

Mapping Mount Richmond Cemetery, Section by Section

Miriam Cohen knew her grandfather was buried at Mount Richmond Cemetery – but didn't know where. While HFBA's records are accurate and carefully kept, there is no mechanism for quick retrieval and sharing. Worse, on Sundays, staff is not always there to help. Visitors are left with minimal information.

In Miriam's case, cemetery staff sifted through hundreds of index cards. Then, to help Miriam find her grandfather's plot, staffers drew her a rudimentary map. The laborious effort was not befitting either the respect we owe the dead, nor the honor we owe to the living.

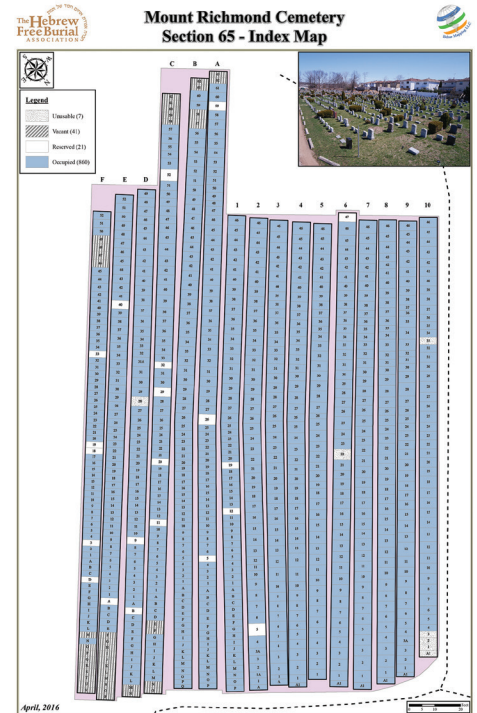
This is about to change. After significant planning and thanks to initial seed donations, HFBA has begun mapping Mount Richmond Cemetery. The project will significantly improve the cemetery and will enable visitors to locate the graves of their loved ones with ease.

Once completed, the centralized map will accurately show all grave locations, including those reserved and vacant. It will be easy to generate maps of sections and subsections, displaying graves by name or location in the cemetery. Maps can even show which graves are missing monuments which will be enormously helpful for the Leave Your Mark campaign. The mapping work is being done by Behar Mapping LLC and the prerequisite digitizing of records by Digiscribe.

We need your help to map each section of the cemetery and allow family members and friends to visit their loved ones with ease.

individuals each year, and the number continues to grow. Each section contains hundreds of graves, those of children, Holocaust survivors, Triangle Fire victims and many others.

If you are interested in making a gift of \$5,000 or more to map a section of the cemetery, please call Amy Koplow, HFBA Executive Director at (212) 239-1662.



Two pilot sections have already been completed: Sections 65 (pictured) and Section 50. The entire mapping of Mount Richmond will cost about \$250,000. **Your contribution of \$25,000 will cover an entire decade of burials. A gift of \$5,000 will map one section.**

Over 55,000 people have been buried at Mount Richmond Cemetery. HFBA currently buries about 400

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.



The Goats Came Back!

Our industrious four-legged friends returned to do what they do best – nibbling their way through the overgrown foliage at Silver Lake Cemetery.



Olga and Vlad G. came to the United States from the former Soviet Union with their young daughter Natalia in 1993. Prior to their emigration, Vlad had been an anesthesiologist and Olga was the manager of a medical diagnostics laboratory. Soon after their arrival, Vlad had a stroke and needed home health care, straining their already precarious financial situation. Vlad died in 2014 and was sadly cremated according to his sister’s instructions. When Olga died, the Public Administrator (PA) was unable to locate any family member to whom to release the body, as Natalia was long estranged from her parents. With a combination of persistence and luck, a member of the HFBA staff was able, via a call to Israel, to locate a niece who informed HFBA that Olga’s brother lived in France. To our surprise, it turned out that the brother had been in touch with the PA. He was very grateful that HFBA could arrange for the burial and regretful that neither he nor the extended family had funds to contribute.

Nathan B.’s remains had been in the city morgue for over four months, unnoticed and forgotten, after he died in a Manhattan subway station, his body discovered by transit

continued on page 5

HFBA Educating the Jewish Community

An important part of HFBA’s work is to educate the Jewish community about end-of-life planning and to inform Jewish organizations dealing with the poor and elderly about HFBA’s services. Toward that end, HFBA Executive Director Amy Koplrow has spoken, over the last several months, to social workers and staff members at multiple JASA locations in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Nassau County, at SelfHelp’s Community Guardian program, SelfHelp’s Nazi Victims Services program and the MJHS Center for Jewish End of Life Care.

