



HFBA

HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION

CHESSED

Volume 8/No. 4

November 1998 / Kislev 5759

In This Issue

2

Staten Island Boro President
Guy Molinari Sends Help In
Time of Need.

3

In Our Mailbox:
Two generations of a family
find the "lost" grave of a
loved one has been remem-
bered by HFBA and express
their thanks.

4

HFBA helps an elderly man
who finds it hard to accept
the death of his beloved wife.

6

Bea and Willie Bauman are
honored at a breakfast in
Englewood, NJ.

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.

Remembered... And Remembering

It is often said that good memories never die. While there are few good things associated with burying a loved one, the remembrance of having been treated with dignity during one's hours of sorrow can make a lifelong impression.

We recently received two bequests from individuals who have had a long-time connection to HFBA. Leon Peskin, who lived on a fixed income, was a long-time donor whose individual contributions never totaled more than \$5 at a time. He never told us why he considered our work to be so important, but we can guess that because he lived on a fixed income, he knew how tenuous one's fortune can be. When he passed away last year, HFBA was the beneficiary of \$20,000 in U.S. Savings Bonds as well as a cash bequest in his will. His generosity will be remembered in perpetuity.

Another friend has notified us of his last wishes in a letter he wrote earlier this year.

"I will eternally be grateful for (HFBA's) having helped me during two of my most difficult times. The work that you are doing is of the highest order and should be supported by all Jews who can afford it.

cont. on page 2



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Overturnd Stones Righted With Help From Molinari

Staten Island Borough President Guy Molinari has been called many things in his long political career, but perhaps his most favorite appellation is "angel." That is the moniker given to him by some of the families whose loved ones' graves were hit by vandalism over the July 4th weekend.

In all, 32 monuments were overturned on Saturday, July 4th, by unseen vandals. Though the destruction was noted on Sunday, the holiday weekend made any attempts to find cleanup crews futile. However, by Tuesday morning, Borough President Molinari's office was "on the case."

Mr. Molinari arranged for "volunteer" inmates from the Staten Island Correctional Facility to assist us in repairing the damage to the cemeteries. Working together, the inmates raised and reset all 32

monuments, lifting even the heaviest stones with only their hands.

The inmates are part of a special program that takes non-violent prisoners outside the prison gates to work on behalf of community facilities. They are supervised by prison guards at all times. Their help saved the Hebrew Free Burial Association several thousand dollars which otherwise would have gone to pay an outside service to right the monuments. Instead, the funds will now be used for indigent burials.

The Hebrew Free Burial Association is grateful to Borough President Molinari and his office for the speed in which they responded to our appeal. We thank the 20 inmates and the supervisors for their efforts as well.

Gerald E. Feldhamer

Remembered... And Remembering

cont. from page 1

"In this vein, I plan to specify a larger donation in my last will and testament. I have already informed my heir of my wishes."

Sincerely, F.K.

You don't have to be wealthy to make sure that the organization that enjoys your support now will continue to be a priority even after you are gone. Making a bequest to the Hebrew Free Burial Association can be as easy as inserting a sentence into your will. For information on including HFBA in estate and trust planning, contact Sandra Wiesel at 212 239-1662.



From The Mailbox...

Our tradition has a concept of "mitzvah goreret mitzvah," one mitzvah follows another. At HFBA, we see the concrete results of this adage daily. The mitzvah of burying the indigent dead, combined with the unique sensitivity of our personnel, helps make the tragic search for a lost loved one into a comforting experience.

We relate to you one such story, as told by two letters received by Rabbi Shmuel Plafker, our rabbi at Mt. Richmond Cemetery.

Dear Rabbi Plafker:

A few weeks ago, our daughter and her husband paid a visit to Mt. Richmond Cemetery to locate the grave of my deceased twin brother, Bernard Newman. They told us how helpful you were in assisting them to find the gravesite. They took pictures of the grave marker, and I am enclosing one of the photos. It is beautiful. The work that you do in seeing that less fortunate Jews have a decent Jewish funeral is a wonderful job.

Please accept the enclosed check to help in your work... Thank you very much....

Dear Rabbi Plafker:

We wanted to let you know how much we appreciated your kindness when we were at the cemetery. When I told my mother about visiting Bernard's grave, she was so touched. She cried and felt so good that we saw the new stone. My mom feels like the baby brother she once knew now has someone who cares. In fact, because of what you said about feeling better after all these years, we really feel he is resting in peace.

As you saw, I was pretty emotional about all of this, but you really made it okay! You are doing a mitzvah, thank you again. It was somehow a bittersweet and a beautiful day.

Fondly, S & J.A.



