

# Chesed



## She was a car ride away from her ancestors, and didn't know

**"HFBA was there for my great-grandparents. I want to be here for HFBA."**

Carol Hochstadt had never heard of Mirza and Nuchem Greenberg until she began investigating her family history.

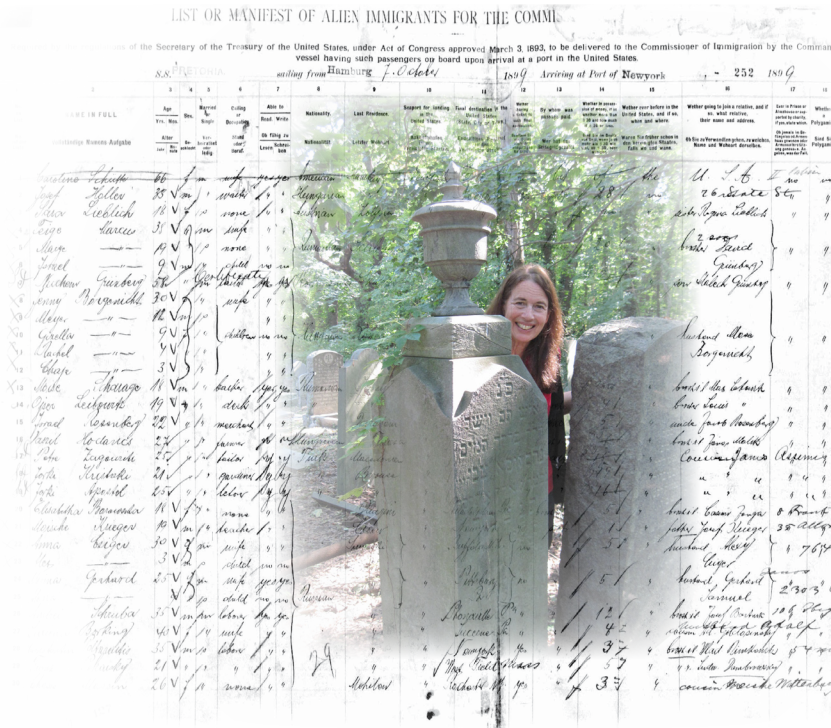
She started with Dovid Greenberg, her grandfather. He and his siblings were the only ancestors her mother ever talked about. From Dovid's marriage license to his second wife, she learned two facts: first, Dovid had arrived in America from Jassy, Romania. Second, his parents were Mirza and Nuchem.

"From census records, I discovered that in 1900, Dovid, his first wife, and four children were living with Mirza and Nuchem on Eldridge Street," Carol told *Chesed*. "I didn't know Dovid's parents were living in America."

Next step: look for Mirza and Nuchem's names on their ship manifest.

Meanwhile, Carol had an aunt who happened to mention that Dovid was also known as Dovid Skulen.

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Carol Hochstadt stands behind her great-grandparents' monument at Silver Lake Cemetery. Behind the photo is a facsimile of her ancestors' ship manifest.

AS TOLD TO *CHESED*

## HFBA buried my baby sister

**Yisroel Sapan looks back 78 years to reflect on a mysterious life and death**



Paula Sapan's grave stone

Neither my mother nor father ever talked about my baby sister, born four years after me. I grew up in Brooklyn and assumed all along that I was an only child.

In the late 1960s, one of my aunts told me I had a sister, born in 1947, who passed away after a few months due to a heart condition. Shortly after her birth, my mother apparently had a nervous breakdown. Many years later, I found out why: my sister was born with Down syndrome.

I learned about Hebrew Free Burial Association's role in arranging my sister's burial only after going through some old papers. My father's signature was on them.

One day, my wife Pearl and I were trying to figure out where to make our annual charitable donations. I'd been thinking for a long time what my obligation was to HFBA. They stepped in at a

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**TO DONATE TO HFBA, VISIT [HTTPS://WWW.HEBREWFREEBURIAL.ORG/DONATE](https://www.hebrewfreeburial.org/donate)**

*Continued from front page*

## Native New Yorker tracks her great-grandparents to Silver Lake



"A few years passed before I realized Dovid's nickname could be a clue, possibly to his home town," Carol said.

