

Chesed

HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION

Volume 7/No. 2

March 1997/Adar 5757

In This Issue

2

"From The President's Desk":
HFBA Becomes a NY State
Referral Agency

3

A generous woman asks for
an unusual gift from her
cousins.

4

New names are added to the
LEAVE YOUR MARK donor
plaque in Mt. Richmond
Cemetery.

5

One of the most recent buyers
of a Forever Gift Annuity
explains her motivation -- and
reveals acute financial astute-
ness.

6

Would you like to be notified
of upcoming yahrzeits? New
program makes it simple.

Chesed is published by the Hebrew Free
Burial Association, 363 Seventh
Avenue,
New York, NY 10001.
Telephone 212 239-1662
HFBA is a beneficiary of
UJA/Federation.

Additional 500 Markers Arriving This Spring

The graves of 500 indigent Jews buried in Mt. Richmond Cemetery will be marked by simple stones as the LEAVE YOUR MARK Campaign continues to transform the look of Mt. Richmond.

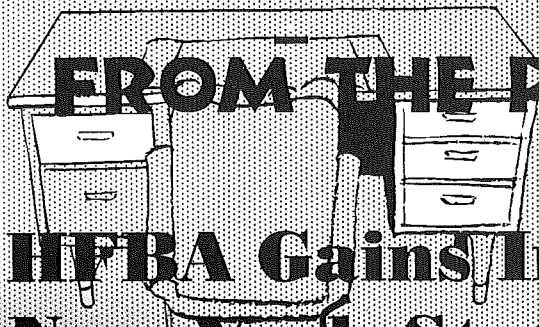
Instead of empty-looking fields, the grass of the cemetery is now studded with rows of low markers, each inscribed with the name and years of life of the person buried beneath. The monuments are a moving testimony both to the lives of the deceased and the dedication of HFBA friends and supporters determined to remember them.

Men's Section Gets 250 Markers

Among the sectors which will be enriched by the monuments this Spring is a section of men who were buried between 1944 and 1953. They ranged in age from 14 to 89.

The youngest person in this section is a boy of 14 who was abandoned by his parents and left at the Willowbrook State Facility for the Retarded. (In those days, the parents of children born mentally retarded were sometimes so traumatized by their children's conditions that they were sent to live their lives in institutions for the retarded.) When he died at 14, his parents wanted no involvement in the funeral arrangements and the sad task was left to his grandparents. Willowbrook was able to put them in contact with the HFBA. While they authorized his burial in Mt. Richmond Cemetery, his grave has remained

cont. on page 6



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

HFBA Gains Important Status as New York State Referral Agency

Our tradition emphatically tells us that the reward of performing a mitzvah is the mitzvah itself, not the recognition we receive. However, there are instances when public recognition is crucial, as we recently found out.

The New York State Department of Health announced that the Hebrew Free Burial Association is listed in the resource guide given to all health and social services agencies as an appropriate referral source for burials of indigent Jews. Simply stated, it means that when an indigent Jew passes away in a hospital, nursing home, State-run facility or even at home, the appropriate authority may contact us regarding the funeral arrangements.

The practical result of the pronouncement has been an increase in phone calls from

agencies dealing with the Jewish poor both upstate and downstate. When it is not feasible to arrange for the funeral and burial to be performed at Mt. Richmond Cemetery, we are able to refer the caller to a *chevra kadisha* (burial society) in

their area to ensure that the interment is carried out in accordance with Jewish tradition. Our involvement also ensures that the deceased is not buried in a Potter's Field or in a non-Jewish cemetery.

We are extremely pleased at the role we are able to play throughout New York State and gratified by the recognition we have received

from the State Government. By conferring the status of central referring agency upon the Hebrew Free Burial Association, the State is affirming both the importance of HFBA to Jewish residents and our ability to perform our duties with efficiency, effectiveness and sensitivity to our clients' needs.

Gerald E. Feldhamer

By conferring the status of central referring agency upon the Hebrew Free Burial Association, the State is affirming both the importance of HFBA to Jewish residents and our ability to perform our duties with efficiency, effectiveness and sensitivity to our clients' needs.



MARION COOPER
60 E 9TH ST APT 507
NEW YORK, NY 10003-6445

October 1 1996

Dear Cousin:

Just a short time before the High Holidays I visited my Zaida's grave at Mt. Richmond Cemetery in Statin Island. For those cousins who don't know it, my grandfather, Max Cooper died in October of 1937, a time when all the family was desperately poor. Zaida had not arranged for his burial, something that many Jewish people did at that time. The family did not have enough money to bury him, and he was buried at little or no cost by the Hebrew Free Burial Association. Apparently, the family did accumulate enough money for a grave marker, and Zaida does have a stone marking his grave.

