETERY CHAPLAIN

Rabbi Shmuel Plafker

CHESED IS PUBLISHED BY THE HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION

Renée Septimus, Editor Adam Rawson, Graphic Designer

224 WEST 35TH STREET, ROOM 300
NEW YORK, NY 10001
PHONE: (212) 239-1662
FAX: (212) 239-1981
EMAIL: INFO@HEBREWFREEBURIAL.ORG
WEB: WWW.HEBREWFREEBURIAL.ORG

UJA Federation
of New York

JEWISH MOURNING PRACTICES

Jewish law and tradition mandate very specific ways of caring for the deceased. The overriding principle is *kavot hamet* (respect for the dead) from the moment of death until the body is buried. The community's *chevra kadisha* (literally, "holy society") is entrusted with the preparation of the body for burial. The funeral takes place as close to the time of death as possible, preferably within 24 hours.

After death has been determined, the *chevra* is called upon to ensure that the deceased is covered and is never left alone. Autopsies are done only under unusual circumstances and embalming is forbidden as is cremation.

The members of the *chevra* perform the *tahara* (ritual cleansing) of the body which is done with utmost modesty and respect by men for men, and by women for women. After cleansing, the body is clothed in white linen, cotton or muslin shrouds, consisting of a full set of clothes- headcover, shirt, trousers, *caat* (or *kittel*) and belt. Men are also dressed in a *tallit* (prayer shawl). The body is placed into a plain wood coffin.

"The Jewish funeral is a starkly simple, but emotionally meaningful, farewell to the deceased," as Rabbi Maurice Lamm states in *The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning*. The garments of the primary mourners (spouse, children, siblings, parents) are torn with a small tear as a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



THOUGHTS FOR PASSOVER

One of the foremost Jewish values is the giving of charity which in Hebrew is *tzedakah*, literally translated as “righteousness.” This implies that both the act of giving, as well as the giver himself, is “righteous,” meaning honorable and just.

The Passover *seder* begins with an invitation to all to participate, especially those who need a place to eat and drink. In that spirit, let us commit ourselves to many acts of *tzedakah*, not only to benefit the recipient, but to ennoble us as well.



ARE YOU PREPARED?

Although it is difficult to face one’s own mortality, it is important to prepare as much as possible for the inevitable. As people live longer, more attention is being directed to the medical, legal and ethical issues surrounding the end of life.

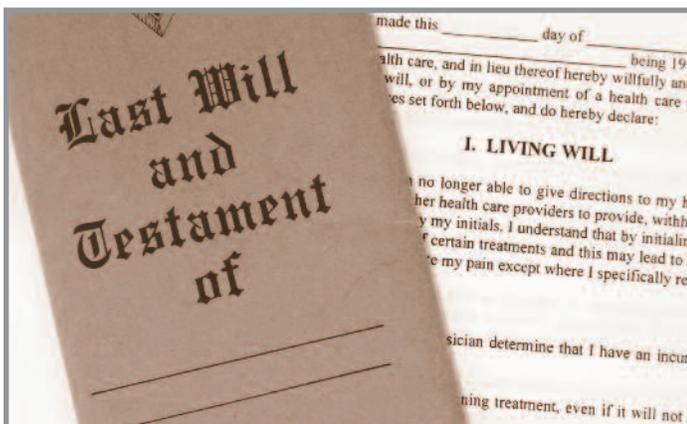
Professionals recommend that individuals should arrange to have the following “advance directives:”

A **health care proxy** and **living will**: Different versions of the living will may be accessed on the internet. There are also *halachic* living wills (www.jlaw.com, www.rabbis.org) which conform to Jewish law. The

health care proxy is the legal agent who makes decisions in place of the “principal,” in this case, an “incompetent” patient. He can be guided by the living will which is a statement by the principal as to how he would want to be treated in the event of serious, possibly or probably, terminal, illness.

