

Help Us Meet a \$250,000 Challenge Grant!

Dear Friends and Supporters of HFBA,

An anonymous foundation has stepped forward to offer Hebrew Free Burial Association \$250,000 – if we can raise \$500,000 by December 1st, 2015.

In 2014, we made burial arrangements for 384 indigent Jews. The number of burials has risen substantially every year since 2008. As the need grows, we urgently need funds for burials, community outreach and rabbinic services. This challenge grant will help us lay to rest our most impoverished brethren with dignity.

To meet this challenge:

- We must raise \$500,000 by December 1st
- Most of the contributions must be \$5,000 or more.
- You can make a two year pledge of \$10,000 or more, provided it is fully paid by December 1, 2016.
- A portion of our smaller contributions – which are so greatly valued! – will also count toward the challenge.

If you are able, please consider making a gift this year of \$5,000 or more. Your contribution will help HFBA reach its \$500,000 goal.

I urge you to participate in this exciting challenge opportunity. You are a valued partner in fulfilling HFBA's mission of *chesed shel emet*.

We appreciate and thank you for your ongoing support.



Amy Koplow



Executive Director

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

HFBA Acknowledges With Much Gratitude For Their 2014 Gifts:

The David Berg Foundation (\$100,000 grant)

Since 2000, the David Berg Foundation has continued its namesake's philanthropic legacy in Israel, Europe and the United States through the support of non-profit organizations involved in a variety of causes such as help for the indigent and elderly and victims of domestic and elder abuse. The Foundation is also involved in the restoration and preservation of synagogues and other Jewish heritage sites, combating anti-Semitism and assisting underserved and impoverished Jewish communities. **This generous grant is allocated for the Silver Lake Cemetery Restoration Project.**

The Margaret and Leo Meyer and Hans M. Hirsch Foundation (\$100,000 grant)

Margaret Meyer (née Hirsch), her husband Leo Meyer and her brother Hans M. Hirsch established their Foundation to support the State of Israel and to benefit the needy within the Jewish community. **This generous grant is allocated for the establishment of the new Margaret and Leo Meyer and Hans M. Hirsch Tahara Facility at Mount Richmond Cemetery.** The Foundation's president wrote that they are "grateful for the opportunity to assist HFBA in establishing the *tahara* (ritual cleansing) facility, and is thankful for the work the HFBA does for the Jewish community."

The Estate of Sara Cohen (\$25,000 bequest)

The five Cohen siblings, to whom Judaism was extremely important, lived with their parents in Brooklyn, supported by their father, a blacksmith. Ruven, one of the brothers, who had a trucking company, left his assets upon his death to his sister Sara who had been a bookkeeper. None of the siblings married and so when Sara died last year at the age of 100, the family line came to an end. The executor of the estate told HFBA's Executive Director Amy Koplow that the Cohens were very charitable, humble people and that "knowing them brought joy to (his) life."

Generous donations such as these allow us to continue our sacred mission of caring for the Jewish poor and according them the full dignity of a Jewish funeral and burial.

HFBA *Helps*



Laura K. befriended Sam W., a nursing home resident, who was blind and wheelchair bound. Over the years she learned that he was Jewish, had lived in the residence for many years and was a WW II veteran who had parachuted from planes on special missions. He received a small pension from the Veteran's Administration but had no other sources of income and no family. When a mass was detected in Sam's kidney, he refused surgery and died some months later of renal disease at the age of 92. Although he was not religious, he was very proud of his Jewish heritage and often said that when the Messiah comes he would be able to walk again. Laura and her sons attended her friend Sam's funeral at HFBA's Mount Richmond Cemetery. An Army Honor Guard was also present.

Abe N. died in his apartment at the age of 81 years but his body remained unidentified at the New York Medical Examiner's Office for two months. A staff member in that office managed to track his identity through a railroad discount card for former employees which led to a definite identification through his dental records. Although no documents were recovered from his apartment, an HFBA staff member found on Ancestry.com the name of his mother and records indicating that in 1940, when he was eight, he had lived with his mother and grandmother on Manhattan's Upper East Side. Sadly, there appears to have been no other window into Abe's life. He had lived alone for many years, and died alone, forgotten except by HFBA which provided a dignified funeral and burial.

