

Silver Lake Cemetery

Our Pledge to the Past, a Legacy for the Future

IT WAS A TIME WHEN MORE CHILDREN THAN OLD PEOPLE DIED...

In 1888, nine men gathered to form the Chebra Agudas Achim Chesed Shel Emeth (The Society of the Brotherhood of True Charity). Children were dying on the Lower East Side; disease and starvation were endemic. Yet, families could not afford to bury them, nor to inter the elderly and the infirm.

Without a Jewish burial ground, impoverished Jews would be consigned to New York City's Potter's Field. There would be no markers there, nor any way to recite the *kaddish*, the traditional prayer for the dead.

One of the nine, Max Silver lent the group \$1,500 to help purchase a plot of land in Staten Island. The land had been a part of the J.G. Thanner estate in the Grymes Hill neighborhood. Silver Lake Cemetery was originally meant to serve the Jews of the Lower East Side. The need, however, was city-wide and soon the cemetery's mission broadened to include all New York.

In just 17 years, the 4.5 acre cemetery was filled. Some days, there were up to a dozen

interments. Some 13,600 individuals were buried at Silver Lake Cemetery between 1892 and 1909. Over half were infants and children. Most were immigrants from Eastern Europe. A few were veterans of the Spanish American War. Others had fallen victim to rampant epidemics, poor medical care and unsanitary conditions. And some just never recovered from the break with their native lands.

Now on the National Register of Historic Places, Silver Lake Cemetery is recognized as a vital chapter in the story of American immigration and the history of New York Jewry.



Silver Lake Cemetery, 2018, before preservation work.



Silver Lake Cemetery, January 2020

AFTER NATURE'S EROSION, A NEW ERA OF HOPE AND REPAIR

Over the past 120 years, nature and encroaching human activity had taken their inevitable course. The cemetery is at the foot of Grymes Hill and – after heavy rains – water collected at its lower spots. Children's graves were submerged under these impromptu ponds.

Most of the children's graves had never been marked. Many of the others had only small and thin stones, now gone. Other

continued on page 2



Your help is needed now more than ever.

Donate online at <https://www.hebrewfreeburial.org/donate>

Giving on our secure website is both easy and efficient!

Daily Giving is an innovative non-profit organization which collects \$1 a day from each of its donors as a gift to a *tzedakah*. Hebrew Free Burial Association would like to thank *Daily Giving* for including us as one of the charitable groups it supports.



Taleisim Needed!

In addition to *tachrichim* (burial shrouds), a Jewish man is buried in a *tallis*. Donated, used *taleisim* are very much needed and appreciated. **Please send used *taleisim* directly to: Mount Richmond Cemetery, 420 Clarke Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10306. Thank you!**

2020/5780
Riverdale
 COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

NEW DATE

Joel E. Simon
Chesed Shul Ernest Award

Lauren & David Lieberman
Community Service Award

Bella Hochberg
Chesed Shul Ernest Award

Sunday, June 14, 2020, 9:30 am
 Hebrew Institute of Riverdale – the Bayit
 3700 Henry Hudson Parkway, Riverdale, NY
 Event co-chairs: Andrea Harris • David Knapp

RSVP: 212-239-1662 or go to www.hebrewfreeburial.org/riverdale

Silver Lake Cemetery ...continued from page 1

headstones were victims of natural erosion, vandalism and other physical damage. Opportunistic trees had uprooted markers and shifted burial sites. Portions of the perimeter walls and fencing needed to be stabilized. One cemetery border needed fencing.

HFBA HAS UNDERTAKEN A MASSIVE AND VALIANT EFFORT TO PRESERVE SILVER LAKE CEMETERY

The Silver Lake Preservation Project is now fulfilling its pledge to those who are buried here. Over the past year, we have secured the cemetery, repaired the masonry walls and cleared the grounds. To stop pondage, we created new drainage channels and removed over 170 opportunistic trees.

FULFILLING A SACRED PLEDGE

With most of the structural work completed, we are now ready to mark the 10,000 graves that are missing stones and restore dignity to those buried at Silver Lake Cemetery. This \$1 million campaign will also enable us to create educational tools focused on the cemetery's significance and the immigrants who shaped our city and are buried here.

As it buries indigent Jews with dignity and respect, Hebrew Free Burial Association promises to maintain their graves and the cemetery in the same spirit, in perpetuity. To do so, it must rely on each succeeding generation to help uphold this sacred promise.