Power of Attorney: A legal document granting an “agent” the power to handle various financial affairs. It is especially important in the case of mental or physical incapacitation or incompetence. Power of attorney ceases to be in effect upon death of an individual and does not provide for burial directions.

“Pre-need” funeral arrangements: This may be arranged with a funeral director or with HFBA if one meets certain income eligibility guidelines. An escrow account is set up based on current funeral prices which guarantees that the monies will exist for an eventual burial. This is especially important if one anticipates the eventuality of residing in a nursing home, of applying for Medicaid or of having no next-of-kin to make arrangements. ***For more information, please call the HFBA office.***



HFBA HELPS



HFBA deals with a tremendous variety of cases. Below are samples of the stories of the people we help.

Karen G. had been mentally ill, was a ward of the state, and had resided in a variety of mental health facilities for the past 15 years. She died, leaving no assets and no family. Coincidentally, at the same time HFBA was applying to the office of the Public Administrator for permission to bury her, our cemetery staff had received an order of stones for the Leave Your Mark campaign. As the stones were being unloaded, the staff recognized that the last name on one of the stones was the same as the burial scheduled for the next day. Checking our records, we realized that the two were siblings and that some years ago, Karen had authorized her brother's burial in the HFBA's Mount Richmond Cemetery. HFBA buried Karen near her brother.

Peter S., a young chef living in Pennsylvania, committed suicide, leaving no immediate family. His friend, a funeral director for a non-Jewish funer-

al home there, drove the deceased to New York where HFBA arranged for his burial. Peter's cousin in France contacted her son in Brooklyn who arranged for a *minyan* at the cemetery.

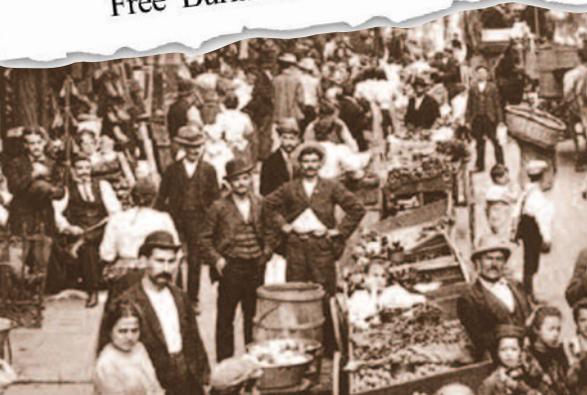
Note: Although traditionally suicides were buried in a special part of a Jewish cemetery, contemporary Jewish legal scholars have ruled more permissively endorsing the view that suicide is a result of severe mental illness

Ilene's mother, a survivor of Bergen-Belsen, brought her to the U.S. where Ilene became bedridden with a severe form of multiple sclerosis while in her twenties. At the age of fifty-six, Ilene died and was taken to a non-Jewish funeral home. The funeral director there, recognizing that Ilene's surname was Jewish, thought that this was a case for a Jewish funeral home. He called a local rabbi who he remembered from a previous job, and this rabbi then contacted HFBA. We were told that Ilene had a cousin in Israel, who we called. He informed us that a cousin from the Netherlands was on his way to spend Passover with Ilene. HFBA retrieved Ilene's remains and instead of spending the holiday with her, the Dutch cousin attended her funeral at our Mount Richmond Cemetery.

The New York Times

NEW YORK, MONDAY, MARCH 13, 1916

No Jews In Potter's Field
Free Burial Association Has Provided 1,253 Graves in a Year



This article appeared in *The New York Times* on March 13, 1916. It describes one moving case, Nathan Cohen "known as the man without a country, who spent the last years of his life on a liner traveling from port to port because no nation would allow a man in his state of health to land." HFBA told the *Times* that since its inception, "no Jew has been buried in Potters Field." The organization had 4000 members in 1916 and 500 attended the annual meeting as reported by the *Times*.

