

## May Their Memories Be Blessed

The names of the 333 people HFBA has buried from January 1 – June 30, 2020

**Gisela Smolkin**, 82, Brooklyn, NY • **Eldred Lakier**, 73, Brooklyn, NY • **Tatyana Kudryavtseva**, 102, Brooklyn, NY • **Adela Vinogradova**, 68, Brooklyn, NY • **Samuel Dorfman**, 64, Olean, NY • **Jay Paul**, 70, Little Neck, NY • **Rakhil Kaganovskaya**, 93, Brooklyn, NY • **David Mendeleyev**, 69, Willowgrove, PA • **Donald Cohen**, 77, Queens, NY • **Blyuma Degtyareva**, 88, Brooklyn, NY • **Ritta Kaplunovskaya**, 81, Brooklyn, NY • **Joel Schmetz**, 74, Rockaway Beach, NY • **Dora Shulman**, 89, Staten Island, NY • **Pinya Smuklavskiy**, 89, Brooklyn, NY • **Gerald Cohen**, 82, Bronx, NY • **Yevsey Royzman**, 90, Bronx, NY • **Scott Burwin**, 55, Commack, NY • **Liliya Ozadovskaya**, 88, Oceanside, NY • **Paula Tavins**, 80, New York, NY • **Sheldon Jacob**, 79, Lebanon, NJ • **Izrail Blat**, 75, Far Rockaway, NY • **Brian Becofsky**, 57, Uniondale, NY • **David Goldstein**, 68, Lititz, PA • **Rosalinda Kosoff**, 75, New York, NY • **Arthur Straus**, 79, Brooklyn, NY • **Paula Solomon**, 73, Brooklyn, NY • **Hanna Lozovska**, 92, New York, NY • **Rita Matskina**, 83, Brooklyn, NY • **Scott Young**, 36, Brooklyn, NY • **Jerome Rubenstein**, 63, New York, NY • **Carla Bankendorf**, 78, New York, NY • **Sandra Barnet**, 71, Rego Park, NY • **George Rosen**, 90, Astoria, NY • **Harry Frenkel**, 73, Brooklyn, NY • **Alexandr Risin**, 93, Brooklyn, NY • **Annette Bronson**, 89, Brooklyn, NY • **Leonin Kaliy**, 84, New York, NY • **Jules Rubenstein**, 74, Bronx, NY • **Robert Penstein**, 68, Arverne, NY • **Vladimir Khasin**, 70, Forest Hills, NY • **Morton Diamond**, 82, Brooklyn, NY • **Lyudmila Radinovskaya**, 85, Brooklyn, NY • **Sofiya Slavina**, 90, Flushing, NY • **Khaya Shterenberg**, 94, Brooklyn, NY • **Anna Boguslavskaya**, 87, Brooklyn, NY • **Steven Hartman**, 61, Bronx, NY • **Anatoliy Susman**, 87, Brooklyn, NY • **Arnold Rappaport**, 65, Belle Harbor, NY • **Svetlana Sokolovska**, 82, Brooklyn, NY • **Alvin Bernstein**, 83, Flushing, NY • **Chaya Berlianshik**, 80, Brooklyn, NY • **Richard Kisner**, 67, NY • **Eileen Abrams**, 80, Brooklyn, NY • **Allan Pollack**, 81, Jackson Heights, NY • **Alan Basche**, 79, Lindenwood, NY • **Paul Cosover**, 78, New York, NY • **Pesa Tsentner**, 81, Brooklyn, NY • **Esfir Kuznetsova**, 98, Edison, NJ • **Joan Willins**, 80, Altamont, NY • **Daniel Wolf**, 67, Bronx, NY • **Steven Albert**, 74, New York, NY • **Stephen Flayer**, 70, Brooklyn, NY • **Hilary Cohen**, 66, New York, NY • **Yelena Vinnitskaya**, 82, Brooklyn, NY • **Eda Feder**, 80, Bronx, NY • **David Greenberg**, 70, Greenlawn, NY • **Mikhail Zaritskiy**, 65, Brooklyn, NY • **Izrail Sherman**, 91, Brooklyn, NY • **Barry Buckstein**, 59, Little Neck, NY • **Igor Malivanny**, 81, Brooklyn, NY • **Dmitri Torbin**, 83, Brooklyn, NY • **Elektra Vise**, 82, Brooklyn, NY • **Bette