

Leave Your Mark – So we can remember our dead

Dear Friend of HFBA:

For 134 years, we have cared for the poorest and most vulnerable of our people in their ultimate time of need, no matter how little they could afford to pay. HFBA has always conducted the funerals and prepared the burials. Moreover, our collective obligation has been to mark each decedent's grave with a name. With the support of thoughtful contributors to our Leave Your Mark campaign, we have memorialized thousands of graves with monuments at our Mount Richmond Cemetery. Now we wish to expand our campaign to include unmarked graves at Silver Lake Cemetery.



Amy Koplow

Rows and rows of babies

Between 1892 and 1909, HFBA buried Jewish cigar rollers, servants, rag pickers and tailors at Silver Lake Cemetery — HFBA's first burial ground. Life expectancy in those years was short and tenement conditions were brutal. Among the 13,600 deaths, some 7,100 were infants and children. One in ten babies died before their first birthday. Young immigrant families could not afford funerals or burials. Yet even when overwhelmed by the sheer numbers, HFBA buried them all at minimal or no cost. Sadly, no money was left over for markers. Indeed, almost 10,000 graves at Silver Lake remain unmarked.

The stories haunt us to this day:

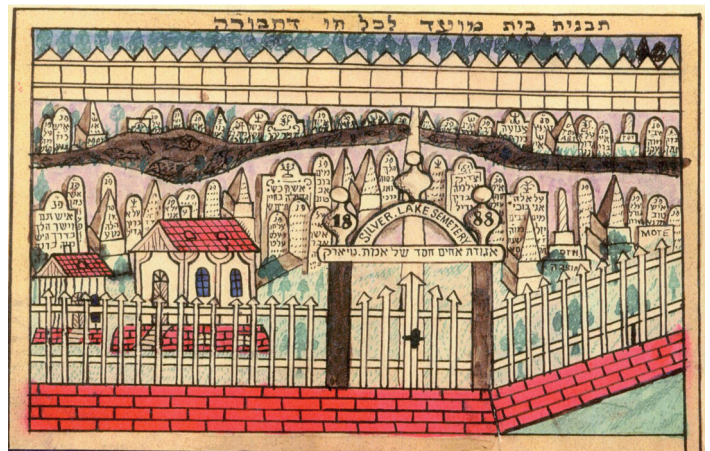
Annie G. 19, an aspiring actress when she died in a ward for expectant mothers at Manhattan's Society for the Lying-In Hospital

Bertha Q. 19, when she was murdered in a Schenectady saloon

William N., 27, a prisoner at Sing-Sing who died by his own hand

On par with America's oldest cemeteries

Since 2011, we have been repairing and preserving Silver Lake Cemetery. Thanks to David Berg Foundation, Mrs. Leona Kern, the New York State Environmental Protection Fund, and other generous donors, we were able to use ground-penetrating radar to better understand where the graves generally are. We removed opportunistic trees whose roots broke gravestones and foundations. We installed a new drainage system, repaired the retaining walls and recreated the central walkway. Our preservation plan also involves reconstructing the cemetery entrance. Silver Lake's listing in 2017 on the National Register of Historic Places — a multi-year campaign — has put the cemetery's historical significance on a par with some of America's oldest cemeteries.



Rendering of Silver Lake Cemetery circa 1901

They outlived their savings

When Silver Lake Cemetery reached its maximum capacity in 1909, HFBA's founders bought the Staten Island property that became Mount Richmond Cemetery. On average we perform six or seven burials a week there, sometimes more than one a day. The population

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INTERVIEW

Landscape architect preserves HFBA's historical mission



Boston-based landscape architect Kyle Zick created a "master plan" to help Hebrew Free Burial Association tackle nature's onslaught on Silver Lake Cemetery. Kyle talked with us about his commitment to preserving one of New York City's oldest Jewish cemeteries.

HFBA: What was your reaction upon seeing Silver Lake Cemetery?

Kyle: A lot of things went through my head when I came down Victory Boulevard and saw the cemetery's two engraved blocks at the entrance. One block listed the names of the original founders, all of them long gone.

Mount Richmond Cemetery hours of operation during Passover and Shavuot

Passover

Sunday, April 17 CLOSED
Thursday, April 21 9 AM - 1 PM
Friday, April 22 CLOSED

Shavuot

Sunday, June 5 CLOSED
Monday, June 6 CLOSED

Yizkor is recited on Saturday, April 23 and Tuesday, June 6.

