

## Kaddish: Linking the Living and the Dead

The mourner's *kaddish* – the prayer recited by the living for the deceased – is never said alone. It is meant to be recited as the mourner stands together with a quorum of Jews, surrounded and comforted by community. It is a responsive recitation; the mourner speaks, and the congregation responds.

Yet *kaddish* is not about death and death is never mentioned. Proclaiming G-d's sovereignty over the world, the prayer anticipates the moment when His kingship will be universally acknowledged. *Kaddish* concludes with the request that G-d grant peace to us and to all of Israel.

*Kaddish* was originally composed as a closing hymn after lectures in the *beit midrash* (the study hall) and the *kaddish derabbanan* (*kaddish* of the rabbis) is still recited after the study portions of daily prayer. For unclear reasons, it took on a broader purpose and has been Judaism's response to death for millennia. Unlike the rest of the prayer book, written mostly in Hebrew, *kaddish* is written in Aramaic, the vernacular of the Jewish people through the Second Temple period. And *kaddish* is an ancient prayer - already incorporated into the ninth century *siddur* (prayer book) of Rav Saadia Gaon.

In earlier centuries, only one person said the *kaddish* on behalf of all mourners. However, this tended to cause friction among the congregants, as each mourner wanted to lead the prayer because of its emotional resonance.

To avoid conflict, it became the custom in many congregations for all mourners to recite the *kaddish* together. Over the last decades, women have joined men in the synagogue, also reciting the mourner's *kaddish*, to pay respects to their deceased parents during their year of *availut* (mourning) and on the *yahrzeit* (anniversary of the death.) Mourners for other deceased relatives such as spouses, children or siblings say *kaddish* for a 30-day period.



In many Ashkenazic synagogues, the congregation stands in respect as the mourners recite *kaddish*. In Sephardic synagogues, only the mourners stand. In all congregations, as the mourners recite the closing verse, they take three steps back and bow to the left, right and forward. This is a sign of respect, as if one were taking leave of a monarch.

According to the noted historian Jonathan Sarna, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries *kaddish* took on an outsized role in American Jewish life. Most of the time, young immigrants who left Eastern Europe to escape oppression could not afford to return to Europe and visit their parents. Immigration meant being separated from family forever.

As news of a parent's death reached a new American, frequently after the *shiva* period, feelings of sadness and guilt were somewhat assuaged by observing the *kaddish* ritual. Children were still able to offer this last prayer for their parents as they sought some comfort for themselves. Even in our time, *kaddish* is often the last Jewish rite to be observed, even when all others have been forgotten.

### 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.



## Readers Respond

Reader response to the article about cremation in the previous edition of *Chesed* was widespread and emotional. Although HFBA has received donations targeted for burials which avoided cremations, contributions towards this effort picked up as a direct result of this story. One woman, suffering from the recent loss of a friend whose family insisted on cremation, made a first-time contribution of several thousands of dollars to fund other burials to avoid cremations.

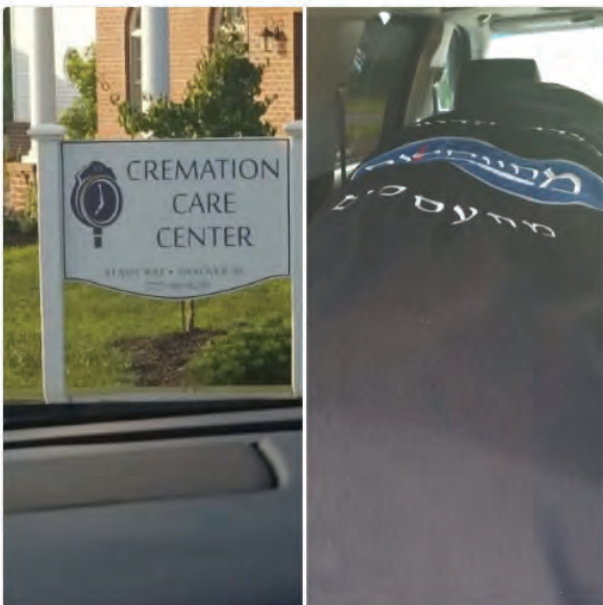
We especially want to thank **The Applebaum Foundation** for a generous grant to subsidize cases that we save from cremation. This year, as of August, HFBA was able to prevent 12 cremations and instead provide traditional Jewish burials.