To read the original article online please go to:
<http://tinyurl.com/hfba1916>

HFBA'S INAUGURAL RUSSIAN CULTURAL EVENT

On February 22, 2009, HFBA hosted a cultural event for the Russian community in commemoration of our 120 years of service to the immigrant community. Russian visual artists exhibited their work and several well-known Russian poets read their poetry to an enthusiastic, appreciative audience.

HFBA was proud to highlight the cultural contributions of New York's dynamic Russian Jewish community!



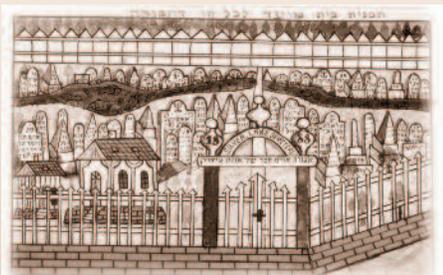
Vladimir Efrainson reads from his work.

"CHESED DAY" AT SILVER LAKE CEMETERY

Please join us to clean and clear
Silver Lake Cemetery on
Sunday, April 26, 2009 from 12 to 2 pm.

We appreciate your participation individually or as a member of a group. To make arrangements, please call the HFBA office, 212-239-1662 or contact Andrew Parver at aparver@hebrewfreeburial.org.

Thank you in advance for participating in this most important *mitzvah*!



HFBA archival image of Silver Lake Cemetery

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE

Perform the
GREATEST MITZVAH!

Provide Burial for a Poor Jew
IRS Tax Deduction as Allowable by Law
FREE TOWING



Phone: (212) 239-1662 • Email: info@hebrewfreeburial.org
Web: www.hebrewfreeburial.org

Many companies offer **matching gifts** to employees. Please consider sending a matching gift form with your donation. Doing so is an easy way for you to enhance your donation to HFBA.

РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

Вечер для Русскоязычной Общины

На протяжении трех десятков лет HFBA продолжает оказывать огромную помощь еврейским иммигрантам из бывшего Советского Союза. Только в 2008 году похороны русскоязычных евреев составили почти треть всех похорон организованных ассоциацией. 22 февраля состоялся первый в истории HFBA вечер для русскоязычной еврейской общины. В программе вечера, посвященного 120 летию Ассоциации, приняли участие известные поэты и художники, представившие свои работы для выставки-аукциона. HFBA выражает благодарность русскоязычной общине и всем участникам этого замечательного вечера и надеется, что он станет ежегодным событием.

Мысли накануне Праздника Песах

Участие в благотворительности – одна из самых важных заповедей иудаизма. Справедливость акта благодетельности и благородство того, кто его совершает, отражено в слове «цедака», что обозначает праведность. Завет гостеприимства является продолжением завета благотворительности. Пасхальный Седер начинается с приглашения тех, кто нуждается в пище и крове, как гласит Хагада: «Пусть все голодные войдут и едят, пусть все нуждающиеся придут и празднуют Песах». Соблюдение благородной заповеди цедаки не только помогает нуждающимся, но и способствует нашему духовному росту, учит сопереживанию и милосердию.

Еврейские традиции похорон и траура.

Еврейский похоронный обряд определен религиозным законом, главный принцип которого - уважение к умершему (*kavot hamet*). Подготовка тела умершего к похоронам производится членами похоронного общества "Хевра кадиша" (буквально - "святое братство"), которые совершают ритуальное омовение тела; женщины- для женщин, мужчины- для мужчин. Затем умершего одевают в похоронные одежды (*tachrichim*), сделанные из белого льна, хлопка или муслина, а на мужчин также одевают талис - молитвенное покрывало. Тело умершего должно быть предано земле в течении 24 часов, если этому нет легальных препятствий. Бальзамирование и кремация запрещены еврейским законом, а медицинское вскрытие разрешается только в особых обстоятельствах. Хоронят в простом деревянном гробу, который закрывают сразу, опять же из уважения к покойному.

