



Leadership Message

We are encouraged by your enthusiastic response to our organization's expanded mission, and we are very grateful for your support. The current pandemic

has presented unprecedented challenges to all of us – and to our cemeteries too. Our cemeteries were left behind when former Jewish communities and organizations moved on, and they will remain in need of our support when the coronavirus pandemic moves on. We optimistically look forward to that day.

We have reached out to all of you because you have families buried at our cemeteries, and we need your help to spread our message to others in your families. We would appreciate your sending us their names and contact information, so we can make sure they are also kept informed. We all have relatives – siblings, cousins, children, and others – who share our interest in these cemeteries as the final resting places for their relatives. So please spread our message to them, ask them to contact us, and help us contact them directly.

As many of you know, Hurricane Laura recently toppled an enormous tree at one of our cemeteries (Hebrew Fraternity Cemetery in Hopelawn, Woodbridge Township), providing another vivid example of cemetery damage requiring repair and ongoing support. Our donations enabled our organization to pay for the removal of the fallen tree and much of the cleanup. Our cemeteries will continue to need support for maintenance and repairs that are independent of the care provided on individual graves by perpetual and annual care arrangements. Only a very small portion of perpetual and annual care payments may be used for general cemetery maintenance. As a result, our cemeteries remain dependent on our charitable donations for maintenance, preservation, and repairs.

All donations to our organization are tax-deductible charitable contributions – in contrast to payments made for perpetual and annual care of individual graves, which are the responsibility of the family and are not tax-deductible charitable contributions. We are really very grateful for your past support, and we hope we can count on your support going forward.

—Mona Shangold and Bennett Epstein



REMEMBERING SHEP SEWITCH

Sidney "Shep" Sewitch was a star in the Perth Amboy Jewish community, where he was popular, admired, respected, appreciated, talented, and humble. His efforts to preserve and improve our cemeteries also established him as a hero. As our organization's first vice-president, Shep played a very important role in our organization from our inception in 2005 until his death this year. He was a life-long resident of Perth Amboy, where he earned and held the admiration and respect of the entire community. Considered by many to be one of the greatest athletes of the Perth Amboy Jewish community, Shep excelled on the basketball teams of the Perth Amboy YMHA, Perth Amboy High School, and Rutgers University, where he served as captain of both the varsity basketball team and the varsity tennis team. He also played varsity football at Rutgers until he was sidelined by knee injuries. His outstanding athletic talent at Perth Amboy High School was especially impressive, since he was one of the youngest students in his class.

After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II, Shep joined his brothers (Myron "Sonny" and William "Vevy") in their father's carpentry/construction business (Leon Sewitch & Sons), developing it into a thriving enterprise with many skilled and loyal employees. He was an active member of the Perth Amboy Jewish community and stepped up to serve wherever and whenever he was needed. His many friends recognized and appreciated his impressive intellect, skills, personality, and humor – all of which were overshadowed only by his great humility.

Shep is survived by his sons and daughters-in-law – Scott and Nancy, Nick and Cathy – and his brother Vevy. His death is a loss to all of us, and we will all miss him greatly. He will be remembered by all as one of our heroes.

—Mona Shangold



Thanking our Donors

The following list includes all donations received and processed between May 23, 2020 and October 20, 2020. All donations received prior to May 23, 2020 were listed in previous issues of *The Eternal Vine*. All donations received after October 20, 2020 will be listed in the next issue of *The Eternal Vine*. We gratefully acknowledge generous donations from the following individuals:

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Deborah Green Brody – in memory of Sol and Rachel Green

Ruth Bronston – in memory of Pauline and Morris Margaretten

Judy Buchband

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Laura Campbell – in memory of Annette and Sidney Tenney

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Jeannie Pavlovsky Castells – in memory of her family

Joel Chodos – in memory of Abe and Eva Chodos

Arthur and Sandra Cohen – in memory of the Cohen and Fox Families

Betty Margaretten Cohen – in memory of Pauline and Morris Margaretten and Lena Avchen

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Drucker, Math and Whitman – in memory of Jack and Harriet Shangold

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Florence Fried – in memory of Lawrence, Murray, and Shirley Fried

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The Gillet Family – in memory of Shep Sewitch

Ruth Gnat – in memory of Nathan and Hattie Margaretten

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Ellie and Barry Goldman – in memory of George and Phyllis Goldman

Sarah Ann Goldstein – in memory of great-grandmother Sarah Pesha bat Avraham Malinsky