Расписание работы кладбища Mt. Richmond на время Песаха и Шавуота – весна и лето 2022

ПЕСАХ

Воскресенье 17 апреля ЗАКРЫТО
Четверг 21 апреля 9 AM - 1 PM
Пятница 22 апреля ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва ИЗКОР читается 23 апреля, в субботу

ШАВУОТ

Воскресенье 5 июня ЗАКРЫТО
Понедельник 6 июня ЗАКРЫТО

Поминальная молитва ИЗКОР читается 6 июня, во вторник

The other block had Hebrew writing on it. Both blocks gave the property a powerful sense of place and origin.

Once my team and I entered the grounds, I was struck by the extent of unplanned tree growth. Trees are great from an aesthetic standpoint, but they do damage. Moreover, decades of deferred maintenance resulted in trees breaking or dislodging thousands of headstones. Other headstones were victims of vandalism. It was all very sad.

What were some of your challenges?

The cemetery had 13,600 burials — 10,000 of them unmarked. Even the marked plots are in rough shape. Where do you start? How do we break the task up into palatable chunks that we can fund internally, with grant support and private donations? The master plan we created lays out a methodical approach to Silver Lake's rehabilitation and makes the overwhelming achievable.

What are your next steps?

HFBA got a half-million dollar grant from the State of New York, and it has funded the removal of hazardous trees, added fencing to secure the site, restored the historic walls and fence along Victory Boulevard and allowed us to drain heavy ponding over unmarked children's graves.

All of these tasks required approval from the City of New York. Tree removal was a grand challenge. Silver Lake is in a so-called "hillside protection district," which means NYC had to consider the environmental impact of any changes to the property. Our master plan was able to convey that the geographical destruction was problematic from a human dignity and respect standpoint.

How does this project fit in with your other remediation projects?

We have worked on a number of historic cemeteries in the Boston area. The Granary Burial Ground, for example, visible from our office, is the final resting place of Samuel Adams, Crispus Attucks, John Hancock and Paul Revere. Silver Lake Cemetery may not have such notables, yet it nevertheless tells an equally moving story about immigrants in NYC.

I don't need to tell you how powerful a statement HFBA makes by offering traditional burials to Jews who cannot afford them. Their mission has been just as urgent during the COVID-19 era as it was in the early twentieth century. My team and I are humbled by the trust HFBA has placed in us to restore Silver Lake in the same spirit we brought to other historic American cemeteries.

Leave Your Mark ...continued from page 1

we serve today comprises the elderly, infirm and impoverished. One in four decedents has entirely outlived their savings, if they ever had any. One in three is buried entirely alone. No friend or relative attends the funeral or asks that a marker be erected on the grave.

During the COVID pandemic, demand for our services intensified. We arranged hundreds of additional burials.

Sadly, many of the burials at both cemeteries remain unmarked.

Let's name the children

The Leave Your Mark campaign allows us to remember each Jew who is buried in our cemeteries. I hope you will join us in this sacred task. For Mount Richmond Cemetery, a contribution of \$250 will let us erect a marker. At Silver Lake Cemetery, a contribution of \$250 will memorialize a single name. A \$5,000 contribution will pay for a single large stone that memorializes 100 names. We will need 15 large stones to ensure that all the children's names at Silver Lake Cemetery live on.

Please join us in our historic effort to preserve an important piece of the American Jewish immigrant legacy.

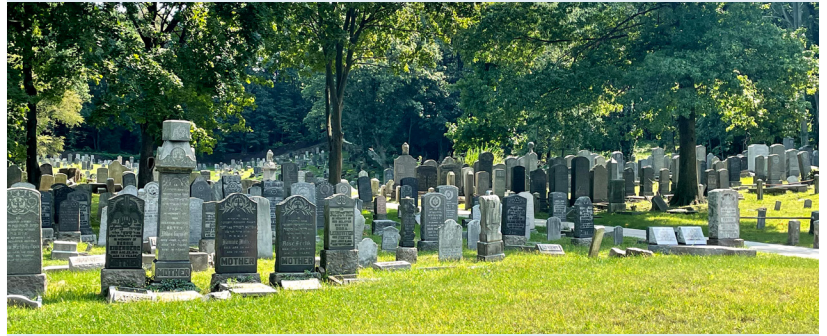
On behalf of our Leave Your Mark campaign, I am deeply grateful to you for your kindness and support.