When I went to the cemetery, I learned that a large percentage of Jewish people buried at Mt Richmond Cemetery have unmarked graves. There is a drive at present to collect money to mark these graves, people who died during a large flu empedemic, women who died in the Triagle fire, 50 children who died at the Willowbrook State School for the mentally retarded. Each marker is \$150.

I think that it would be a charitable gesture for all the cousins at the Cooper Family Circle to contribute \$5.00 each so that if 30 of us do this we would have one marker as a family to pay back in a small way what the Hebrew Free Burial Association did for my grandfather back in October of 1937. If you agree, when you come to the Family Circle Meeting October 13 1996, please bring your \$5.00 check made out to HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION. I will send them to 363 -7th Avenue, New York, NY 10001. If we don't get enough, I will make up the difference; if we get more than \$150, the contribution of the difference can go to poor people being buried at this time; people who don't have enough for their own burials, for their own markers, and people who don't even have one person at their funerals.

Zaida's grave is being kept up nicely at the moment. I have even arranged to have new plantings for his grave.

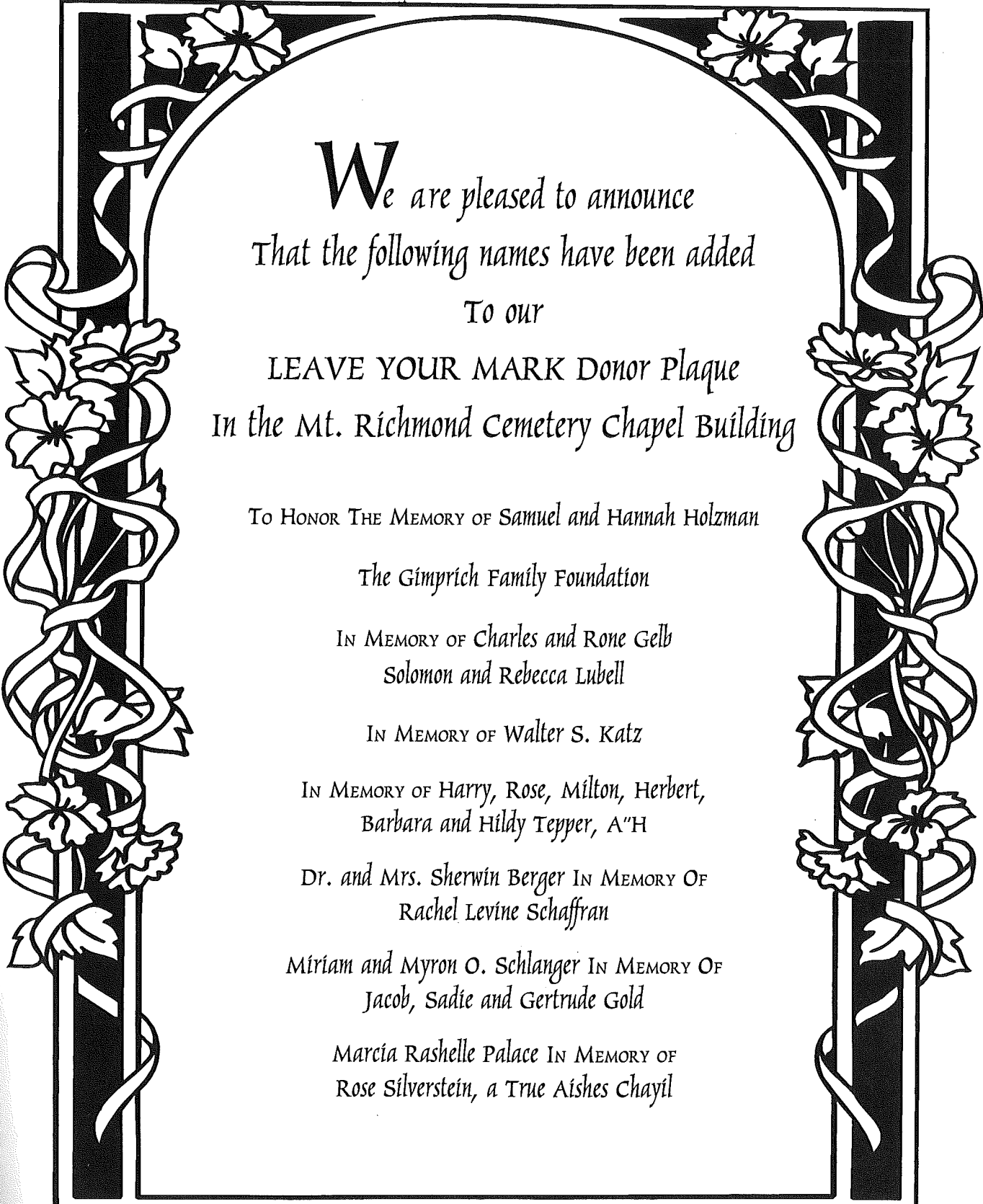
We are ver^y lucky to have our own cemetery grounds at Wellwood. And we are lucky to have each other who care both in life and death. The HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION takes care of those who don't have family, friends, or money.