Irina K. was buried by HFBA in 2012 when her son Vladimir was in prison for violating an order of protection she had taken out against him. At the time, HFBA worked with the prison chaplain to get Vladimir to authorize his mother's burial by HFBA. Several months ago, Vladimir's second cousin informed us of Vladimir's death. He was 52 and had been a chronic alcoholic. It seems that Vladimir had immigrated to the United States from Minsk with his parents in 1979 and his father worked in jewelry repair. Vladimir, too, worked in the jewelry business and also for a car service before the family fell on hard times after the father's death. HFBA buried Vladimir with his cousin attending the funeral.

Names changed to protect confidentiality.

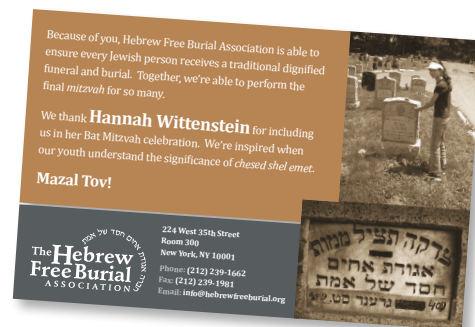
Hannah Wittenstein and HFBA's Bar/Bat Mitzvah Circle



In 2011, Lois Wittenstein from Marietta, Georgia e-mailed HFBA looking for information about her great-grandmother, Kate Friedman, who she suspected had been buried in Silver Lake Cemetery. We searched our records and found that Mrs. Friedman had indeed been buried there in 1905.

On September 5, 2014, Mrs. Wittenstein reached out to us again. She wrote, "I wanted to let you know that my daughter Hannah will be having her *Bat Mitzvah* in December this year and she would like to donate a portion of her gift money to the Hebrew Free Burial Association as one of her *Mitzvah* Projects, thus becoming a member of your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Circle. In addition, we would like to include information about your organization to our guests so that they too can donate."

For years, HFBA has been sponsoring a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Circle in which a young person, at the cusp of Jewish legal adulthood, commemorates this important rite of passage by giving and collecting *tzedakah* for HFBA, participating in the great *mitzvah* of *chesed shel emet*, burying the Jewish poor. Generally, a portion of the gifts will be earmarked for HFBA or guests will be asked to contribute independently. It is hoped that after this initial contact with HFBA, donors will join us as volunteers at the cemetery as well as become consistent supporters.



HFBA provided cards to include with Hannah's invitation and, as a result, we received dozens of donations in Hannah's honor.

Hannah said, "I chose HFBA as my *Mitzvah* Project because I liked the idea of a connection with the cemetery where my great-great-grandmother is buried. I also think that what they do to help the Jewish community is really important." She and her mother are looking forward to visiting their ancestor's grave when they come to New York.

It is a special young boy or girl who chooses to share her celebration in this way. We are grateful to Hannah Wittenstein and to all those who have joined our *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Circle.

For more information on how you and your child can be part of the Circle, please e-mail Andrew Parver at the HFBA office, aparver@hebrewfreeburial.org.

Visit and help us clean and clear debris.

Save the Date! Spring 2015 Community *Chesed* Day at Silver Lake Cemetery

**926 Victory Boulevard, Staten Island, NY
Sunday, April 26, 2015 • 10am-12pm**

Participate in the *mitzvah* of *chesed shel emet* and join us to clean and clear winter debris from the cemetery grounds. For more information, please call Andrew Parver at the HFBA office (212) 239-1662.

Weather permitting. The most up to date information will be posted at www.facebook.com/hebrewfreeburial



Staten Island Community Breakfast Honors HFBA's Rabbi Shmuel Plafker

On December 28, 2014, a crowd of 200 people came together at the Young Israel of Staten Island to recognize the efforts and accomplishments of Rabbi Shmuel Plafker, the Mount Richmond Cemetery chaplain, who has served HFBA for 25 years. Guest speaker Rabbi Mordecai Becher spoke informatively and poignantly about the *mitzvah of chesed shel emet*.



Left to Right: Scott Diamond, Breakfast chair; Andrew Feinman, Charles Greinsky, HFBA Board members; Amy Koplow, Executive Director; Rabbi Shmuel Plafker, HFBA chaplain and honoree; Rabbi Mordechai Becher, guest speaker; Paul H. Nagelberg, HFBA Board president; and Robbie Marcus, HFBA Vice President.

Rabbi Shmuel Plafker, a Brooklyn resident, Brooklyn College graduate and *musmach* (ordained) of Yeshiva Rabbi Jacob Joseph, came to Hebrew Free Burial Association in 1989, after having worked in private industry. He realized that his strengths were best used in serving the Jewish community and joined HFBA as the cemetery chaplain, often officiating at burials six days a week. Rabbi Plafker also helps families when they come to the cemetery to visit the graves of relatives, frequently being called upon to research HFBA archival records and verify unmarked graves.