**A collaborative effort between HFBA and Misaskim to save a Jew who would otherwise have been cremated was publicized in the tweet below from July 27, 2018.**



**Misaskim** @misaskim · Jul 27

Last night @misaskim volunteers drove 350 miles to Hanover PA & retrieved the body of a Jewish war vet who was going to be cremated by his friends. Instead we arranged for him with the help of @hfba a proper Jewish burial which took place today.



## HFBA Helps



**George F.**, a retired New York City tour guide, had suffered a traumatic brain injury and had been hospitalized for four years. Remarkably, just as life-sustaining medical intervention was to be re-assessed, he suddenly emerged from his coma, only to succumb days later, a week after his wife died. His daughter, an only child, was forced to deal with the deaths of both her parents at the same time. She arranged for the burial of her Jewish father with HFBA in the morning and had a memorial service for her Catholic mother that same afternoon.

**Larry K.** had been unable to work or function independently because of a lifelong psychiatric disability. Larry's parents had left him a sizable trust which had been so mismanaged that Larry had been evicted from his apartment, was in and out of nursing homes and hospitals and at his death had only \$700 to his name. His therapist called HFBA to provide a funeral service and burial for his client which he, and one of Larry's acquaintances, attended.

**Ada F.**, disabled from birth, lived in a state facility for the developmentally disabled for 30 years prior to her death at the age of 82. She had no known family but was appreciated by her friends at the residence for her intelligence and her love of coffee, cigarettes and red lipstick. Four of these friends were able to attend her funeral at Mount Richmond Cemetery.

**Jerry B.** was developmentally disabled from birth and had lived in residential facilities since he was eight years old. For a number of years, he lived at the infamous Willowbrook State School in Staten Island. When Jerry was 47 years old, his mother withdrew from any involvement in his care and applied to make him a ward of the state. At the same time, she pre-arranged a cremation despite having purchased graves in a Jewish cemetery for herself and her husband. When Jerry died at the age of 71, the non-Jewish director of the residence in which Jerry was living, compassionately called HFBA, aware that "Jews are not supposed to be cremated." Four staff members from the adult home and HFBA's volunteer *minyan* attended his burial.



**HFBA thanks Andrew Feinman** for his nearly 30 years of dedicated service to the organization as a member of the Board of Directors as well as its president and co-president. Andrew first became involved with HFBA through his next door neighbor, Gerald Feldhamer, HFBA's president at the time.

Andrew is a familiar face to those who have attended our community breakfasts as he has participated in so many of them. We are grateful that, although he is stepping down from the Board, he will continue to serve on HFBA's investment committee. As he says, ***"Working with HFBA is really helping people who can't help themselves by providing a service they would have wanted as their last act on earth—a traditional Jewish send-off."***

We are grateful for his dedication to *chesed shel emet* and his many years of service.

**Many thanks to Yosi Shalem** who is leaving Mount Richmond Cemetery after nearly 10 years working as its superintendent. Beginning in the fall of 2008, Yosi worked hard to make the cemetery and burials run smoothly, beautify areas and supervise the lifting and resetting of hundreds of monuments. He also extended himself to visitors, helping them whenever he could. We wish him a restful and well deserved retirement!



## HFBA Helps: Pregnancy and Neo-natal Loss

Thanks to advances in medical research and health care, as well as improved hygienic conditions, the rate of pregnancy loss and neo-natal death has fallen significantly over the last century.

However, whereas once this type of loss was commonplace and often hidden and unacknowledged, society as a whole has begun to confront the pain



and loss suffered by those who lose a pregnancy or experience a still-birth or neo-natal death.

When HFBA is called upon to help parents deal with this type of loss, we are ready. Our *chevra kadisha* will handle the remains which are buried in a special section of our cemetery.

We work hard to make this tragic situation somewhat less difficult by ensuring that the loss is acknowledged and that the fetus or infant is treated respectfully as it is laid to rest, accompanied by the recitation of *tehillim* (psalms.)

HFBA has served the Jewish community in this capacity since its inception, and hundreds of such losses rest in its cemeteries. Over the last several years, up to a dozen fetal and neo-natal remains per year have been buried with dignity, reverence and love.

Thank you to the **Richmond County Savings Foundation** for a generous grant of \$25,000 for the Silver Lake Cemetery Preservation Project.



### In the Mail

I would like to thank everyone at HFBA for the invaluable support and assistance that was provided to me in the burial of my neighbor, Peter F.