Thanks for helping. Please give me your \$5.00 checks at the meeting or mail them to me.

A bit late - but from my heart to you all. A healthy and Happy 5757.

Sincerely,

Marion Cooper



We are pleased to announce
That the following names have been added
To our
LEAVE YOUR MARK Donor Plaque
In the Mt. Richmond Cemetery Chapel Building

TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF Samuel and Hannah Holzman

The Gimprich Family Foundation

IN MEMORY OF Charles and Rone Gelb
Solomon and Rebecca Lubell

IN MEMORY OF Walter S. Katz

IN MEMORY OF Harry, Rose, Milton, Herbert,
Barbara and Hildy Tepper, A"H

Dr. and Mrs. Sherwin Berger IN MEMORY OF
Rachel Levine Schaffran

Miriam and Myron O. Schlanger IN MEMORY OF
Jacob, Sadie and Gertrude Gold

Marcia Rashelle Palace IN MEMORY OF
Rose Silverstein, a True Aishes Chayil

Forever Gift Annuity Gains Popularity

"You helped a friend of mine a long time ago. Now I want to do something for you." That was the motivation of the newest donor to our Forever Gift Annuity Program, a lively octogenarian we'll call Jennie.

Jennie's family escaped from Germany in 1939, one of the "lucky ones" who survived the Holocaust. She was well aware that too many Jews who were left behind had no burial at all. So when she came to HFBA to arrange for the funeral of a friend, she felt as though she had found a kindred spirit in the staff who worked so diligently on behalf of someone they didn't even know. Impressed with the sensitivity of the staff, the efficiency of the service and the kindness of the mission she was determined to help HFBA in any way she could.

Her decision to purchase the Forever Gift Annuity was a shrewd investment move. Jennie will receive a 9.6% return on her guaranteed investment, payable as a quarterly annuity, for the rest of her life. After her death, the remaining principal (approximately one half of the original investment) will become a gift to the HFBA.

When she announced her intention to purchase the Forever Gift Annuity, Jennie sent us her suggestion for success. "I remember the offices were so beautifully shabby. I hope they are still the same way. Please don't change them. Don't waste money on elegant offices," she urged.

"You helped a friend of mine a long time ago. Now I want to do something for you."

A

fascinating six minute videotape of the work of the Hebrew Free Burial Association is now available to interested donors. The short video describes our one hundred year history and provides a brief walking tour of Mt. Richmond Cemetery.

If you would like a copy of the video, please contact the HFBA office, 212 239-1662, or write to 363 Seventh Avenue, Room 501, New York, NY 10001.

500 Additional Markers

cont. from page 1

unmarked since 1950.

Howard, who would have been 61 had he lived, will finally have a memorial to his brief life, erected by friends he never met.

Excellent Response Leads To New Projections

While the original plan was to purchase monuments annually, the large numbers which

have been ordered as LEAVE YOUR MARK gains momentum necessitated a change in plans. According to HFBA president Gerald E. Feldhamer, stones will now be bought and set twice annually.

"The response has been terrific," stated Bjorn Bamberger, HFBA vice president. We are looking forward to doubling this year's this year's total and installing 1,000 monuments next year."

INTEREST IN HFBA YAHRZEIT PROGRAM GROWS

Interest in the HFBA's projected Yahrzeit Notification Service has been substantial, but not great enough to warrant the purchase of the computer software necessary to implement the program at the present time, board member Jack Weiss, announced recently.

"We conceived the program in response to a number of requests from our supporters who have friends and family buried in our cemeteries," he said. "However, in order to make Yahrzeit notification cost-effective for a small agency like ours, we are offering the service to all our donors as well."

The service would provide a timely reminder of both the Hebrew and English dates of the anniversary of the death of a loved one. The deceased does not have to be buried in Mt. Richmond Cemetery.

If you have not yet returned the coupon from the last issue of CHESED and would like to participate in the program, please fill out the attached coupon and mail or fax it to the HFBA office. Please do not return it if you previously sent the coupon back.

Yes, I am interested in receiving advance notification of loved ones' *yahrzeits*.

Please let me know when the service will be available.

Name _____

Address _____

Please return this coupon in the envelope provided with CHESED.