Slutsky**, 76, Bronx, NY • **Stanley Goldstein**, 66, Fresh Meadows, NY • **Tatyana Shterenberg**, 53, Brooklyn, NY • **Stan Litvin**, 63, Brooklyn, NY • **Mildred Boxer**, 96, Long Beach, NY • **Michael Maxon**, 70, Valley Stream, NY • **Anna Shpitinetskaya**, 71, Brooklyn, NY • **Barry L Grushkin**, 65, New York, NY • **Vladimir Rubinchik**, 72, Brooklyn, NY • **Semen Koyfman**, 72, Brooklyn, NY • **Susan Tepper**, 73, Franklin Square, NY • **Irving Baruch**, 92, Middle Village, NY • **Judith Feinrider**, 72, Flushing, NY • **Augustina Osadchuk**, 79, Brooklyn, NY • **Neal Sheeskin**, 67, New York, NY • **Mark Parkan**, 90, Roseda, CA • **Alan Britman**, 77, Staten Island, NY • **Lyubov Leyferman**, 79, Brooklyn, NY • **Arthur Steinberg**, 73, New York, NY • **Zena Zabludovsky**, 84, Woodmere, NY • **Yuriy Grechanik**, 89, Brooklyn, NY • **Jonathan Minond**, 39, Larchmont, NY • **Edward Perl**, 83, Fresh Meadows, NY • **Sarra Sokolinsky**, 83, Brooklyn, NY • **Oleg Kaplun**, 84, Brooklyn, NY • **Stephen Friedman**, 84, Bronx, NY • **Alexandr Sakirski**, 69, Brooklyn, NY • **Helene Lasky**, 98, Brooklyn, NY • **Vladimir Shagabaev**, 81, Brooklyn, NY • **Rivka Tsimberg**, 94, Brooklyn, NY • **Hyman Schaffer**, 85, Bronx, NY • **Elaine Talbott**, 76, Brooklyn, NY • **Jeffrey Rosenberg**, 70, Bronx, NY • **Debra Blecker**, 59, Far Rockaway, NY • **Mark Wittenberg**, 83, Staten Island, NY • **Allen Kaufman**, 62, Brooklyn, NY • **Iosif Tenenbaum**, 81, Long Branch, NJ • **Stephen Steiner**, 75, Brooklyn, NY • **Marvin Yarmush**, 88, Parsippany, NJ • **Jerry Grossman**, 85, Brooklyn, NY • **Ian Romani**, 37, Brooklyn, NY • **Gennadiy Oynus**, 87, Brooklyn, NY • **Sidney Morrison**, 86, Paterson, NJ • **Gregory Nayfeld**, 70, Morganville, NJ • **Izabella Abramova**, 65, Staten Island, NY • **Shep Fishman**, 96, Bronx, NY • **Ann Goldberg**, 80, New York, NY • **Robert Goodfriend**, 74, Elmhurst, NY • **Harvey Gilbert**, 83, Brooklyn, NY • **William Silver**, 67, Hazlet, NJ • **Abraham Kurland**, 89, Brooklyn, NY • **Noel Schor**, 77, Queens, NY • **Mikhail Povolotsky**, 59, Brooklyn, NY • **Daniel Freyer**, 69, Far Rockaway, NY • **Leo Rosansky**, 96, New Rochelle, NY • **Jafin Kagan**, 82, Far Rockaway, NY • **Helen Rothstein**, 95, Brooklyn, NY • **Samuel Abecassis**, 59, Inwood, NY • **Shimon Arbitaylo**, 94, Arverne, NY • **Vladimir Binenboim**, 93, Brooklyn, NY • **Felix Sorkin**, 71, Brooklyn, NY • **Zinaida Gorelik**, 87, Bronx, NY • **Sarah Fiks**, 94, Brooklyn, NY • **Melvin Provler**, 84, Oceanside, NY • **Anatoly Sokolovsky**, 73, Brooklyn, NY • **Bruce Samuels**, 80, Brooklyn, NY • **Serafima Brover**, 68, Brooklyn, NY • **Tauba Litvak**, 98, Brooklyn, NY • **Eileen Schulman**, 67, New York, NY • **Dmitriy Lerenberg**, 59, Brooklyn, NY • **Anisa Shaulova**, 73, Brooklyn, NY • **Boris Tsimerman**, 83, Far Rockaway, NY • **Solomon Leibowitz**, 78, Rego Park, NY • **Victor Kapwaf**, 71, New

