

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.

אגודת אחים חסיד של אמת
The Hebrew
Free Burial
ASSOCIATION

Chesed

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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 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 6.

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UJA Federation
of New York

THE WINTER OF 2011

This winter's snow, ice and extreme cold made it a particularly challenging season for HFBA at its Mount Richmond Cemetery on Staten Island.

The first large storm of the season on December 26 dumped over two feet of snow on the Island. Streets remained unplowed for days and snowplows were in short supply.

HFBA was able to accommodate one funeral that Sunday morning but was unable to reopen for the next two days until the cemetery could be adequately plowed. Despite January and February's heavy snowfalls, Mount Richmond did remain open and fully functioning thanks to the dedication of Yosi Shalem, the Mount Richmond Cemetery superintendent and his staff, and Shy Shalem, head of the maintenance crew.



AFTER THE DEC. 26 STORM, MANY MONUMENTS AT MOUNT RICHMOND CEMETERY WERE TOTALLY COVERED BY SNOW.

As he does each year in the fall, Yosi had protected the burial areas in advance by covering them with wood-chips, so that the ground would be at a higher temperature than the air and the surrounding frozen area. This way the graves could be dug out as needed. Shy and his crew often worked well into the night after a storm to prepare the cemetery for burials the next day.

When there is a large snowfall, the cemetery's roads must be plowed and there must be access to the grave for the equipment, the gravediggers and those attending the funeral. In some instances, because of inaccessibility, some graves had to be dug by hand as there was no room for the heavy equipment to move in and excavate. Nonetheless, there were 72 burials in our cemetery from December 26 through March 15.

We are grateful to our dedicated staff. *Yasher koach!*

HFBA SPEAKERS BUREAU

HFBA can provide a speaker for your synagogue, school or organization. We can tailor the presentation to your needs and interests. Among others, topics include *Chesed Shel Emet*—the last, most loving *mitzvah*, HFBA services and pre-need arrangements, and the history of Jewish poverty in New York.

There is no charge for this service but donations are appreciated.

Please call the HFBA office for more information.

THE EXODUS AND THE BONES OF JOSEPH

The narrative arc of the story of the Exodus begins and ends with the biblical figure, Joseph. Joseph was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, became a viceroy in the pharaoh's court and enabled his estranged family to settle in Egypt to escape a famine in their homeland of Canaan. Subsequent to Joseph's death, a new pharaoh rose to power, one who did not "know Joseph" (Exodus, 1:8). This pharaoh enslaved the descendents of Jacob and later freed the budding Israelite nation of twelve tribes.



The story of Passover is well known. An interesting portion of the larger story, however, involves the promise Joseph extracted from his family to bring his bones with them to the land of Israel when they eventually left Egypt. The *medrash* tells us that immediately prior to leaving, Moses was looking for

Joseph's remains and turned to Serach, the daughter of Asher (Joseph's brother), the only member of the family still alive from the time of Joseph. Serach directed Moses to the Nile, and told him that after putting the embalmed corpse of Joseph inside a coffin, the Egyptians sank it in the river to assure that its waters would be blessed. Moses called out to the bones of Joseph at which point the coffin miraculously rose to the waters' surface and Moses fulfilled the oath sworn to Joseph hundreds of years before, taking his bones to be buried in the land of his ancestors.

Joseph's story is one of enslavement and redemption, a narrative echoed in the subsequent enslavement and redemption of his entire people. The oath he made his people swear to "liberate" his bones echoes the oath G-d made to His people, to liberate them after the abyss of slavery.

The end of Joseph's story coincides with the redemption of the Israelites, the end of their enslavement. And although Joseph remains in our collective memory as the handsome, smart, powerful leader, the last picture we have of him in the text is of a coffin full of bones, at last returning to the land from which he came.

The burial process, and where one is buried, is important in the Jewish tradition. The Hebrew Free Burial Association exists to assure that every Jew receives Jewish funeral rites and a Jewish burial.

Q: Why are there no flowers at a Jewish funeral or on a Jewish grave?

A: Historically, people used embalming fluid, spices, incense or flowers to ward off odors from a decomposing body. However, embalming is prohibited according to Jewish law and Jews are buried quickly. This made the practice of using flowers unnecessary and since the custom of having flowers at a grave became associated with a pagan ritual surrounding death, Jewish tradition discouraged it. It has also been suggested that leaving something “living” on a grave is an offense to one who is no longer living on this earth.

STAY CONNECTED!