Carol entered "Dovid Skulen" into a search engine — and *voilà!* Dovid had been born in Skuleni, once home to the Skulen Hasidic dynasty. Now when Carol included "Skulen" in her online search of ship manifests, Mirza and Nuchem's 1899 voyage to New York Harbor turned up.

Carol had no trouble locating the death certificates for Nuchem and Mirza. To her surprise, though, both great-grandparents were buried at HFBA's Silver Lake Cemetery — a 45-minute drive over the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge from Carol's childhood home in Brooklyn.

### A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY TO STATEN ISLAND

Like many genealogists, Carol wanted to see her ancestors' graves for herself. On a trip to New York, Carol and her husband scheduled a tour of Silver Lake and Mount Richmond Cemeteries with HFBA's Rabbi Shmuel Plafker.

At Silver Lake, a new puzzle presented itself. Why were Nuchem and Mirza buried in the *chevra kadisha* section alongside some of HFBA's founders?

*Continued from front page*

## HFBA donor remembers his baby sister

truly difficult time in my family's life, and as a religious Jew, I felt a responsibility to acknowledge their kindness.

HFBA let me know about their "Leave Your Mark" project, whereby I could contribute to the cost of a grave marker. So many children's graves once went unmarked, and this campaign was a way of rectifying this problem.

When HFBA performed a proper burial with a gravestone and a religious service, I felt I had done the right thing by my sister. Despite the passage of so many years, the Jewish soul in me touched the Jewish soul in her.

As Pearl said, "When your parents needed help, these people helped you. It's important for people to know that." ■

"My great-grandparents were immigrants," Carol says. "Moreover, Nuchem was a tailor. It's hard to imagine he could support HFBA the way a wealthy person could."

Carol believes Nuchem contributed what he could: a shroud for every Jew whose family couldn't afford to pay for one. This might explain why the prominent monument overlooking Nuchem's grave praises him, in Hebrew, as a "man flawless and blameless, complete and strong."

Perhaps Carol's connection to her earliest American ancestors explains why she is a volunteer trustee with the Kol Ami Cemetery Association in Salt Lake City.

"My father died in 1990 and was buried in Mount Hebron Cemetery in Queens," Carol says. "I moved out of New York in 1970, so I knew I had left his perpetual care to others. When a spot opened up at our cemetery trust in 1991, I joined as a volunteer. I couldn't directly care for my father's grave, but I could take care of the graves in my own city. In 2006 I became chairman. I've served the trust for 34 years."

Carol's story doesn't end with the discovery of her great-grandparents.

### HONORING THE MEMORY OF ANCESTORS

"Visiting Nuchem and Mirza's graves at Silver Lake Cemetery lit my spiritual connection with them," she says. "When my son and his wife had twins 11 years ago, they decided to honor the memory of their great-great ancestor by naming the elder boy Nuchem in Hebrew and Nathan in English."

Fortunately, Carol says, poverty is not often an issue at burial time in Salt Lake's Jewish community. Reading about HFBA's mission, though, reminds her that sometimes people fall through the cracks.

"HFBA was there for my ancestors," she says. "I want to be here for HFBA." ■



Yisroel Sapan, Age 2

# HFBA HELPS

*True stories about the people HFBA serves. Names and details are anonymized to preserve confidentiality.*

**Sofia Y.**, 95, a Holocaust survivor originally from Poland, died of heart disease in a nursing home. Sofia's daughter is legally blind, so her grandson worked with HFBA to arrange the funeral. Sofia had reserved a grave at Mount Richmond Cemetery alongside her husband, whom we buried in 2000. A dozen people attended. They learned that Sofia and her sister had escaped to the former Soviet Union and ended up on a train bombed by the Germans. Their identity papers were destroyed. As blonde, blue-eyed women, they could have passed as non-Jews. "Sofia never denied who she was," an attendee told Rabbi Shmuel Plafker. "She was always cheerful. People gravitated toward her."