Abe and Barbara Goll – in memory of the Schofield and Stein Families and Jacob and Fanny Schwartz

Neal Golub – in memory of Esther and Irving Golub

Marlene Gordon – in memory of Jennie Turshen and Family

The Gort Family – in memory of Shep Sewitch

David Graber

Sandra Greenberg – in memory of the Yorkoff and Greenberg Families

Ezra Greenspan

Joan Bressler Greenspan

Annellen and Murray Guth – in memory of Shep Sewitch; in memory of Dorvin Rosenberg; in memory of their loved ones

Ellen Hermanos – in memory of Ira and Phyllis Safran

Harriet Hirsch and Sandra Haimoff – in memory of their great-grandparents, great aunt, and great uncle

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Robert Leaf – in memory of Herbert and Sylvia Leaf

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Dorothy Lemelson

Vicki Harris Lemberg – in memory of Etta Isenberg Jacobson, Leo Jacobson, Jerry Jacobson, and Ruth and Al Harris

Adele and Jeff Lepinsky – in memory of Rebecca and Meyer Miller

Jeffrey Lepinsky – in memory of Anna and Benjamin Bortnecker

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Beverly Pomeranz – in memory of David Berlfein
Sarah Ritter – in memory of Miriam and Nat Kleiner
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Martha Leibowitz Rothman and Elliot Paul Rothman – in memory of Shep Sewitch
Mark Rothstein – in memory of William Rothstein, Mary Rothstein, and Joanne Rothstein
Carl Rubenstein – in memory of the Rubenstein Family
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Zena Schechter – in memory of Yettas Yosef Levi
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Bennett Schneider
Francine Schneider – in memory of Harry and Irene Schneider
Norman Schulaner
Joanne Schwartz – in memory of Aaron Ginsberg
Scott and Nancy Sewitch – in memory of Shep Sewitch
Mona Shangold – in memory of Harriet and Jack Shangold; in memory of Russell Bey; in memory of Shep Sewitch
Ethel Sher – in memory of Robert Korb
Skip Shihar – in memory of David (Duvy) Shihar; in memory of Carla Shihar

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Rebecca P. Singer and Milan Zahorcak Susan and Jeffrey Singer – in memory of the Singer Family
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Alan and Nancy Spivack – in memory of Minerva Spivack
Mark Starker – in memory of Sonia Sandowski
Alex and Sandi Stern
Richard and Marcia Weinstein Stern – in memory of Sally, Abe, and Sheldon Weinstein; in memory of all their deceased Perth Amboy friends and family members
Robert St. Lifer
Michael Stoller
Ruth Strashun – in memory of Max and Fannie Strashun
Rosalyn Strauss
Warren Tamaroff – in memory of the Tamaroff and Pearl Families
Karen Tinkham – in memory of the Goldberger Family
Rev. Jonathan Toborowsky – in memory of the Toborowsky and Sher Families
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Riva Silverman Wilkens – in memory of Nettie and Herman Silverman
Stuart and Jane Yourish – in memory of Rose and Israel Yourish and Ida Yourish
Stanley and Joanne Zimmerman

Cemetery Tours

From 2006 to 2019, our organization held Cemetery Tours several times each year at the cemeteries in Perth Amboy and Woodbridge for which we were (and still are) raising funds. Although we had planned to continue our tours at these cemeteries and also schedule tours at our new cemetery partners, the current pandemic forced us to cancel our tours during 2020. We remain hopeful that we can resume safely in 2021. We will send you more information as soon as possible. We are glad many of you were able to visit our cemeteries individually and many were able to visit Newark Jewish Cemeteries on September 27, when the Community Relations Committee of Greater MetroWest NJ sponsored its annual Newark Cemetery Visiting Day.

Please contact us for more information – or if you can help us in any way – through our website at <https://friendsofjewishcemeteries.org>, by phone at 856-222-1418, or by e-mail to FPMCJC@gmail.com. Check our website frequently for more information about the tours.

Contact Information for all Cemeteries

Office: 908-245-7100

The cemetery office (for all of our partner cemeteries) will provide information about these and other services at all of the cemeteries:

- Purchasing cemetery plots
- Planting grave covers
- Arranging for perpetual or annual care of plantings
- Constructing or repairing cemetery monuments and/or foundations
- Cleaning (acid-washing) discolored cemetery monuments



Friends of NJ Jewish Cemeteries, Inc.

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<https://friendsofjewishcemeteries.org>

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