York, NY • **Stuart Yelin**, 81, Staten Island, NY • **Michael Geltzer**, 58, Long Beach, NY • **Daniel Basevich**, 73, New York, NY • **Donald Seidel**, 74, Whitestone, NY • **Yakov Shkolnik**, 83, Brooklyn, NY • **David Tokar**, 92, Brooklyn, NY • **Paul Aronowitz**, 70, Flushing, NY • **Iris Epstein**, 70, Yonkers, NY • **Florence Kohl**, 90, Middle Village, NY • **Allen Boxer**, 78, Staten Island, NY • **George Tabor**, 85, Bronx, NY • **Barry Zitomersky**, 68, Whitestone, NY • **David Joseph**, 75, Flushing, NY • **Jeffrey Horowitz**, 64, Staten Island, NY • **Harry Zakalik**, 79, Bronx, NY • **Luis Reichman**, 81, Brooklyn, NY • **Richard Brotman**, 86, Brooklyn, NY • **Mayya Kulik**, 92, Far Rockaway, NY • **Carol Leblang**, 84, Bronx, NY • **Muriel Adelman**, 90, Brooklyn, NY • **Margarita Korolik**, 91, New York, NY • **Samuel Borenstein**, 83, New York, NY • **Yevgeniya Belaya**, 72, Brooklyn, NY • **Ruth Malach**, 82, Forest Hills, NY • **Yefim Volis**, 82, Far Rockaway, NY 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## Взгляд с места погребения

Написано раввином Шмуэлем Плафкером

Мне приходится иметь дело со смертью каждый день. Из всех, кого я знаю, очень немногие согласились бы на такое.

Примерно на одно из трёх погребений, проводимых Еврейским Благотворительным Похоронным Бюро (HFBA), никто не приходит проводить усопшего. И хотя я провожу погребальную службу вслух, некому услышать молитвы скорби и утешения.

Когда провожающие приходят, я настаиваю, чтобы они произнесли панегирик – слова восхваления своих ушедших близких. Ведь это так важно – рассмотреть жизнь, которую те вели, и осознать, что мы потеряли. Я всегда помню, что в могилу опускают тело чьих-то отца, матери, брата или сестры. Это была личность, что-то любившая и не любившая, со своими мнениями и чувствами. Это – еврей или еврейка, чья душа стояла на горе Синай, когда Вс-вышний давал Тору еврейскому народу.

После панегирика я обычно вкратце рассказываю о еврейском похоронном обряде, объясняю традиционный

еврейский подход к жизни и смерти. До пандемии COVID-19 близкие и друзья усопшего провожали его до места погребения. Теперь же, если скорбящие и могут прийти на похороны, они должны оставаться в своих машинах. Я звоню на их мобильные телефоны, чтобы они могли прослушать похоронную службу.

Но в конце концов неважно, кем был усопший при жизни. Неважно также, приходят ли скорбящие проводить его, или не приходит никто. Мы хороним каждого ушедшего достойно и с одинаковым уважением. Этот священный еврейский идеал – «кавот хамет» (достоинство умершего) – то, что вдохновляет и поддерживает меня каждый день.



**UJA Federation**  
NEW YORK

HFBA безмерно благодарно за срочный грант в \$250 тыс. долларов, связанный с корона-вирусом, от UJA Федерации Нью-Йорка, который позволит нам справиться с похоронами столь многих жертв пандемии.

## A View from Graveside

By Rabbi Shmuel Plafker, HFBA Cemetery Chaplain

I deal with death on a daily basis, day after day, month after month, year after year. I know that very few people would do this.

Years ago, after I graduated from college and was ordained as a rabbi, I took a job at a firm and put my rabbinical degree on the back burner. But something was missing in my life. As I wondered about the next step, an acquaintance told me that I was “needed at the cemetery.”

In about one-third of our funerals, no one who knew the deceased attends – no relatives nor friends. The only people there are myself, the gravediggers, and our volunteer *minyán*. The person is being buried without anyone who knew him. That’s heartbreaking.

But when mourners do attend, I encourage them to eulogize their loved one. It is always important for them, and it is also important for me, to consider the life that was led and what has been lost. I never want to lose sight that someone’s father, mother, brother or sister is being lowered into the grave. Here was a human being who had likes, dislikes, feelings, opinions. Here was a fellow Jew

whose soul was at Mount Sinai, when G-d gave the Jewish people His Torah.

I take a few minutes to describe the Jewish burial rite. I explain the traditional Jewish approach to life and death.