**Sherry J.**, 84, a daughter of Holocaust survivors and once a nurse with the International Red Cross, died of heart disease. Until five years ago, Sherry was living in Israel. She fell ill on a visit with her daughter Marlene in New York. Only HFBA's volunteer *minyán* and Marlene attended the funeral in person. Marlene's husband attended by phone, as did a cousin from a military bunker in Gaza. Marlene told Rabbi Plafker that in addition to speaking English, her mother spoke Yiddish, German, Spanish, Russian, and Hebrew. Marlene had pressed for a traditional Jewish burial and was grateful for the volunteer *minyán*, which attended.

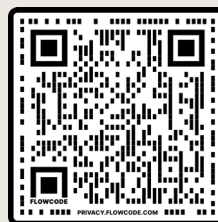
**Jeannette B.**, 75, divorced and estranged from her two children, died of heart disease. Shortly before Jeannette's death, HFBA received a call from Dana, her daughter, who asked us about cremation services. We explained that we are an organization that ensures the traditional burial of every Jew. Only Dana and a friend attended in person; another friend participated by phone. Dana's brother did not attend. Dana's friends offered up some words of compassion: "Jeannette was a beautiful woman. She was always one of us girls." After the funeral, Dana told us her mother was schizophrenic, had no means of income and periodically lived on the streets.

**Yevgeny B.**, 69, died of a heart attack. He emigrated from Russia 40 years ago and worked for many years as a custodian for the New Jersey Department of Public Works. Yevgeny had open-heart surgery four years ago. After surgery, he was diagnosed with cancer. He told no one. Known until then by his co-workers as a workaholic,

Yevgeny started drinking heavily and became homeless. He was divorced and in touch with at least one of his three children in the last years of his life, but bounced around between nursing homes. By the time he let people know about his cancer, it was too advanced to treat. HFBA's volunteer *minyán* was present at his burial in Mount Richmond Cemetery.

**Philip M.**, 60, worked for the New York City Transit Authority. He'd long been in poor health and died of a heart attack. Philip's personal history was sad. His mother died when he was two. His father died when he was 12. Philip was 21 when his grandmother, who'd looked after him for nine years, died. Philip had no friends other than his female partner. He cheated death in 2017 when he had a first heart attack. He was unable to alter his lifestyle habits, though, and finally succumbed to cardiovascular disease. HFBA handled funeral arrangements and buried Philip in Mount Richmond Cemetery. Only Philip's companion attended.

**Shirley S.**, 93, died in a Queens, NY nursing home. We learned about her passing from a neighbor, who knew Shirley was Jewish, and who feared she would end up in City Cemetery. A year before her death, Shirley broke her hip. While in rehab, where she suffered a stroke, her landlord initiated eviction proceedings against her based on the condition of her apartment: Shirley had been a hoarder and the place had become uninhabitable. She spent part of her childhood in an orphanage now under the auspices of the Jewish Child Care Association. HFBA's volunteer *minyán* attended so *kaddish* could be recited. ■



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You can support HFBA's mission by making a donation at [www.hebrewfreeburial.org/donate](http://www.hebrewfreeburial.org/donate), or use our QR code.



## РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

### «HFBA помогло моим предкам, и теперь я хочу помочь HFBA»

Пока Кэрол Хохштадт не начала исследовать историю своей семьи, она никогда даже не слышала о Мирзе и Нухеме Гринберг. Она начала со своего деда, Довида Гринберга, поскольку Довид и его братья и сестры были единственными родственниками, о которых Кэрол рассказывала её мать. Изучив свидетельство о браке Довида и его второй жены, Кэрол выяснила, что, во-первых, Довид прибыл в Америку из города Яссы в Румынии, и, во-вторых, что родителей его звали Мирза и Нухем.

«Согласно данным переписи населения в 1900-м году Довид со своей первой женой и четырьмя детьми проживали на улице Элдридж вместе с Мирзой и Нухемом», рассказала Кэрол газете «Хесед».

В качестве следующего шага Кэрол стала искать имена Мирзы и Нухема в списках пассажиров кораблей, привозивших иммигрантов. После продолжительных поисков в интернете Кэрол нашла нужный манифест: оказывается, Мирза и Нухем прибыли в нью-йоркскую гавань в 1899 году.