Additionally, Andrew Parver, Director of Operations and Rabbi Elchonon Zohn, Rabbinic Advisor, spoke at the Annual Conference of the Orthodox Jewish Nurses Association in May while Dana Riess, HFBA’s Assistant Office Manager, represented HFBA at JASA’s

Senior Resource & Advocacy Fair.

HFBA wants all referring individuals and agencies to know that we will work with surviving members of the family, regardless of their financial resources, to bury any indigent Jew so that their remains will peacefully rest at our cemetery, rather than anonymously in a mass grave on New York’s Hart Island.

Ms. Koplrow also presented at the annual Jewish Cemetery Association of North America Conference in Michigan in May. She spoke on the topic “Building Kavod and Community: Margaret and Leo Meyer and Hans M. Hirsch Tahara Facility,” describing HFBA’s recent construction of its new on-site structure for the ritual preparation of the body prior to burial.



HFBA receives many letters from people who have had experience with our organization. Below are recent examples.

We recently suffered the loss of a pregnancy. It was a very difficult time for us physically and emotionally. We were very concerned that everything should be done according to halacha (Jewish law) yet we had no idea what that meant. That's where your organization came in. You made sure that everything was taken care of and you did it in a caring, sensitive way. We truly appreciate all you've done for us.

Dara and Mark A.

I am grateful and appreciate the dignified Jewish funeral service that was conducted by the kind and compassionate Rabbi Plafker for my cousin J.B. who was ill and in difficult monetary circumstances. J.B. was an honest, humble

person who worked all his life and he always honored and cared for his parents.

A check is enclosed to assist you in your efforts to aid Jewish people in dire circumstances.

Sara C.

Thank you most sincerely for your kindness and assistance in making my brother, M.G.'s final arrangements and for giving him such a heartfelt service despite not knowing him. We are deeply touched and thankful of your organization.

Ricki T.

Thank you so very much for your kind attention to the burial of my aunt, Frieda T. I was deeply appreciative of your efforts, and very touched that on a cold, Sunday morning, ten men arrived to make up a minyan. I understand it is a mitzvah to do so, but for me and my family, it turned a sad moment into a beautiful one. I will always remember it. My sincerest thanks, and all blessings to you.

Rachel K.

Names have been changed and letters edited for clarity and to protect confidentiality.

Leave Your Mark

Sponsor four grave markers and a plaque with your name will be added to our roster at the Weinberg Chapel at Mount Richmond Cemetery.

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors whose contributions have qualified them for a plaque:

Alpha-Genesis Sunshine Foundation, Inc.

Mrs. Roslyn Bierig

Mr. & Mrs. Charles T. Feldman

Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Gellman

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur S. Gertstein

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Goldman

Mr. Raphael Haar

Dr. Jesse M. Hackell

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The Silverweed Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Paul M. Trenk

Mr. Sheldon Wertheim

РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

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

Картируем кладбище Маунт Ричмонд, секцию за секцией

Мириам Коэн знала, что её дед похоронен на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд, но не знала где точно. Файлы HFBA бережно хранятся и содержат точную информацию, но у нас нет процедуры для быстрого извлечения этой информации. Усугубляет проблему то, что часто по воскресеньям наших сотрудников может не быть на кладбище, и посетители должны довольствоваться скудными сведениями об усопших.

В случае с Мириам сотрудники кладбища перерыли тысячи учётных карточек, затем нарисовали примерную карту-схему захоронения. Эти трудоёмкие усилия явно не соответствовали традиции уважения к усопшим, а также уважения к живущим.

Но эта ситуация скоро должна коренным образом измениться. После тщательного планирования и благодаря начальным пожертвованиям HFBA наконец начало картировать кладбище Маунт Ричмонд. Этот проект существенно улучшит кладбище и позволит посетителям легко находить могилы усопших родственников с помощью централизованной карты, показывающей все захоронения.

Пожертвование в 5 тыс. долларов позволяет картировать одну секцию кладбища. К настоящему времени закартированы две секции. На кладбище Маунт Ричмонд похоронено более 55 тыс. человек, и HFBA организует около 400 погребений в год, причём это число неуклонно растёт. В каждой секции кладбища сотни могил: здесь похоронены дети, а также пережившие Холокост, жертвы пожара в здании Утюга (начало прошлого века) и многие другие.

Если Вы хотите пожертвовать 5 тыс. долларов или большую сумму для картирования секции кладбища, пожалуйста позвоните Эми Коплоу, исполнительному директору Еврейского Благотворительного Похоронного Бюро, по телефону (212) 239-1662.