We have lost so much because of the pandemic! At the cemetery, even funerals are conducted differently. Before Covid-19, families and friends would escort the deceased to the grave. They stood by as the coffin was lowered into the grave. Everyone attending was invited to take a shovel and put some earth over the coffin. Now, when mourners are able to attend, they must stay in their cars. I call them on their cell phones so they can hear the service.

As an observant Jew, I am guided by the teaching in the Talmud, in tractate Shabbat. The Talmud tells us about the good deeds that are rewarded in this world — but will truly be repaid in the next. One of them is *levayot hamet*, escorting the dead to their burial. That is what we are doing every day at Mount Richmond Cemetery.

It does not matter who the decedent was in life. Nor does it matter if there are mourners who attend, or if no one is present. We escort each of the deceased with the same respect and dignity. It is the sacred Jewish ideal of *kavot hamet* – the dignity of the dead – that inspires me every day.

# HFBA *Helps*

*Names and details have been changed to protect confidentiality.*

Cora F. called about her estranged brother, **Andy**, whom she had not seen in 50 years since he left home at 15. A friend of his had managed to locate her to tell her that Andy was very sick and in the hospital. Cora called the hospital and, after a run-around during which the hospital was unable to find any records about Andy, was informed that her brother had already died and his body was in the hospital morgue. She reached out to anyone she thought might have information about him and learned that he lived in public housing with no income and, at some point had filed for bankruptcy. Andy left no assets and Cora was unwilling to pay funeral costs. In March, HFBA buried Andy in Mount Richmond Cemetery, three weeks after his death.

In May, **Sam K.** returned home and found that he had been illegally evicted from his Brooklyn apartment. He had not been well and had lost his job because of the pandemic. Having nowhere to turn, he found a place to sleep at the home of an acquaintance. In the morning, he was found dead. His brother Mark called HFBA. At the funeral, Mark and some friends sat in the car observing the service. Mark kept repeating, "he was only 35 years old!" while a friend comforted him, murmuring that Sam "was a good person, always showing respect to everyone." His cause of death is unknown.

When **Bessie R.**, age 80 years, was put on a ventilator, ill from Covid-19, her sister Millie, age 87, called HFBA to find out about our services. Bessie had suffered from mental illness for many years and lived in a residential facility until she became sick from the virus. We knew that a few years ago, a friend had initiated plans with

HFBA for both sisters to be buried upon their deaths. When Bessie succumbed, she was buried at Mount Richmond Cemetery and a nearby grave was reserved for Millie.

After living 99 years and surviving the Holocaust, **Hannah R.** died of Covid-19. She was living with a disabled son, Jerry, and, upon her death, her daughter Naomi called HFBA. At the time, both Naomi and her husband were also sick from the virus. Naomi recalled that her mother had talked about cremation. After a few days Naomi called HFBA back to say that they had decided on a burial. No one attended the graveside service but Rabbi Plafker called Jerry so he could listen to the rabbi's remarks and prayers.

*(Note: On that day, April 26, 2020, a record number of twelve people were buried at Mount Richmond Cemetery.)*

**Svetlana P.** called HFBA distressed, confused and argumentative. Her son **Dmitry**, age 59 years, had died after a four-month hospitalization. She insisted that neither he, nor she, had any money and she "needed a free burial." It was difficult to get exact information from her. The next day, a rabbi called. He had referred Svetlana to HFBA and confirmed that she was Jewish and could not afford to bury her son. He was under the impression that Dmitry had been ill with an infection and while in the hospital may have contracted Covid-19 which contributed to his death. He mentioned that Svetlana had mental health issues and that Dmitry had immigrated to the United States as a teen and had served in the U.S. Marines. Two months after HFBA buried Dmitry, we also buried Svetlana who died suddenly of the coronavirus at the age of 83.



HFBA is grateful for the \$250,000 Emergency Covid-19 Response Grant from UJA-Federation of New York allowing us to meet the challenge of burying so many victims of the pandemic.

# From Death to Burial and Commemoration

It's an irony of life. While too many of our decedents die alone, their funerals and burials require over two dozen pairs of hands. This is true, perhaps especially true, for the most indigent among us – those who pass away with no assets and no friends.

## THE FIRST CALL – CASE WORKERS TAKE ON THE CASE

We may be notified by a social worker or chaplain at a nursing home or hospital. The call may come from a close relative or a friend or perhaps only a roommate. Our case workers get to work. They need to validate the person's Jewish identity and financial eligibility.