Затем новая находка: Кэрол нашла оба свидетельства о смерти, из которых следовало, что её прадед и прабабка покоятся на кладбище Сильвер Лейк, в 45 минутах езды через мост Верразано от дома Кэрол в Бруклине.

Когда Кэрол с мужем посетили кладбище Сильвер Лейк, они удивились тому, что Нухем и Мирза были похоронены среди членов хевра кадиша (команда помощников при погребениях), рядом с могилами основателей HFBA.

Кэрол считает, что Нухем был скорее всего портным, и что он помогал чем мог: он делал саваны для тех евреев, чьи семьи не могли оплатить погребение.

Кэрол живёт в Солт-Лейк-Сити уже более 30 лет. Возможно преемственная связь с её предками-иммигрантами объясняет, почему она является добровольным попечителем Ассоциации кладбища Кол Ами в этом городе. «HFBA помогла моим предкам, и теперь я хочу помочь HFBA и моим собратьям-евреям в Солт Лейк Сити».

### Исроэл Сапэн газете Хесед: «HFBA в своё время помогло с похоронами моей младшей сестры»

Моя мать и отец никогда не говорили о моей младшей сестре, которая родилась на четыре года позже меня. Я вырос в Бруклине и всегда считал себя единственным ребенком.

Но где-то в конце 1960-х моя тетя рассказала, что у меня была сестра, родившаяся в 1947 году, которая умерла в младенчестве из-за порока сердца. Позже я узнал, что моя сестра родилась с синдромом Дауна.

Я узнал о роли Еврейской Благотворительной Похоронной Ассоциации в организации погребения моей сестры, когда просматривал старые бумаги. На них была подпись моего отца.

Как-то раз мы с моей женой Перл обсуждали, на что дать наше ежегодное пожертвование. А перед этим я часто



задумывался, что хотел бы отплатить добром организации HFBA за то, что она помогла моей семье в тяжёлое для неё время. Как религиозный еврей, я вдвойне чувствовал, что хочу отметить это доброе дело. Поговорив с сотрудниками HFBA, я решил присоединиться к программе «Оставь свой след», пожертвовав средства на установку надгробных табличек.

Теперь, когда HFBA проводит погребение по еврейскому обряду, с религиозной службой и установлением надгробного памятника, я чувствую, что, помогая в этом, достойно чту память моей сестры. Хотя прошло столько лет, её и моя еврейские души как бы соприкасаются...

### HFBA помогает

Евгений Б. скончался в 69 лет от сердечного приступа. Он эмигрировал из России 40 лет назад и много лет проработал смотрителем в Департаменте общественных работ штата Нью-Джерси. Четыре года назад Евгению сделали операцию на открытом сердце. После операции у него диагностировали рак, но он никому не сказал об этом. До болезни коллеги знали Евгения как трудоголика, но тут он начал пить, и через некоторое время оказался бездомным.

Евгений был разведён. В последние годы жизни он проживал то в одном, то в другом доме престарелых, поддерживая связь по крайней мере с одним из своих троих детей. Когда он сообщил окружающим, что болен раком, болезнь уже не поддавалась лечению. Добровольный миньян присутствовал на похоронах Евгения на принадлежащем HFBA кладбище Маунт-Ричмонд.

### Почему книга «Исход» напоминает о необходимости чтить умерших

Особый эпизод в Книге Исхода – когда Моисей выполняет обещание народа своим предкам: он велит забрать кости Иосифа, сына патриарха Иакова, увозя израильтян из Египта в Землю Обетованную. Этот момент символизирует для евреев священное обязательство почитания умерших, обеспечивая им достойное погребение.

Мы благодарим всех наших дарителей, которые в течение всего года делают для HFBA возможным продолжение благородной миссии по обеспечению надлежащих похорон для каждого еврея. Мы желаем вам всего наилучшего и счастливого Песаха! ■

## Students perform *chesed* at Mount Richmond Cemetery

Students from area schools participated in the fall/winter Cemetery Clean-Up Project at HFBA's Mount Richmond Cemetery. The *chesed* project has been a longstanding volunteer event that gives young people the opportunity to honor fellow Jews who left this world without the resources for a traditional Jewish burial. ■



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### HFBA GETS MAIL

## Grateful acknowledgement from our generous donors

When you get a call you were not expecting — that your loved one has passed — it's shocking. You want to do the right thing for them. The call to Hebrew Free Burial Association was a godsend. HFBA's professionalism and care made all the difference. When they provided a *minyán* of men, whom I consider *melachim* (angels), it just added to my comfort level that I did what I could according to *halacha* (Jewish law).