HFBA помогает

Ольга и Владимир Г* приехали в США из бывшего Советского Союза в 1993 году со своей дочерью Натальей. Перед отъездом Владимир работал анестезиологом, а Ольга была заведующей диагностической лаборатории. Вскоре после эмиграции у Владимира случился инсульт, и ему требовался домашний уход, что осложняло их и без того трудное финансовое положение.

Владимир скончался в 2014-м и был кремирован согласно воле его сестры. Когда умерла Ольга, общественный администратор Нью-Йорка не смог найти родственников, которые бы позаботились о похоронах, поскольку Наталья много лет не общалась с родителями. Благодаря настойчивости и толике удачи, сотрудники HFBA после звонков в Израиль разыскали племянницу Ольги, которая сообщила о брате Ольги, живущем во Франции. Оказалось, что брат уже связывался с офисом общественного администратора Нью-Йорка. Он был безмерно благодарен HFBA за организацию похорон Ольги и сожалел что ни у него, ни у других родственников не было средств, чтобы помочь оплатить похороны.

Нам пишут

Письма отредактированы для большей ясности и для сохранения конфиденциальности

«Недавно беременность в нашей семье закончилась неудачно. Это был очень трудный для нас период, как физически так и эмоционально. Мы хотели, чтобы всё было сделано по галахе (еврейский закон), но не знали, что это конкретно означает. В этом нам очень помогла ваша организация. Еврейское Благотворительное

Похоронное Бюро взяло на себя организацию погребения, и всё это с заботой и тактом. Мы безмерно благодарны вам за это.

*Дара и Марк А**»

«Огромное спасибо за достойный обряд погребения, проведённый вашим раввином г-ном Плафкером для моего двоюродного брата Д.Б., долго болевшего и не имевшего средств. Мой брат был честным и скромным, он работал всю жизнь и всегда почитал своих родителей и заботился о них. Я прилагаю чек, чтобы ваша организация и дальше помогала евреям в трудной ситуации.

*Сара С**»

** имена изменены*

Шерстистые друзья возвращаются!

Наши трудолюбивые четвероногие друзья козы делают то, что умеют лучше всех – проедают дорожки сквозь густые заросли на нашем историческом кладбище Сильвер Лейк. Природой созданные «газонокосилки» постепенно открывают для глаз ранее скрытые могилы и памятные таблички.

Просвещаем еврейскую общину о работе HFBA

Одна из важнейших задач Еврейского Благотворительного Похоронного Бюро (HFBA) – рассказывать о планировании последней фазы жизни и информировать о наших услугах различные еврейские организации, работающие с пожилыми и бедными. С этой целью исполнительный директор HFBA Эми Коплоу в течение последних месяцев выступала несколько раз перед социальными работниками и сотрудниками многочисленных отделений JASA (*Еврейской Ассоциации по Работе с Пожилыми*), участвовала в нескольких программах SelfHelp Guardian (*опекунство над пожилыми*), и выступала в хосписе MJHS (*Еврейской системы здравоохранения Большого Нью-Йорка*).

Другие сотрудники HFBA, включая консультанта по еврейским законам, выступали на ежегодной конференции ортодоксальных еврейских медсестёр, а также представляли HFBA на информационной сессии («ярмарке») о защите и ресурсах для пожилых, проводимой JASA.

HFBA хочет, чтобы все обращающиеся к нам отдельные лица и организации знали, что мы будем работать с членами семей усопших независимо от их финансовых возможностей, чтобы останки их ушедших родственников покоились на нашем кладбище, а не в безымянной могиле для нью-йоркских бедняков на острове Харт.

HFBA в новостях

Время от времени HFBA доводится хоронить кого-то известного или даже мрачно известного.

• Несколько месяцев назад в газете «Нью-Йорк Таймс» вышла статья, озаглавленная «Факты и вымысел о преступной жизни» и рассказывающая о жизни Майкла Формана, преступника и мошенника, который регулярно попадал в тюрьму, вплоть до прошлого года. Автор статьи, Майкл Уилсон, описывает свою работу по разматыванию всё новых слоёв жизни Формана, в которой были его друзья-рекламщики в 1960-х, закулисные воротилы-спонсоры фестиваля Вудсток, тюремщики множества тюрем, где он сидел, женщина, чью фотографию он носил, рассказывая друзьям и родственникам, что его подруга – русская балерина вдвое моложе его, и под конец – соседи по ночлежке в Манхэттене. Траектория жизни Формана включала кражи, наркотики, мошенничество с кредитными карточками и убийства.