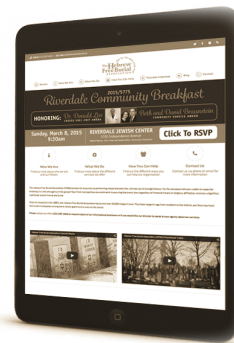
It is estimated that in his 25 years of service, Rabbi Plafker has performed more than 7500 burials. Because of his compassion, sensitivity, and understanding, he has earned the thanks and respect from all whose lives he has touched.

HFBA is tremendously grateful to Rabbi Plafker for his indelible, compassionate impact on the families and friends of the deceased that HFBA serves.

We invite you to visit our new website
www.hebrewfreeburial.org

Our newly designed website gives a clear picture of HFBA's history and mission, how we help and how you can help us and participate in the *mitzvah of chesed shel emet*, ensuring a Jewish burial for New York City's impoverished Jews.

Attractive photos, graphics and videos make this website easy to navigate as a tool to learn about our unique organization.



Mount Richmond Cemetery Hours of Operation:

Passover

Friday, April 3	9AM – 1PM SHARP
Sunday, April 5	CLOSED
Thursday, April 9	9AM – 1PM SHARP
Friday, April 10	CLOSED

Shavuot

Sunday, May 24	CLOSED
Monday, May 25	CLOSED

YIZKOR is recited on the last day of these holidays:
Saturday, April 11 and on **Monday, May 25**.

Расписание работы кладбища Mt. Richmond

ПЕСАХ

Пятница, 3 апреля	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM строго
Воскресенье, 5 апреля	ЗАКРЫТО
Четверг, 9 апреля	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM строго
Пятница, 10 апреля	ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва ИЗКОР читается в последний день праздника, **субботу 11 апреля**

ШАВУОТ

Воскресенье, 24 мая	ЗАКРЫТО
Понедельник, 25 мая	ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва ИЗКОР читается в последний день праздника, **понедельник 25 мая**

РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

BELOW ARE TRANSLATED SUMMARIES OF THE
ARTICLES APPEARING IN THIS ISSUE OF CHESED.

Шанс выиграть грант для HFBA

В январе один из благотворительных фондов выбрал нас для возможности получения призового гранта в 250 тыс. долларов. Если до первого декабря 2015 г. Еврейское Благотворительное Похоронное Бюро сможет собрать 500 тыс. долларов, причём каждый взнос будет не меньше \$5000, мы получим эти 250 тысяч долларов.

Если мы сможем получить этот грант, он чрезвычайно поможет нам. В 2014 году мы организовали 384 погребения наших братьев-евреев – намного больше по сравнению с предыдущим, 2013-м годом, в котором было организовано 339 погребения. Поэтому призовой грант так важен, ведь он позволит нам продолжать оказывать наши услуги тем, кто в них нуждается. Мы просим тех из вас, кто в состоянии дать не меньше пяти тысяч долларов, сделать это именно в 2015 году, чтобы HFBA смогло выполнить условие гранта.

Бар-мицвы и бат-мицвы для HFBA

В течение многих лет HFBA поддерживает «клуб» состоящий из мальчиков и девочек на пороге наступающего по еврейской традиции совершеннолетия. Юноши и девушки отмечают свою бар-мицву или бат-мицву тем, что собирают цедану и передают эти деньги в HFBA. Помогая в деле погребения умерших еврейских бедняков, они участвуют в исполнении высокой мицвы милосердия к усопшим.

В 2011 году нам написала Луис Виттенштейн из города Мариэтта в штате Джорджия. Она разыскивала информацию о своей прабабке, Кэйт Фридман, полагая, что та похоронена на принадлежащем HFBA кладбище Сильвер Лейк. Мы просмотрели наши архивы и действительно обнаружили, что г-жа Фридман была погребена там в 1905 году.

В октябре 2014 года г-жа Виттенштейн снова написала нам: «Я хотела дать вам знать, что бат-мицва моей дочери Ханны состоится в декабре, и что она хочет отдать часть подаренных ей денег Еврейскому Благотворительному Похоронному Бюро. Таким образом она присоединится к вашему клубу бар-мицв и бат-мицв. И ещё: мы собираемся раздать информацию об HFBA нашим гостям, чтобы они тоже могли пожертвовать средства для вашей организации». В ответ на письмо наш офис отправил карточки с краткой информацией, которые были разосланы вместе с приглашениями на бат-мицву. В результате мы получили десятки пожертвований, сделанных в честь Ханны.