Amy Koplow

Executive Director

An enduring tribute to NYC's Jewish immigrants

Few biographical details are known about Barnett Freedman, the clothier who co-founded Chebra Agudas Achim Chesed Shel Emeth, a mutual aid organization whose 4.5 acres on Staten Island became the free cemetery for NYC's poor immigrant Jews. Yet Silver Lake Cemetery, as the property in 1892 was known, stands as a testament to Freedman's belief in the distinctness of the Jewish nation — and in the right of every Jew to a traditional burial among his own people.



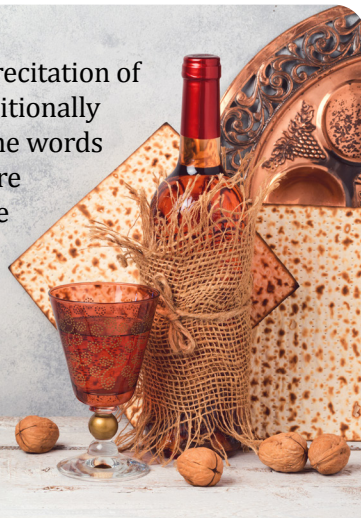
Time and human neglect have eroded the lettering on many headstones, but the names of the deceased remain inscribed in the Hebrew Free Burial Association's ledgers. Each name, along with date of burial, age at death, place of death, country of origin, occupation and manner of death, helps reconstruct a social, economic and communal portrait of the Jewish immigrant experience in America from 1889-1909.

In 2017 Silver Lake Cemetery was named to the National Register of Historic Places. Its entry there pays tribute to Barnett Freedman's vision and the courage of those first-generation Americans who left Europe with little more than a pair of hands ready to do the hard work of building a better life for themselves — and the rest of us.

The Passover *Haggadah* includes the recitation of *Ha Lachma Anya*, an Aramaic text traditionally sung to invite the poor to the seder. The words remind us that we live in a world where members of the Jewish community are afflicted and need our help.

Let this Pesach be the occasion for opening our doors to fellow Jews less fortunate than we are.

All of us at HFBA wish you a happy and meaningful Pesach!



Underwrite an HFBA burial

Every funeral and burial costs HFBA about \$5,400.

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.

Программа «Оставь о себе память» нужна, чтобы мы помнили об усопших

Дорогие друзья Еврейского Благотворительного Похоронного Бюро (HFBA):

Вот уже 134 года мы заботимся о самых бедных и незащищённых евреях Нью-Йорка в их последний час вне зависимости от того, сколько они могут платить. HFBA всегда находило возможность организовать их похороны и погребение. Наш долг в том числе – отметить каждую могилу именем усопшего. Благодаря поддержке дарителей нашей программы «Оставь о себе память» мы уже установили несколько тысяч надгробий на действующем кладбище Маунт Ричмонд. И теперь мы распространяем эту работу на неотмеченные могилы на нашем старом кладбище Сильвер Лейк, которое недавно было внесено в Национальный Реестр исторических памятников.

В период 1892-1909 на кладбище Сильвер Лейк, нашем первом месте погребения, HFBA хоронило евреев, трудившихся за гроши на табачных фабриках или в качестве домашней прислуги, портных, или рывшихся в отбросах нищих. Когда кладбище было заполнено в 1909 году, основатели HFBA приобрели землю на Стейтен Айленде, на которой было устроено ныне действующее кладбище Маунт Ричмонд. Те, кого хоронят там сейчас, обычно поступают к нам из больниц или домов престарелых. Многим нужны надгробия, чтобы их имена не забылись, и чтобы их могилы были правильно отмечены.

Но мы никогда не забывали души тех 13600 евреев, похороненных на кладбище Сильвер Лейк.

Начиная с 2011 года на кладбище развернулись восстановительные работы. Благодаря пожертвованиям Фонда Дэвида Берга, г-жи Леоны Керн, нью-йоркского Фонда защиты окружающей среды и другим щедрым дарителям, мы начали использовать подпочвенный георадар, чтобы точно отметить каждую могилу. Мы также удалили буйно разросшиеся деревья, чьи корни повредили многие надгробия и могильные плиты. Мы смогли установить новую дренажную систему, починить сохранившиеся остатки кладбищенской ограды и воссоздать центральную аллею.