But, when the first call comes from the public administrator or the medical examiner's office, the case is far more challenging. Most likely it means that there is no next of kin or that she is not responsive. If our decedent has truly died without family, we must get authorization from the public administrator to bury.

## THE PAPERWORK

Government agencies can move slowly. We want to bury within 24 hours, as Jewish tradition mandates. The public administrator's office – there is one in every borough – has additional interests: to investigate whether the decedent had made burial plans before death; to locate assets and distribute them. The research can take weeks.

*As I write these words at the end of June, our funeral director tells us that there could be 100 Jewish decedents in morgues and mobile mortuaries around New York City. These are Covid-19 deaths, decedents whom no one has claimed. We do not yet know their names. We are waiting for the medical examiner to complete investigations on these cases. Once notified and granted authorization, we can begin to bring them to their final rest.*

—Amy Koplow, Executive Director

Once we get authorization, we claim and complete the death certificate. Then we file it and apply for a burial permit.

Our staff, both in our office and at Mount Richmond Cemetery, handle the paperwork, apply for the New



York City indigent death benefits (as applicable) and schedule the burial.

## A DRIVER AND THE CHEVRA KADISHA

A funeral home staffer transfers the decedent from the morgue to Mount Richmond Cemetery.

Then, the *chevra kadisha* takes over. Each *chevra* is a team of four, men for a male, women for a female. They wash the body, recite prayers and dress it in shrouds.

## THE RABBI, THE VOLUNTEER MINYAN AND THE MOURNERS

At about one-third of our funerals and burials, there are no mourners at all. Still, there is always our rabbi to recite the final prayers and to eulogize the decedent. Except in pandemic conditions, a volunteer *minyán*, a prayer quorum, assembles for the burial. These volunteers come to ensure that the *kaddish* prayer can be said.

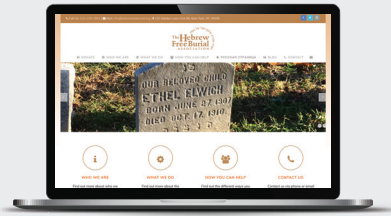
## THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR AND THE GROUNDS CREW

By law, a licensed funeral director must supervise the burial. While the mourners may help to shovel earth, the grounds crew takes over after the service and ensures that it is filled and the area is cleaned.

Separately, the crew is responsible for maintaining Mount Richmond Cemetery as a dignified and serene eternal resting place.

## THE MONUMENT

The family may decide to put up a monument. If the family cannot afford a gravestone – or if there is no family or friends – our Leave Your Mark campaign and fund will underwrite a grave marker.



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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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125 Maiden Lane, Unit 5B  
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**Phone:** (212) 239-1662

**Fax:** (212) 239-1981

[info@hebrewfreeburial.org](mailto:info@hebrewfreeburial.org)

[www.hebrewfreeburial.org](http://www.hebrewfreeburial.org)

[www.facebook.com/hebrewfreeburial](https://www.facebook.com/hebrewfreeburial)



## Underwrite a Covid-19 Burial

Every funeral and burial costs HFBA about \$5,400. This year HFBA anticipates twice the number of last year's interments, to over 600 burials.

You can participate in the *mitzvah* of taking care of one Jewish soul at the end of life. If you underwrite the full cost of a burial, we will send you the name and profile of the deceased and a *yahrzeit* notice next year, creating your personal connection to someone everyone else has forgotten.

## Give a Gift That Lasts Forever and Costs Nothing Today

The pandemic has shown us how important it is to have a plan in place for ourselves and our loved ones. It may be uncomfortable or scary to think about, but it's not something to be completely ignored.

Here's a tool that can provide value and peace of mind: a free will writing resource. A will can help you protect the people and the things that are close to you.

Writing a will can help you:

- Assign guardians for children and pets
- Make a plan for your assets and possessions
- Create a powerful legacy with HFBA and other organizations you care about
- Dictate your funeral wishes



This easy online tool takes 20 minutes or less and is completely free to use. It can help you protect what matters most and create a lasting legacy.

Visit [www.hebrewfreeburial.org/freewill](http://www.hebrewfreeburial.org/freewill)



## Donate Appreciated Stocks

For those with appreciated assets looking to provide immediate support to our community, gifts of stock maximize your impact while maximizing your savings. 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. We have a free online tool to help you through the process in just a few minutes. Visit:

[www.hebrewfreeburial.org/stocks](http://www.hebrewfreeburial.org/stocks)