Peter was an 81 year old man living on SSI without friends or relatives. He could not afford a burial plot. As the only person he communicated with, I did not want him buried in potter's field.

Upon his death in a Bronx hospital, I called HFBA and the process (of burial) started. Without HFBA I would not have known what to do. The efficiency and generosity of HFBA is miraculous.

Once again, my heartfelt thanks to this incredible organization.

**L.E.**

*Identifying information has been changed and the letter has been edited for length and clarity.*

# РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

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

## Кадиш – молитва больше для живущих, чем для усопших

Кадиш скорбящих – молитва, читаемая по усопшим – никогда не произносится в одиночестве. Скорбящие произносят её стоя, окружённые и поддерживаемые членами еврейской общины. Эта молитва произносится как диалог: скорбящий говорит, и община отвечает.

Тем не менее, при чтении кадиша смерть даже не упоминается. Эта молитва провозглашает власть Вс-вышнего над миром, и призывает будущее, в котором эта власть будет признана всеми. Завершает молитву призыв даровать мир нам и всему народу Израиля.

После смерти родителей детям предписывается читать по ним кадиш в течение 11-и месяцев. Родители, с другой стороны, произносят кадиш 30 дней в случае смерти ребёнка. Братья и сёстры, и супруги усопших, также должны произносить кадиш один месяц.

Во многих ашкеназских синагогах вся община встаёт в знак уважения к скорбящему, произносящему кадиш. В сефардских же синагогах все остаются сидеть, и встаёт только тот, кто произносит молитву. Во всех общинах читающие последний стих кадиша отходят на три шага назад и кланяются влево, вправо и затем вперёд, как если бы они заканчивали аудиенцию у повелителя всего сущего.

## Ответ наших читателей

Реакция на нашу статью о кремации в прошлом номере «Хесед» была эмоциональной и массовой. Хотя HFBA и раньше получало пожертвования, специально направленные на то, чтобы избежать кремации, их поток увеличился сразу после публикации. Одна женщина недавно потеряла друга, семья которого настояла на кремации. Её первый взнос – несколько тысяч долларов – был специально предназначен для тех погребений, которые помогают избежать кремирования.

Мы особо благодарим Applebaum Foundation за щедрый грант, позволяющий субсидировать случаи, когда удаётся предотвратить кремацию. В этом году, по данным на начало августа, HFBA смогло предотвратить кремацию в 12-и случаях и заменить её на погребение по еврейскому обряду.

## HFBA помогает: потеря во время беременности или после родов

Благодаря прогрессу в медицине и здравоохранении, а также улучшению общесанитарных условий, вероятность гибели плода или новорожденного значительно упала по сравнению с прошлым веком. Раньше подобные случаи были частыми, при этом о них обычно не заявляли. В

наши дни общество начало реагировать на боль, которую пережили близкие из-за потери беременности, мертворождения или гибели новорожденного.

Когда к HFBA обращаются, чтобы помочь родителям пережить подобную потерю, мы готовы. Наша «хевра кадиша» (группа поддержки) поможет похоронить останки в особой секции еврейского кладбища.

Мы прилагаем усилия, чтобы как-то облегчить эту трагическую ситуацию, чтобы потеря была признана и принята, и чтобы плод или новорожденный были похоронены с достоинством, с чтением псалмов (теилим).

С самого своего основания Еврейское Благотворительное Похоронное Бюро (HFBA) занималось подобными случаями для еврейской общины. Сотни таких погребений были проведены на принадлежащих HFBA кладбищах. В последние годы HFBA организует до дюжины погребений младенцев, которых хоронят с достоинством и с любовью.

## HFBA помогает

- У Джерри Б\* с детства было отставание в развитии, и с восьми лет он жил в специальных заведениях. В течение нескольких лет он находился в печально-известном государственном интернате Уиллоубрук на Стейтен Айленд. Когда Джерри было 47, его мать отказалась участвовать в заботе о нём, полностью возложив эту заботу на штат. В это же время она договорилась о кремации Джерри в случае его смерти, хотя сама она приобрела участок на еврейском кладбище для себя и мужа. Когда Джерри скончался в возрасте семидесяти одного года, директор заведения, в котором проживал Джерри, нееврей, позвонил в HFBA и проникновенно заявил, что «евреев ведь не должны кремировать». На похоронах Джерри присутствовали четверо сотрудников его заведения, а также наш миньян из добровольцев.