Кампания «Оставь о себе память» позволит нам помнить о каждом еврее, похороненном на наших кладбищах. Я искренне надеюсь, что вы присоединитесь к нам в выполнении этого священного долга перед усопшими. Пожертвование в 250 долларов позволит установить одно надгробие на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд. На кладбище Сильвер Лейк 250 долларов позволят увековечить одно имя. А дар в 5000 долларов позволит сделать один большой камень, на котором будут высечено 100 имён. Нам всё ещё нужно 15 таких больших камней, чтобы увековечить имена всех детей, похороненных на Сильвер Лейк.

Пожалуйста, примите участие в нашей исторической работе по сохранению этой важной части наследия евреев-иммигрантов, приехавших в Америку. От имени всех участников кампании «Оставь о себе память» я выражаю глубокую благодарность всем вам за вашу доброту и поддержку.

Эми Коплоу, Исполнительный директор

Еврейское Благотворительное Похоронное Бюро

Ландшафтный архитектор помогает сохранить историческое наследие HFBA

Бостонский ландшафтный архитектор Кайл Зик создал «генеральный план» помощи Еврейскому Благотворительному

Похоронному Бюро в восстановлении облика кладбища Сильвер Лейк. Кайл ответил на наши вопросы о сохранении одного из старейших еврейских кладбищ Нью-Йорка.

HFBA: Какова была Ваша реакция, когда Вы впервые увидели кладбище Сильвер Лейк?

Кайл: Меня неприятно удивило обильное неконтролируемое разрастание деревьев. Деревья замечательны с эстетической точки зрения, но в иных ситуациях они приносят вред. То, что здесь десятилетиями откладывалось восстановление территории, привело к тому, что деревья разрушили сотни, быть может тысячи надгробий. А некоторые памятники стали жертвами вандализма. Это было грустно видеть.

HFBA: Каковы будут Ваши дальнейшие шаги?

Кайл: HFBA получило грант в полмиллиона долларов от штата Нью-Йорк. Эти деньги позволят нам удалить ненужные деревья, восстановить ограду для защиты территории, восстановить старинные стены и оградки вдоль бульвара Победы, а также осушить сильно заболоченный участок с неотмеченными детскими могилами.

HFBA: Как Вам работается с HFBA?

Кайл: Миссия HFBA сегодня столь же важна и необходима, как и во все эти годы. Моя команда и я сам польщены и горды тем доверием, которое HFBA оказало нам, поручив восстановление кладбища Сильвер Лейк.

Невесёлые истории

Тодду С* было 79 лет, до выхода на пенсию он работал психологом. Тодд жил в Манхэттене со своим партнёром. В январе месяце тот умер, и Тодд нанял адвоката по делам наследства. Однако в процессе улаживания имущественных вопросов Тодд выпрыгнул с балкона девятого этажа. Адвокат, являющаяся спонсором HFBA, связалась с нами и попросила организовать похороны Тодда, поскольку у того не было сделано на этот счёт никаких приготовлений. HFBA похоронило Тодда на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд. Наш раввин, г-н Шмуэль Плафкер, прочитал кадиш вместе с миньяном наших добровольцев.

Дагу Ф* было под семьдесят, он был разведён и жил у друзей, работая в магазинчике продуктов. Большая часть его зарплаты шла на содержание дочери-подростка, жившей в другом штате. Когда Даг внезапно умер, его дочь не знала, что делать. Ни у неё, ни у Дага не было сбережений. Работодатель Дага, однако, вызвался оплатить расходы на погребение и авиабилет, чтобы дочь смогла присутствовать на похоронах на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд.

** имена изменены*

Пасхальный призыв

Пасхальная Агада содержит чтение арамейского текста Ха лахма ания («вот хлеб нашей свободы»), в котором по традиции приглашают всех бедняков войти и присоединиться к пасхальному седеру. Слова эти напоминают нам, что живём мы в мире, где многие члены еврейской общины испытывают горести и нуждаются в нашей помощи. Пусть же этот праздник Песах даст нам возможность открыть двери нашим братьям-евреям, которым живётся хуже, чем нам.

Мы все в HFBA желаем вам праздника Песах – счастливого и наполненного смыслом!

In appreciation

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you

We gratefully acknowledge the service of three longtime board members whose compassion and dedication have seen HFBA through daily emergencies, preservation campaigns and a global pandemic. We are honored that they have added "HFBA" to their list of personal and professional commitments.

Minna Monte Seitelman



The daughter of Holocaust survivors who met in the Bergen-Belsen death camp, Minna found her mission in providing a dignified burial for every Jew. At HFBA, she served as board treasurer, as well as a member on our executive, budget/audit and investment committees. A powerhouse networker, Minna has been adept at spreading the word about HFBA's mission. Outside HFBA, she is particularly proud that she and her husband co-produced the Folksbiene's production of *"Fiddler Afn Dakh"* ("Fiddler on the Roof" in Yiddish).