Сама Ханна сказала: «Я выбрала одной из мицв пожертвование для HFBA, так как мне понравилось этим выразить связь с кладбищем, на котором похоронена моя прапрабабушка. Мне также кажется очень важным тот вид помощи, который эта организация оказывает еврейской общине». Ханна со своей матерью собираются вскоре посетить могилу своих предков во время визита в Нью-Йорк.

HFBA помогает

Ирина К* была похоронена HFBA в 2012 году, в то время как её сын Владимир находился в тюрьме за нарушения судебного решения о защите, которое Ирина получила против него. Наш офис связался с тюремным капелланом, чтобы добиться от

Владимира разрешения на погребение. А несколько месяцев назад Владимир – хронический алкоголик – умер в возрасте 52-х лет. Его троюродный брат, по-видимому единственный оставшийся родственник, позвонил нам, чтобы организовать похороны Владимира. По нашим сведениям Владимир приехал в США со своими родителями в 1979 году из Минска. Его отец зарабатывал починкой ювелирных изделий. Владимир тоже поработал в ювелирном деле, затем был таксистом. После смерти отца Владимира для семьи настали тяжёлые времена. HFBA организовало похороны Владимира, на которых присутствовал его троюродный брат.

Питер Ф* был успешным бизнесменом, женатым, с тремя детьми. К сожалению у него развилась зависимость от азартных игр, из-за которой он потерял работу, развёлся с женой и не виделся с детьми последние два десятка лет. Питер пил, много курил, а недавно скончался от рака лёгких. HFBA разыскало его сына, живущего за пределами штата Нью-Йорк. Однако ни тот, ни остальные дети не захотели иметь никакого дела с погребением отца. Разрешение на похороны было получено HFBA от общественного администратора Нью-Йорка.

* имена изменены

HFBA выражает огромную благодарность и признательность:

- Фонду Дэвида Берга за грант в \$100 тыс. на проект по восстановлению кладбища Сильвер Лейк
- Фонду Маргарет и Лео Хирш за грант в \$100 тыс. на создание тахара – нового помещения для ритуального омовения, которое теперь названо в их честь
- Трасту семьи Сары Коэн за завещанную сумму в \$25 тыс.

Эти и подобные им щедрые пожертвования позволяют нам продолжать наше святое дело заботы о еврейских бедняках, дело обеспечения для них достойного погребения согласно еврейским традициям.

Чествование г-на Плафкера, главного раввина кладбища Маунт Ричмонд

На ежегодном завтраке, приуроченном к недельной главе Торы «Ваехи» и состоявшемся 28 декабря 2014 года, присутствовали более двухсот человек. Они собрались почтить раввина Плафкера за его огромную работу на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд в течение 25 лет. Рав Шмуэль Плафкер начал работать в Еврейском Благотворительном Похоронном Бюро в 1989 году, после работы в частном бизнесе. Раввин Плафкер зачастую проводит погребения шесть дней в неделю, а также помогает родственникам усопших, когда те навещают могилы близких. По приблизительным подсчётам раввин Плафкер провёл за эти годы 7500 похорон. Он заслужил огромную благодарность и уважение тех, кто с ним сталкивался, за его участие, понимание и такт.

HFBA выражает огромную признательность раввину Плафкеру за то трогательное и незабываемое участие, проявленное им семьям и друзьям усопших, похороненных HFBA.

Мы желаем всем, кто поддерживает HFBA, замечательного и счастливого праздника Песах и мира во всём мире!

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:

Barber and Golowa Family
Sondra Cohen
Julius M. and Celia Cohn
Adrienne M. Driben
Linda Golden

Kenneth and Harriet Goldman
Lawrence and Frances Hellman
Herbert P. and Rhoda S. Jaslow
Paul J. Lebowitz

Alan and Jane Neustadter
Steven and Rachel Schwartzberg
Aaron Strassburger
Bob Wiener
Pantea Yazdian

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

Chesed Shel Emet – HOW YOU CAN HELP

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 \$18 and can include a personalized message.

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.

DONATE unused graves. If the graves are not part of a burial society or family plot and are located in New York or New Jersey, please consider donating them to HFBA and receiving a tax deduction for your gift.

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

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.

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

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

*We wish all HFBA supporters
a sweet, happy Pesach in a
peaceful world!*



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

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 65,000 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.



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