—Margy-Ruth Davis



Barnet Zodikoff was 31 years old when he passed away. He was a beloved husband and father. HFBA pledged to Barnet's family – to the families of 13,600 other indigent Jews – that Silver Lake Cemetery would always be maintained with dignity and respect.

HFBA Helps

Names and details have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Eileen F., 73 years old, lived in her car in a mall parking lot. There she was befriended by Donna N. who worked in the mall. A few years ago, Donna brought Eileen home to have Thanksgiving dinner with her and her mother, Kristin. Eileen eventually became a family friend and would visit on various occasions, never sharing details of her personal life. One Friday night, Eileen asked the Catholic women if she could light candles, explaining that it was a custom in her Jewish faith. When Eileen passed away, Donna and Kristin recalled that Eileen had said that she wanted to be “buried in the ground with a rabbi saying prayers.” Donna found HFBA on the internet, reached out and soon Eileen received the traditional Jewish burial she had wanted. In a letter of thanks to us, Donna said, “HFBA treated us all with respect. The more I learn about the Jewish faith, the more I want to learn.”

Sarah W., 75 years old, called HFBA to pre-plan her burial. However, at the time of her death from cancer a month later, she had not yet filled out the required paperwork. Sarah had been married and divorced three times and had been estranged from her three siblings for over thirty years. She had also abandoned her son and daughter when they were children. HFBA located Sarah’s brother, who told us that they had had an abusive father and that Sarah suffered from mental and emotional problems. When Sarah died, a neighbor took the initiative to call HFBA for Sarah’s burial. Sarah was buried at Mount Richmond Cemetery with the volunteer *minyán* in attendance.

Jerome R. was raised by a divorced single mother and maternal grandparents. He attended Columbia University and several overseas universities including the Sorbonne. He married, had a son and worked throughout his life at various jobs. When he died at the age of 76, HFBA received a call from his son Kevin who lives off the grid in Oregon with no internet or phone. He claimed that his father had received some public assistance but he did not know details and he himself could not contribute to the cost of the funeral. HFBA buried Jerome. His son did not attend the burial.

New Ways to Support Hebrew Free Burial Association

Your support makes it possible for hundreds of indigent Jews in our community to be buried each year.

To help you make your own wishes known — and to provide you with some smart giving choices — here are three new planning and philanthropic tools.

YOUR LEGACY

A gift to HFBA in your will can help ensure that every Jewish person receives a dignified, traditional Jewish funeral. You can now create your will at no cost and build your legacy at Hebrew Free Burial Association by visiting www.hebrewfreeburial.org/freewill. This resource is free to you whether or not you choose to include Hebrew Free Burial Association. We’re happy to help you prepare for your future no matter what you choose to do.

DO YOU HAVE A TRADITIONAL IRA?

If you do, and you are 70½ years old, you are eligible to make a tax-free donation called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA directly to Hebrew Free Burial Association. The gift is always tax free, regardless of whether or not you itemize deductions on your tax return.

And if you’re required by law to withdraw an RMD (required minimum distribution) from your IRA, a QCD is a great way to satisfy that requirement while maximizing your impact.

Visit www.hebrewfreeburial.org/QCD to calculate your potential tax savings, and make a tax-free gift from your IRA to Hebrew Free Burial Association.

GIFTS OF STOCK

If you have appreciated stocks, they represent your best opportunity for giving back. When you cash out your stocks, you are required to pay capital gains tax. However, if you transfer the stock directly, you will be able to deduct the full amount of your stock, completely avoiding capital gains tax.

Visit www.hebrewfreeburial.org/stocks to transfer your stocks today.

РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

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

Кладбище Сильвер Лейк – наш долг прошлому, наше наследие для будущего

В 1888 году девять человек собрались в Нью-Йорке и основали Товарищество Истинной Благотворительности (на иврите Хевра Агудас-Ахим Хесед шель Эмет). В то время на Нижнем Ист-Сайде еврейские дети во множестве умирали, чаще всего из-за болезней и голода. Без специального места для погребений по еврейскому обряду многие евреи были бы похоронены на нью-йоркском Поттерс Филд – кладбище для бездомных. Их могилы не были бы обозначены, и не было бы возможности прочитать кадиш, традиционную молитву по усопшим.