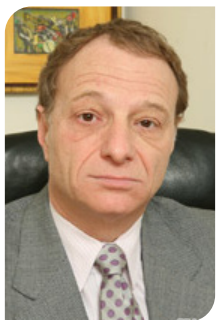
Charles M. Greinsky



A Staten Island native, "Charlie" has spent a lifetime in public service, notably with the NYC Board of Education and the Office of Pupil Transportation. With extensive relationships in many Staten Island communities, Charlie facilitated HFBA's crucial interactions with elected officials and charitable foundations. As an active member of the Jewish War Veterans, he ensured the placement of U.S. flags at veteran graves every Memorial Day in HFBA's two cemeteries. Along with his distinguished service in

local and national Democratic Party politics, Charlie is proud to be the first Staten Islander to serve on the HFBA board.

Rabbi Dr. Henry Sheinkopf



"Hank" brought his executive expertise to HFBA as founder and president of Sheinkopf Ltd., a strategic communications company that has given him entrée to some 700 political campaigns in 44 American states and 15 countries. He was especially skilled at facilitating HFBA's interactions with NYC's Human Resources Administration, public administrators and elected officials. In addition to his work with HFBA, he is a board member of American Friends of Yeshivot Bnei Akiva and Green Chimneys, a

residential environment for at-risk children.

Donate your 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.

For more information visit:
www.hebrewfreeburial.org/stocks

Remember HFBA in your will

*Give a gift that lasts forever
and costs nothing today*

FREEWILL

The pandemic has shown us how crucial a will is for ourselves and our loved ones. Writing a will can help you:

- Assign guardians for your children and your pets.
- Make a plan for your assets and possessions.
- Remember HFBA and other organizations you care about.
- Dictate your funeral wishes.

Use "FreeWill," a no-cost tool that takes 20 minutes to create or update a will. You can find it at www.hebrewfreeburial.org/freewill.

Create your legacy and protect what matters to you.

Your help is needed now more than ever.



Donate online at
www.hebrewfreeburial.org/donate

Giving on our secure website is easy and efficient!

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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HFBA Helps

Names and identifying
details have been changed
to protect confidentiality

Elliott K., 70 and alone, spent his last years in a long-term care facility. Nine days after his death, the NYC Medical Examiner reached out to HFBA. To get burial authorization, we contacted the appropriate borough public administrator. The PA's office informed us that the deceased had some funds and another funeral home was handling the burial. But three months later, the funeral home still had taken no action. The ME's office called to say that Elliott was still in the morgue. We quickly got burial authorization from the PA. Elliott received a Jewish burial at Mount Richmond Cemetery.

Todd S., 79, a retired psychologist, lived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan with his partner. When his partner passed away in January, Todd retained the services of an attorney to handle estate matters. He also began preparing his own last will and testament. During the process, however, Todd jumped from his ninth-floor balcony. The estate attorney — an HFBA donor — called HFBA and asked if we could handle burial arrangements as her client had not made any. We buried him at Mount Richmond Cemetery. HFBA's Rabbi Shmuel Plafker recited *kaddish* along with our volunteer *minyán*.

Doug F., late sixties, was divorced, working at a deli and living with friends. Most of his salary had gone to the support of his teenaged daughter who did not live with him. When he passed away suddenly, his daughter did not know what to do. Neither she nor her father had any assets. Doug's employer stepped forward to pay for the burial and the daughter's airfare so she could attend the Mount Richmond Cemetery funeral.

Alvin S., 75, was admitted to Calvary Hospital with metastatic prostate cancer. With the help of hospital chaplain Rabbi Rachmiel Rothberger, Alvin's brother Steven reached out to us. Alvin had neither burial arrangements nor funds. Moreover, Alvin's wife Susan was mentally and visually impaired. Steven wanted HFBA to handle all the impending burial arrangements. He himself wanted nothing to do with the process, nor did he want us to involve Susan. Unfortunately, that left us unable to help as there was no one to authorize the burial. It took two weeks of negotiating with the family, along with the help of a few rabbis, to convince Steven to sign paperwork authorizing the burial. Once Alvin lost his battle with cancer, we moved fast on a burial — with all the family in attendance — at Mount Richmond Cemetery.