"Еврейские похороны - очень простые, но прощание вызывает огромный духовный отклик", - пишет раввин Морис Ламм в книге "Смерть и траур в иудаизме". На

одежде родственников, на которых распространяются законы траура делается небольшой надрыв - *криа*, символизирующий утрату. После чтения Псалмов и поминальной молитвы *Kayl malay rachamim* члены семьи и друзья заполняют могилу землей, после чего читается особенный погребальный каддиш. Сразу же после похорон начинается неделя траура *shiva*, когда соблюдающие траур принимают людей пришедших выразить соболезнования, обычно в доме покойного.

Очень важно помнить, что ритуал еврейских похорон одинаков для всех, независимо от их успехов при жизни, финансового и общественного положения.

Этим принципом и руководствуется благотворительная ассоциация HFBA, которая уже 120 лет организывает похороны малоимущих евреев, со строгим соблюдением еврейских похоронных традиций и обычаев. С помощью HFBA Вы также можете заказать каддиш для ежедневного прочтения или на годовщину смерти, позвонив нам по тел. 212-239-1662.

Важность заблаговременной подготовки к неизбежному

Доверенность на принятие медицинских решений – Health Care Proxy. По законам штата Нью-Йорк человек может назначить доверенное лицо для принятия медицинских решений на случай утраты способности принимать решения самостоятельно. Агент по принятию медицинских решений - health care proxy, может иметь различную степень полномочий, например, принимать конкретные или же любые медицинские решения. Медицинские работники обязаны выполнять решения агентов так же, как решения самих пациентов.

Living Will - Распоряжение о жизни используется в случае, если человек не в состоянии сам дать указания для принятия необходимого медицинского решения. В отличие от доверенности на принятие медицинских решений, которая дает полномочия по принятию медицинских решений доверенному лицу (агенту), распоряжение о жизни – это письменное заявление с изложением воли самого человека в отношении медицинского лечения. Целесообразно подготовить оба документа, чтобы уполномоченный смог осуществить директивы согласно воле доверителя указанной в распоряжении о жизни. Различные распоряжения о жизни, включая версии подготовленные в соответствии с еврейским законом

MOURNING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

symbolic rending of the mourner's soul for the loss. The service consists of eulogies and the recital of Psalms and the memorial prayer (*Kayl malay rachamim.*). At the conclusion, the casket is escorted to the hearse and then to the cemetery.

After the casket is placed in the earth, prayers are recited and the grave is filled in, usually by family members and close friends of the deceased. A special "burial *kaddish*" is recited and the mourners pass between two parallel rows of survivors who recite words of comfort. The mourners proceed to the home in which the *shiva* (week of mourning) will be held, usually the home of the deceased, to receive comfort from visitors.

Each year on the eve of the *yahrzeit* (the anniversary of the death according to the Hebrew calendar), a 24-hour candle is lit and during the evening, morning and afternoon synagogue services, mourners recite the mourner's *kaddish*. Although this is obligatory for sons to say for their parents, it is often said for other

relatives as well. If there is no son or no close relative available to assume the obligation, it is customary for someone else to recite the *kaddish* on the departed soul.

The Jewish customs surrounding death and mourning are intrinsically democratic. There is no difference in the service, clothing or casket of a wealthy or poor Jew, one of high social status or one isolated from the community.

For those who lack the resources to be buried according to Jewish custom, HFBA can assure a funeral and burial according to the highest Jewish standards. HFBA can also arrange for the kaddish to be said on the anniversaries of the loss. Please call the office for more information and to make arrangements.



Продолжение. Начало на 5-й стр.

можно найти на интернете, например на сайтах www.ilaw.com, www.rabbis.org.

Power of Attorney - Доверенность- на распоряжение собственностью дает право доверенному лицу/лицам управлять имуществом и делами доверителя, за исключением, как правило, полномочий в отношении завещания. Доверенность может быть генеральной или ограниченной, а долговременная доверенность остается в силе даже в случае недееспособности доверителя, что особенно важно в случае непредвиденных обстоятельств. В отличие от завещания, **Power of Attorney** утрачивает юридическую силу после смерти доверителя и не включает в себя распоряжений о похоронах.