If you would like to sign up for HFBA's e-Newsletter, or if you'd like to receive a copy of our DVD, please send an e-mail to info@hebrewfreeburial.org.

To become a fan of HFBA on Facebook, please visit www.facebook.com/hebrewfreeburial.

To follow us on twitter, please visit www.twitter.com/hfba.



MOUNT RICHMOND CEMETERY HOURS

Hours of operation during Passover and Shavuot holidays - Spring 2011

PASSOVER

Monday, April 18, 2011	Erev Pesach	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM sharp
Tuesday, April 19, 2011	1st day of Passover	CLOSED
Wednesday, April 20, 2011	2nd day of Passover	CLOSED
Sunday, April 24, 2011	Erev Yom Tov	9:00 AM -3:45 PM sharp
Monday, April 25, 2011	7th day of Passover	CLOSED
Tuesday, April 26, 2011	Last Day of Passover	CLOSED

SHAVUOT

Tuesday, June 7, 2011	Erev Shavuot	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM sharp
Wednesday, June 8, 2011	Shavuot	CLOSED
Thursday, June 9, 2011	Shavuot	CLOSED

YIZKOR is recited on the last day of the holiday: Tuesday, April 26 and on Thursday, June 9

Расписание работы кладбища Mount Richmond В праздники Песах и Шавуот – Весна 2011

ПЕСАХ

Понедельник, 18 апреля 2011 г.	Канун Песаха 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM строго
Вторник, 19 апреля 2011 г.	Закрето , первый день Пасхи
Среда, 20 апреля 2011 г.	Закрето , второй день Пасхи
Воскресенье, 24 апреля 2011 г.	Канун праздника 9AM -3:45 PM
Понедельник, 25 апреля 2011 г.	Закрето , седьмой день Пасхи
Вторник, 26 апреля 2011 г.	Закрето , последний день Пасхи

Шавуот

Вторник, 7 июня 2011 г.	Канун Шавуота 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM строго
Среда, 8 июня 2011 г.	Закрето , Шавуот
Четверг, 9 июня 2011 г.	Закрето , Шавуот

Поминальная молитва **ИЗКОР** читается во вторник, **26 апреля** и в четверг, **9 июня**.

HFBA HELPS



The Former Soviet Union reserved its most oppressive measures for religious minorities, especially Jews. At this time of year, it is especially poignant to recount the following end-of-life stories of some who fled for freedom in the United States.

Marya S.,* fifty two years old, was found dead in her apartment by her pregnant daughter who gave birth, probably from shock, the very next day. Overwhelmed, the daughter requested burial by HFBA. At the same time, a plot was reserved nearby for Marya's elderly mother, ill with dementia, and unaware of her daughter's death.

Yuri P. had suffered from mental health problems and was thirty two years old when his body was found in the subway by a train crew. His last known address had been a cheap residential hotel to which he moved following a fire which destroyed his apartment. His mother was somehow located by the police, and she went with her sister to the city morgue to identify her son from whom she had been estranged. HFBA was alerted and made the arrangements for Yuri's funeral and burial.

Boris Y. had remained in the United States illegally. Although under the constant threat of deportation, the immigration authorities had been unable to deport him because he was somehow considered stateless. Supposedly, his wife had left him for a wealthy Russian developer and had taken their son with her. He worked "off the books" selling watches and handbags and had served time in prison. At the time of his death, he was living in a homeless shelter with his girlfriend and her teenage daughter, both of whom attended his funeral at Mount Richmond Cemetery.

**Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.*

HFBA SPRING CHESED DAY

MAY 15, 2011 • 10 A.M.

To join our semi-annual clean-up day at Silver Lake Cemetery, please call the office at 212-239-1662. We appreciate those individuals and groups who come to do *chesed shel emet* (act of lovingkindness) by restoring order and dignity to the graves of Jews buried by HFBA.

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:

ESTATE OF THELMA DRIER
SHARON H. FRIEDEL FERSEL
MALKY AND DAVID GOTTLIEB
BERNARD AND SHEILA KATZ
DANIEL R. PERLA
RABBI REGINA L. SANDLER-PHILLIPS
NINA SELIN
DR. ZEV AND MADELYN STERN
AARON STRASSBURGER
SUSAN STRASSBURGER
FRANCES F. TOMPKINS
NELSON M. TUCHMAN



РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

События Исхода и прах Йосифа

Повествование об Исходе начинается и заканчивается упоминанием о Йосифе, сыне Иакова. Йосиф был продан в рабство ревнивыми братьями и, попав в Египет, возвысился там и стал правой рукой фараона. Он способствовал спасению всей своей еврейской родни от голода, свирепствовавшего в земле канаанской, и переселению её в Египет. После смерти Йосифа новый фараон восстал над Египтом, «который не знал Йосифа» (Исх. 1:8). Этот фараон поработил двенадцать колен потомков Иакова, которые впоследствии освободились и сделали еврейским народом.