Товарищество приобрело землю для кладбища Сильвер Лейк, изначально предназначавшегося для евреев-жителей Нижнего Ист Сайда. Но потребность в таком кладбище была общегородской, и вскоре кладбище начало принимать евреев со всего Нью-Йорка. Поэтому всего за 17 лет работы все четыре с половиной акра территории кладбища были заполнены.

Между 1892 и 1909 годами на кладбище Сильвер Лейк было похоронено примерно 13,600 человек, в основном выходцев из Восточной Европы. Более половины из них были дети. Здесь покоятся ветераны войны США с Испанией, а также жертвы эпидемий, плохой медицины и антисанитарных условий. Кладбище занесено в реестр Национальных Исторических Памятников и признано важной вехой в истории американской иммиграции и, в частности, в истории нью-йоркского еврейства.

За последние 120 лет и природа, и подступающие пригороды способствовали упадку и запустению кладбища. Чтобы решить эту проблему, HFBA предприняло смелые и масштабные шаги по сохранению кладбища Сильвер Лейк. В рамках этих усилий была укреплен внешняя ограда, починена каменная кладка зданий и пристроек, проложены новые дренажные каналы и удалено более 170 вторгшихся деревьев.

Сегодня большая часть структурной работы завершена, и мы готовы правильно пометить 10,000 могил, не имеющих каменных табличек. Помимо этого, HFBA проводит кампанию по созданию учебных материалов о значении кладбища Сильвер Лейк и о вкладе похороненных здесь еврейских иммигрантов в развитие Нью-Йорка.

Как тогда, так и в наши дни HFBA обеспечивает малоимущим евреям достойные похороны. Этим наши сотрудники дают обещание будущим эпохам сохранять эти могилы и кладбище. Для продолжения столь важного дела мы рассчитываем на помощь каждого нового поколения в выполнении этого священного обещания.

HFBA помогает

Эйлин Ф*, которой было 73 года, жила в своей машине, стоявшей на парковке торгового центра в Нью-Джерси. Там она подружилась с некоей Донной Н., работавшей в этом же центре. Несколько лет назад Донна и её мать Кристина пригласили Эйлин к себе домой на трапезу по случаю Дня Благодарения. Постепенно Эйлин подружилась с этой семьёй и иногда приходила к ним в гости, правда, почти не рассказывая о своей жизни. Однажды в пятницу Эйлин спросила Донну и Кристина, католичек, может ли она зажечь у них свечи, объяснив, что это одна из традиций её еврейской веры.

Когда Эйлин не стало, Донна и Кристина припомнили, что

Эйлин упомянула, что хотела бы «быть похороненной в земле, и чтобы раввин читал молитвы». Донна разыскала телефон HFBA в интернете и позвонила нам. Вскоре Эйлин была погребена по еврейскому обряду, как она того хотела. Донна написала благодарственное письмо: «...Сегодня наша подруга была похоронена под молитвы раввина, согласно еврейской традиции. Это было бы невозможно без помощи HFBA. Ваши сотрудники проявили ко всем нам заботу и уважение. Чем больше я узнаю о законах иудаизма, тем больше мне хочется и дальше их изучать».

** имена изменены*

Нам пишут

Я начал выстраивать генеалогическое древо нашей семьи в конце 70-х, беседуя с родственниками. Мой отец, его брат и сестра настаивали, что у них был четвёртый брат, который умер в младенчестве. Хотя они все были в этом уверены, никто не знал его имени. И так начались поиски моего дяди Айзека, занявшие в общей сложности три десятилетия. В 1991 году я сумел разыскать запись о рождении Айзека Стайнфельда, родившегося у моих бабушки и дедушки, Морица и Иды Стайнфельд. Но лишь в 2006-м удалось мне найти свидетельство о смерти. В свидетельстве была ошибка – оно было выдано на Исидору Стайнфельд. Все остальное было правильно: имена родителей, адрес и возраст дяди Айзека. Внизу страницы было указано место погребения – МР Оушн Вью. Я установил, что «МР» означает Маунт Ричмонд, кладбище, которым нынче заведует HFBA.

Я связался с офисом HFBA и назначил дату и время посещения, чтобы найти могилу моего дяди. У входа меня встретил сотрудник HFBA, который проводил меня до места захоронения. Могила не была помечена, как и многие другие могилы. Персонал кладбища помог мне заказать и установить памятник на могилу. Теперь я каждый год соблюдаю йорцайт (годовщина смерти) своего дяди.