Thank you for all you do for the Jewish people. It's a great need, which you fill so well.

Gratefully,  
J. Akselrod

Please accept this donation in memory of my great-grandmother, Sarah Rothman, who is buried at Mount Richmond Cemetery.

My wife and I recently attended a funeral there. After the ceremony, I asked Rabbi Plafker, who officiated, if he could help me locate Sarah's grave. He was wonderfully helpful, and together, based on the information we had with us, we found the grave.

I can't thank him enough. He's a mensch!

Sincerely,  
Aharon Rothman

My heartfelt thanks to everyone at HFBA for your dedication and invaluable help during the very worst time of my life. Please know, even on your most challenging work day, that your work is immeasurably important and makes a difference.

Please extend as well my heartfelt thanks to Rabbi Plafker . . . He did a phenomenal job in explaining every step along the way, and in doing so, provided wisdom and comfort to all who were present. His heart shone through my darkest hour. My loved one would have absolutely adored him.

Regards,  
Bari Connolly ■



## Why “Exodus” reminds us to honor the dead

An extraordinary moment in “The Book of Exodus” comes when Moses acts on his nation’s commitment to their ancestors: he takes the bones of Joseph — son of our patriarch Jacob — with him as he leads the Israelites to the Promised Land.

This scene underscores the Jewish value of honoring the dead by ensuring them a proper burial.

Thank you to all of our donors who make it possible for HFBA to continue its mission all year to provide a proper burial to every Jew. You have all our best wishes for a happy Pesach!

## Donate your appreciated stocks

If you’ve got appreciated assets and you’re looking to provide immediate support to our community, you can maximize your impact while also maximizing your savings by donating to HFBA. When you cash out your stocks, you are required to pay capital gains tax. If you transfer the stock directly, however, 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](http://www.hebrewfreeburial.org/stocks)

## MOUNT RICHMOND CEMETERY SPRING HOURS

Расписание работы кладбища Mt. Richmond – весна 2025

### PASSOVER ПЕСАХ

SUNDAY, APRIL 13	-----	CLOSED
Воскресенье, 13 апреля		ЗАКРЫТО
MONDAY, APRIL 14	-----	CLOSED
Понедельник, 14 апреля		ЗАКРЫТО
SUNDAY, APRIL 20	-----	CLOSED
Воскресенье, 20 апреля		ЗАКРЫТО

### SHAVUOT ШАВУОТ

MONDAY, JUNE 2	-----	CLOSED
Понедельник, 2 июня		ЗАКРЫТО
TUESDAY, JUNE 3	-----	CLOSED
Вторник, 3 июня		ЗАКРЫТО

Yizkor is recited on the last day of Passover and Shavuot: Sunday, April 20 and Tuesday, June 3.

Поминальная молитва ИЗКОР читается в последний день Песаха и в последний день Шавуота, 20 апреля и 3 июня.

The cemetery closes at 1:00 PM on Fridays.

По пятницам кладбище закрывается в час дня.



## SAVE THE DATE!

### Hebrew Free Burial Association Riverdale Community Breakfast

Sunday, May 4, 2025 | 9:30 a.m.

at Hebrew Institute of Riverdale  
3700 Henry Hudson Parkway  
Bronx, NY 10463

## A LASTING IMPACT WITH HBFA



You can include Hebrew Free Burial Association in your estate plan at no cost to you. A legacy donation in your will helps HFBA in its mission to treat every Jew with the respect so integral to Jewish law and tradition, regardless of financial status. Get started by visiting [www.hebrewfreeburial.org/freewill](http://www.hebrewfreeburial.org/freewill). If you've already included us in your will, let us know by visiting the same site. We are deeply grateful to you for your support.

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