История Песах – история освобождения из египетского рабства – хорошо известна. Интересны её детали, касающиеся обещания, потребованного Йосифом у своей семьи – «забрать его кости», когда они будут покидать Египет. Наши мудрецы говорят, что накануне исхода Моисей в поисках останков Йосифа обратился к Серах, дочери Ашера, одного из братьев Йосифа. Серах была единственной к моменту Исхода, кто ещё застал время, когда Йосиф был жив. Серах рассказала Моисею, что после бальзамирования египтяне опустили тело Йосифа в Нил в особом саркофаге, чтобы воды Нила были всегда благословенны. Моисей воззвал к «костям Йосифа», и саркофаг чудесным образом поднялся на поверхность. Так Моисей смог выполнить клятву, данную евреями Йосифу за несколько веков до Исхода. Евреи носили с собой прах Йосифа во все годы странствий и, войдя наконец в Землю Обетованную, похоронили его (в усыпальнице, построенной ещё Авраамом).

HFBA помогает: поминая тех, кто искал свободы

В бывшем СССР особенно жестоко преследовались религиозные меньшинства, в частности евреи. В эту пору весенних праздников особенно необходимо вспомнить о последних днях тех советских евреев, которые бежали в США в поисках свободы:

- Тело Марии С* (52 года) было найдено её беременной дочерью, которая на следующий день родила, по-видимому вследствие потрясения. В отчаянии та позвонила в HFBA прямо из роддома и попросила организовать похороны Марии. Во время подготовки похорон HFBA зарезервировало участок и для престарелой матери Марии, которая из-за старости даже не способна была осознать смерть дочери.

- Юрий П. страдал психическим расстройством. Ему было тридцать два, когда его тело было найдено работниками метро. Было лишь известно, что Юрий проживал в дешёвом отельчике, куда перебрался после того, как пожар уничтожил его квартиру. Несмотря на скудные данные, HFBA удалось через полицию разыскать мать Юрия, которая давно с ним не общалась. Та смогла опознать Юрия в городском морге.
- Борис И. проживал в США нелегально. Хотя ему грозила депортация, иммиграционные власти не выслали его, поскольку он считался «без отечества». Предположительно, жена Бориса ушла к богатому российскому предпринимателю, забрав сына. Борис перебивался, продавая часы и дамские сумочки, и даже провёл какое-то время за решёткой. Он скончался в приюте для бездомных, где жил со своей подругой и её дочерью. Они обе смогли присутствовать на похоронах Бориса, организованных HFBA на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд.

*имена изменены

Вопросы и ответы

Вопрос: По еврейской традиции, существуют ли обстоятельства, при которых разрешено вскрытие?
Ответ: Рав Морис Лэм в своей книге «Смерть и оплакивание – еврейский путь» пишет: «вскрытие оправдано при особых обстоятельствах, но в каждом конкретном случае нужно консультироваться с компетентными раввинами». Примерами таких обстоятельств являются убийство, самоубийство, гибель от несчастного случая, отравление, а также болезнь, при которой результаты вскрытия могут помочь защитить здоровье других людей.

Ежегодный день хесед (благих дел) – воскресенье, 15 мая 2011 г.

Пожалуйста, присоединяйтесь к нам в ежегодно проводимый день по расчистке и уходу за кладбищем Маунт Ричмонд. Звоните по тел. 212-239-1662. Мы благодарны всем добровольцам, которые проявляют «хесед шель эмет» (добродетель к усопшим), восстанавливая и приводя в порядок могилы евреев, которые были погребены при содействии HFBA.

STATEN ISLAND HFBA BREAKFAST

The Staten Island community warmly inaugurated an annual HFBA Breakfast on December 19, 2010 to coincide with the Torah portion of "Vayechi," the last in the book of Genesis, which describes the death of the patriarch Jacob. Over one hundred participants attended and the next Breakfast has already been scheduled to coincide with that same portion on January 8, 2012. We thank the Staten Island community for their generous support.



הגשמה!

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.