• Четвёртого ноября 2015 года Майкл Форман скончался в реабилитационной клинике в Бруклине, имея в кармане всего 41 доллар. Его брат Рэнди, которого смогли разыскать с помощью тюремных документов Майкла, «организовал традиционные похороны через Еврейское Благотворительное Похоронное Бюро».



Several months ago, The New York Times, featured an article titled **“The Facts and Fictions of a Life of Crime,”** the life story of Michael Forman, “a career criminal and con artist who had been in and out of prisons and jails as recently as last year.” The article’s author, Michael Wilson, described “peeling back the layers of his life” which included “his fellow ad men of the 1960’s...his fellow promoters of Woodstock working with him behind the scenes before the concert...scores of jailers...the woman whose picture he carried in recent years telling friends and relatives she was his Russian ballerina girlfriend less than half his age...his neighbors, near the end, in the Manhattan flophouse he called home.” As a young man Forman was friendly with headliners of the hippie era like Jann Wenner and Abbie Hoffman. He worked with film director Otto Preminger until, in 1975, he stole a valuable Kandinsky painting from the wall of Preminger’s office. His trajectory of crime included theft, drug deals, credit card fraud and murder.

On November 4, 2015, Michael Forman died at a rehabilitation center in Brooklyn with \$41 in his pocket. His brother Randy was located through Michael’s prison records and “arranged a proper funeral through the Hebrew Free Burial Association.”

A lengthy article on the front page of The New York Times on May 16, 2016 described the **“Secrets of New York’s Mass Graves: On Hart island, Over a Million Life Stories Have an Anonymous End.”** The piece described the burials, in unmarked mass graves, of New York’s forgotten, isolated and impoverished on an island which is off-limits to the public, the work done by prison inmates, supervised by the city’s Correction Department. The grim history of the island and its unyielding and often apathetic bureaucracy is long and haunting, reflecting society’s view of its most unfortunate members, denied dignity in life and in death.

It is precisely this scenario that HFBA works so hard to avoid. “We can’t get the morgue lists,’ complained Amy Koplow, executive director of the Hebrew Free Burial Association, which is dedicated to providing a traditional private interment to any Jew who can’t afford one. ‘We can’t march in... (and say) that person’s Jewish; they belong to us’” for a respectful funeral and burial.

HFBA is proud of its long tradition ensuring that no Jewish soul suffers the indignity of an anonymous burial, alone and forgotten.

HFBA Helps *continued from page 2*

police officers. A green card found on him indicated that he was 69 years old, had been born in Israel and had lived in the United States since 1967. HFBA investigated further and found that his last address had been a shelter which had closed, probably rendering him homeless. Once it was determined that Nathan was Jewish, without any apparent surviving family members, HFBA arranged for his funeral and burial.

Cora F., a Holocaust survivor born in Poland, witnessed the horror of her siblings being killed in front of her. After the war she and her husband settled in the US and had a son. Her husband died in the early 1990’s and HFBA arranged his burial. Several months ago, her disabled son informed us of his mother’s passing and again we

helped their family, arranging Cora’s burial. Cora’s son was particularly grateful to HFBA for our services due to his constrained finances and disabilities which hinder his ability to work.

Carl T. was referred to HFBA by the Public Administrator. Despite the formidable odds of finding any information, HFBA was able to determine the names of Carl’s parents and the location of their graves. However, there was no grave reserved for him at that cemetery. Apparently, he had no friends or anyone who knew him well despite the fact that he had lived at the same address for at least 25 years. Besides HFBA’s Rabbi Plafker and the HFBA volunteer *minyán*, no one attended the funeral. His life remains a mystery, one of isolation and poverty. His burial was dignified, his grave will be marked.

Names changed to protect confidentiality.

HFBA Bergen County Breakfast

On May 22, 2016, HFBA held its inaugural Bergen County (New Jersey) Breakfast at Congregation Rinat Yisrael in Teaneck. We were pleased to honor Bryan Alter, who served for 12 years as a member of HFBA's Board of Directors and as corporate secretary.

Over 125 people came to honor Mr. Alter, support HFBA and learn from our guest speaker, Rabbi Paysach Krohn.



L-R: Robbie Mendeles, HFBA Board Secretary; Bryan Alter, honoree; Rabbi Paysach Krohn; Amy Koplow, HFBA Executive Director; Andrew Parver, HFBA Director of Operations; Paul H. Nagelberg President HFBA Board of Directors.

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 Silver Lake Cemetery Chesed Days.

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

DONATE your property, used vehicle or boat and receive a generous tax donation.



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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