- Джордж Ф., вышедший на пенсию гид по Нью-Йорку, перенёс травму головы и четыре года находился в госпитале. Когда решался вопрос, продолжать ли держать его на системах искусственной поддержки, Джордж неожиданно вышел из комы. Однако через несколько дней Джордж скончался, через неделю после смерти жены. Его дочь – единственный ребёнок – была вынуждена заняться похоронами сразу обоих родителей. С помощью HFBA она организовала погребение отца утром и в тот же день отправилась на поминальную службу для своей матери-католички.

С Новым годом ! Мы желаем всем, кто поддерживает HFBA, в этом году крепкого здоровья, удачи и мира !

# Leave Your Mark

Thank you to the following who received a plaque at Mount Richmond Cemetery for their generous donation of four grave stones.

Alpha-Genesis Sunshine Foundation, Inc.  
Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel  
of Riverdale – Rabbi Barry Dov Katz  
Mrs. Bernice P. Feldman  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Fine  
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Gellman  
Mr. Alan Goldman

Major Edward Gurewitz  
Mr. Thomas H. Maupin  
Mr. Nechemia Aaron Oberstein  
Edward Salomon & Linda Steiner  
Mr. & Mrs. Harris Schwartz  
Mr. Ralph L. Schwartz  
Mr. Italo S. Servi

Dr. Beth M. Siegel  
Ms. Deborah E. Siegel  
The Silverweed Foundation, Inc.  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Spiewak  
Mr. Maury J. Storch  
Ms. Doris Travis  
Mr. & Mrs. Howard S. Zavin

## HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

*It is traditional to visit “kever avot” (the grave of our ancestors and loved ones) during the High Holy Day period. Please see the schedule below.*

### Mount Richmond Cemetery

#### **ROSH HASHANA**

Sunday, Sept. 9	OPEN/CLOSE 9 am - 3:45 pm
Monday, Sept 10	CLOSED
Tuesday, Sept. 11	CLOSED

#### **YOM KIPPUR**

Tuesday, Sept. 18	9 am – 1 pm
Wednesday, Sept 19	CLOSED

#### **SUKKOT**

Sunday, Sept 23	9 am – 3:45 pm
Monday, Sept 24	CLOSED
Tuesday, Sept 25	CLOSED

#### **SHMINI ATZERET and SIMCHAT TORAH**

Sunday, Sept. 30	9 am – 3:45 pm
Monday, Oct 1	CLOSED
Tuesday, Oct 2	CLOSED

*YIZKOR* is recited on Yom Kippur, Sept 19 and Shmini Atzeret, Oct 1.

*Согласно еврейской традиции принято посещать могилы близких (кевер авот) во время торжественных осенних праздников. Пожалуйста, ознакомьтесь с приведенным ниже расписанием.*

### Кладбище Маунт Ричмонд – расписание в осенние еврейские праздники:

#### **РОШ ХАШАНА:**

Воскресенье	9 сентября	9:00 - 15:45
Понедельник	10 сентября	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник	11 сентября	ЗАКРЫТО

#### **ЙОМ КИПУР:**

Вторник	18 сентября	9:00 - 13:00 ровно
Среда	19 сентября	ЗАКРЫТО

#### **СУККОТ:**

Воскресенье	23 сентября	9:00 - 15:45
Понедельник	24 сентября	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник	25 сентября	ЗАКРЫТО

#### **ШМИНИ АЦЕРЕТ и СИМХАТ ТОРА:**

Воскресенье	30 сентября	9:00 - 15:45
Понедельник	1 октября	ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник	2 октября	ЗАКРЫТО

*Поминальную молитву Изкор будут читать на Йом Кипур 19-го сентября и в праздник Шмини Ацерет 1-го октября*

### Silver Lake Cemetery

Silver Lake Cemetery will be open for visitors on Sunday, September 2, 2018 from 9 am – 3:45 pm.

This is the only day this year that the Silver Lake Cemetery will be open to the public due to the extensive preservation work taking place at the site.

*We hope to provide exciting updates about the progress in the coming months.*

# Save the Date

## Annual Staten Island Community Breakfast

Sunday, December 16, 2018  
Young Israel of Staten Island

## Shana Tova!

Wishing all our HFBA supporters a year of good health, good fortune and peace!



## 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.



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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