...Алан Стайнфельд

Желаем всем нашим друзьям и тем, кто нас поддерживает, счастливого праздника Песах!

Расписание работы кладбища Mt. Richmond на время еврейских праздников – весна 2020 г.

ПЕСАХ

Среда, 8 апреля 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Четверг, 9 апреля ЗАКРЫТО
Пятница, 10 апреля ЗАКРЫТО
Вторник, 14 апреля 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Среда, 15 апреля ЗАКРЫТО
Четверг, 16 апреля ЗАКРЫТО

ШАВУОТ

Четверг, 28 мая 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Пятница, 29 мая ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва ИЗКОР читается в последний день каждого праздника: 16 апреля и 30 мая



In the Mail

Letters below have been edited for clarity and to protect confidentiality.

I just wanted you to know that I've just sent out a check for \$500 as a thank you and donation for all your good work. To know that you were there for my family when they could not afford to bury their infant son – at their greatest time of need – touches me greatly. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the work you do.

G.M.

Some time ago, I learned that my mother had a brother, Josel Klassman, who died of measles on February 4, 1921 at the Ellis Island Hospital. I recently found a card in my parents' safe deposit box which had the section and grave number in Mount Richmond Cemetery for Joseph Kleinman (his Americanized name). I would never have found his grave without this information.

It was quite moving to know that HFBA buried my uncle all those years ago.

Stuart K. Waxenberg

Today our friend Deborah was buried in a beautiful pine box and prayed over by a rabbi and was honored with a traditional Jewish burial.

This would not have been possible without this wonderful organization, Hebrew Free Burial Association. Everyone we came in contact with was wonderful. They treated us and Deborah with care and respect.

I can't say enough about what it meant to my daughter and me that Deborah was escorted today.

Thank you so very much.

M.N.

Posted on Facebook

I started work on my family tree, in the late 1970s by talking to family members. My dad, his brother and sister, all said that there had been a fourth sibling who died as an infant. While they all knew this, none of them knew his name. And so began what would be a three-decades-long search for Uncle Isaac...

...Finally, in 1991, I located the birth record of Isaac Steinfeld, born to my grandparents, Moritz and Ida Steinfeld. But it was only in 2006 that I located the death certificate I sought. It wasn't for Isaac Steinfeld but rather Isidore Steinfeld. Everything else was correct: the names of his parents; his address and his age. At the bottom of the certificate was his place of burial, MR Ocean View. MR, I learned, stands for Mount Richmond, now under the care of the Hebrew Free Burial Association.

I contacted the association's office and made an appointment to find my uncle's grave. I was met at the cemetery by an association official who walked with me to the site. As with so many others, it was unmarked and the cemetery staff assisted me in ordering and placing a monument. I now observe my uncle's yahrzeit every year.

Alan Steinfeld



**Wishing all our
HFBA supporters
and friends a
very Happy
Passover!**



HFBA History:

From "The Evening World," July 18, 1902

Tried to Slay His Wife, Then Killed Himself

Hoffman Sent a Bullet into Her Head and Drank Poison

As a climax to a drunken spree, Hyman Hoffman, a Russian tailor, attempted to murder his wife Sophie, the mother of his four children... and then succeeded in a double attempt at suicide to avoid arrest.

Mrs. Hoffman died with a bullet at the base of her brain. Hoffman shot himself twice without effect, then drank a tumbler of carbolic acid and died almost immediately... In his death agony he said to the police, "I shot her. The revolver is there under the chair." He was dead before the ambulance arrived from the hospital only a block away.

HFBA buried Hyman on July 20, 1902. It is not known where Sophie was buried. The fate of their four children is also unknown.

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

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.

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Mount Richmond Cemetery

Hours of Operation During
Passover and Shavuot Holidays

Passover

Wednesday, April 8	9 AM - 1 PM
Thursday, April 9	CLOSED
Friday, April 10	CLOSED
Tuesday, April 14	9 AM - 1 PM
Wednesday, April 15	CLOSED
Thursday, April 16	CLOSED

Shavuot

Thursday, May 28	9 AM - 1 PM
Friday, May 29	CLOSED

Yizkor is recited on the last day of these festivals:
April 16 and May 30

Chesed Shel Emet How You Can Help

Contact us for more information,
212-239-1662 or
info@hebrewfreeburial.org