HFBA HELPS THE LIVING, TOO

It is the saddest bit of news anyone will ever have to hear: a beloved spouse has passed on. For one elderly man, the news was too much to bear. He remained in denial after his wife had died, begging hospital personnel to send her home.

The hospital was now in a quandary. How would the woman be buried? A worried social worker called the Hebrew Free Burial Association asking for our intervention. But the man's despair was so great that even we could not gain his cooperation.

It became clear that the man could not authorize his wife's funeral when we received a letter from the physician who had treated the woman. The doctor stated that he had known the couple and that the husband's distress and mental condition made him incapable of participating in funeral arrangements.

We then requested that the Public Administrator become involved. Public Administrators are usually called in when an unidentified person dies or when the deceased has no relatives that can be located. In this case, the Public Administrator investigated the situation thoroughly and then acted on behalf of the deceased, taking charge of burial plans. At the request of the PA, HFBA made all the arrangements and the man's wife was given a Jewish funeral and burial at Mt. Richmond Cemetery.

In the meantime, social workers are now working with this elderly, emotionally fragile man to help him accept his wife's death and adjust to his new life situation. Though the road is long, he has been freed of the sad duty of making funeral arrangements and can now concentrate on saying his final good-byes and mourning his wife.



Silver Lake Cleanup Continues

The huge task of cleaning the Silver Lake Cemetery grounds continues. The most recent effort cleared enough debris from one section of the cemetery to fill a 20 cubic yard garbage container.

"Although Silver Lake Cemetery is no longer used for burials, we take our responsibility to maintain this historic, consecrated burial ground very seriously," stated Bjorn Bamberger, vice president. "It is our goal to see that Silver Lake is restored to its onetime pristine appearance."

SEVEN HONORED FOR LEAVING THEIR MARK IN MT. RICHMOND CEMETERY

The generous contributions of seven individuals and families to our Leave Your Mark program have been perpetuated with the addition of their names to our Donor's Board at Mt. Richmond Cemetery. They join an ever-growing number of people who have purchased a minimum of four grave markers as part of the Leave Your Mark project.

The Board is placed in our historic chapel at the cemetery, where it can be viewed by all who come inside to pray or contemplate during their visits to the cemetery.

We thank our most recent benefactors:

KAREN DAVIS
AARON GREEN
JOE AND GUSSIE HOROWITZ

SYLVIA AND MEYER KRINITZ
ARYE LEV RUBIN
RAYMOND SCHWARZ

MR. AND MRS. ILAN SLASKY

We urge all our friends to join these seven leaders by endowing a minimum of four grave markers as part of Leave Your Mark.

YAHZRZEIT REMINDERS AVAILABLE

The Hebrew Free Burial Association can remind you of upcoming yahrzeits every year.

Our Yahrzeit Reminder Service has been operational for several months. Approximately two to three weeks prior to a yahrzeit, we will send you a timely reminder by mail that includes the English date for the calendar year.

There is no charge for this service. The deceased does not have to be buried in our cemeteries. If you would like to register for this program, please complete and return the notification slip below or call 212 239-1662.

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

Name of Deceased _____

Hebrew Date and time of Death _____

English Date and time of Death _____

Relationship to you _____

Name of Deceased _____

Hebrew Date and time of Death _____

English Date and time of Death _____

Relationship to you _____

(If you require additional space, please include a separate piece of paper with all the requested information.)

WILLIE AND BEA BAUMAN HONORED IN ENGLEWOOD

Willie Bauman, the head of the Chevra Kadisha (burial society) in the Englewood, NJ, area, and his wife, Bea, two of the society's founders, were feted at a gala breakfast in their honor this Spring. The couple received the coveted Anshei Chesed Award from HFBA for more than three decades of devoted volunteer work in the Englewood area and for their contributions to the Jewish community at large.

Bauman was born in Vienna and emigrated to England in 1939. He spent the war years in Australia, serving as one of the founders of the Mizrahi Youth Movement on that continent. He

and Bea settled in the United States after the war, becoming active members of K'hal Adas Yeshurun in Washington Heights. In 1965 they moved to Englewood, where together with a small group, they founded the Englewood Chevra Kadisha. Mr. Bauman has headed the Chevra Kadisha for the past 20 years.

The well-attended breakfast was addressed by Rabbi Ralph Pelcovitz, Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Knesseth Israel, Far Rockaway. Rabbi Shmuel Goldin, spiritual leader of Congregation Ahavath Torah, made the presentation to the honored couple.



HFBA president Gerald E. Feldhamer joined Bea and Willie Bauman at the breakfast in Englewood. "By honoring Bea and Willie Bauman, we pay tribute to the work of both the Hebrew Free Burial Association and the Chevra Kadisha of Englewood," he noted.