«Pre-need» funeral arrangements - Предварительная оплата похоронных услуг может быть осуществлена с

помощью HFBA при посредничестве похоронного директора. После заключения официального контракта с похоронным домом, сумма, отложенная на похороны, кладется на специальный счет - *escrow account*, гарантируя таким образом наличие фондов на похороны, когда они понадобятся. **Предварительная оплата** имеет смысл особенно в ситуациях, когда предполагается возможное проживание человека в доме для престарелых/инвалидов, получение страховки Medicaid, или же если нет родственников, способных организовать похороны. Тем, у кого не достаточно фондов для оплаты **Pre-Need Arrangement**, мы рекомендуем поставить в известность **HFBA**, а также назначить доверенное лицо из друзей и близких, которое сообщит нам о кончине. По всем вопросам, связанным с планированием похорон, просим звонить в по тел. **212-239-1662**.

MOUNT RICHMOND CEMETERY

2009 HOURS OF OPERATION DURING PASSOVER AND SHAVUOT HOLIDAYS

Please note that the cemetery will be closing early on the day prior to each festival.

PASSOVER

Wednesday	April 8, 2009	Erev Passover	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Thursday	April 9, 2009	1st day of Passover	CLOSED
Friday	April 10, 2009	2nd day of Passover	CLOSED
Saturday	April 11, 2009	Shabbat	CLOSED
Sunday	April 12, 2009	Chol Hamoed	9AM – 3:45 PM
Monday	April 13, 2009	Chol Hamoed	9AM – 3:45 PM
Tuesday	April 14, 2009	Erev Yom Tov	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Wednesday	April 15, 2009	7th day of Passover	CLOSED
Thursday	April 16, 2009	Last Day of Passover	CLOSED

SHAVUOT

Thursday	May 28, 2009	Erev Shavuot	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Friday	May 29, 2009	Shavuot	CLOSED
Saturday	May 30, 2009	Shavuot	CLOSED

YIZKOR is recited on the last day of the holiday: Thursday, April 16 and on Saturday, May 30.

Весна 2009 г. -Расписание работы кладбища Mt. Richmond во время праздников Песах (Еврейской Пасха) и Шавуот

ПЕСАХ

Среда	8 апреля 2009 г.	Канун Песаха	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Четверг	9 апреля 2009 г.	первый день Пасхи	Закрыто
Пятница	10 апреля 2009 г.	второй день Пасхи	Закрыто
Суббота	11 апреля 2009 г.	Шабат	Закрыто
Воскресенье	12 апреля 2009 г.		9AM – 3:45 PM
Понедельник	13 апреля 2009 г.		9AM – 3:45 PM
Вторник	14 апреля 2009 г.		9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Среда	15 апреля 2009 г.	седьмой день пасхи	Закрыто
Четверг	16 апреля 2009 г.	последний день пасхи	Закрыто

Шавуот

Четверг	28 мая	Канун Шавуота	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Пятница	29 мая	Шавуот	Закрыто
Суббота	30 мая	Шавуот	Закрыто

Поминальная молитва **ИЗКОР** читается в **четверг, 16 апреля** и в **субботу, 30 мая**.

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:



- SIDNEY G. ADLER
- HELEN BEDERMAN
- MICHAEL J. CLEMENT
- BARBARA FINKELSTEIN
- SARI FISHMAN
- RABBI URI GOLDSTEIN,
CONGREGATION AHAVAT ACHIM
- CHARLES AND ILENE GREINSKY
- SANDRA RUBINSTEIN

Please consider adding your name by sponsoring four grave markers for unmarked graves for \$600.

CHESED SHEL EMET—HOW YOU CAN HELP

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

CELEBRATE a *simcha* or commemorate a loss with HFBA cards. Cards cost \$15 and can include a personalized message.

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.

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.

REMEMBER to include HFBA in your will with a bequest.

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

“**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.

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.

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

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.



Original pushka from 1909 at HFBA’s Mount Richmond Cemetery

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