

CEMETERY TOURS

Our Cemetery Tours remain popular and provide a special opportunity for us to honor and remember our loved ones together, and we hope you will be able to join us for one or more of these --- possibly arranging for a family reunion there. We have scheduled Cemetery Tours on the following Sundays during 2011:

May 8 (Mother's Day)
June 19 (Father's Day)
July 17
September 18

All tours begin at noon at the Hebrew Fraternity Cemetery entry gate on New Brunswick Avenue in Hopelawn. After visiting the Hebrew Fraternity Cemetery, we will drive to the Congregation Shaarey Tefiloh Cemetery and the Congregation Beth Mordecai Cemetery on Florida Grove Road. We will follow this Cemetery Tour with an optional visit to a local restaurant.



Ron Berkowitz, David Weiss, Melva Eidelberg, Shep Sewitch, Barbara Kagan Littman, Bardin Levavy, Rissa Spivack Ratner, Michael Ratner, Roni Goss Berkowitz, Nancy Doctofsky Okun

Please let us know in advance, if possible, if you plan to attend, especially if you want us to help you locate any specific graves. If you can't visit in person, we will be glad to visit for you and will place stones on the graves for you too. Please contact us for more information through our Web site at:

www.friendsofjewishcemeteries.org

by phone at
856-222-1418

or by e-mail to

friends@friendsofjewishcemeteries.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It has been rewarding for me to meet or reconnect with so many of you since we formed this organization in 2005. Although our mission is still to ensure that our cemeteries are respectfully cared for in perpetuity, the many projects we have added have enabled us to reach more people, satisfy more interests, remember more history, learn more genealogy, and raise more awareness.

We are deeply involved in the preparation of the Perth Amboy Jewish History Book, and --- as you will read in this issue --- author Robert Spector has provided an update announcing that this unique treasure is expected to be in print by December 2011. In this issue you will also read that our Cemetery Registry Project Coordinator Carol Roberts expects to submit our cemetery registry data soon to JewishGen for publication of all of our monument data in JOWBR (JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry).

Many of you have attended our Cemetery Tours -- where you have located and visited your relatives' final resting places -- and/or our reunions -- where you have socialized and reminisced with old friends. We have also helped many of you explore your own genealogy -- enabling you to trace your roots and share the information with your cousins and your children.

As exciting and rewarding as all of these accomplishments have been, we remain mindful that our original purpose has not changed and we remain committed to the future of our cemeteries. Short of winning a very generous lottery, we still have a very long way to go to achieve our goals. Honoring the deceased is a very special mitzvah for which thanks cannot be given. We are truly very grateful for all of your past support, especially during our current economic challenges, and we hope we can count on your future support too.

Mona Shangold



Top - Hebrew Fraternity Cemetery in Hopelawn, NJ

Bottom - Congregation Shaarey Tefiloh Cemetery in Perth Amboy, NJ



PERTH AMBOY JEWISH COMMUNITY HISTORY BOOK UPDATE -- A MESSAGE FROM BOOK AUTHOR ROBERT SPECTOR

See page 2.

PERTH AMBOY JEWISH COMMUNITY HISTORY BOOK AN UPDATE FROM AUTHOR ROBERT SPECTOR

As many of you know, several of us have volunteered to work on a labor of love: a book about the history of Jewish people in Perth Amboy. This book is not about nostalgia; not an elegy for the “good old days”. Rather it is the story of a proud, vibrant community and the contributions that we made to Perth Amboy. It’s about the shopkeepers and the synagogues; the public schools and the Hebrew Schools; dances at the “Y” and prayers at the cemeteries; good friends and lasting memories.

With all due respect to Thornton Wilder, this book is our community’s version of “Our Town,” with all the joys and sorrows; the mundane and the miraculous.

My most recent book, “The Mom & Pop Store,” which is part memoir, brought me back to growing up in Perth Amboy and the influence it had on my life, particularly working in my parents’ butcher shop in the Farmers’ Market on Smith and Elm. Describing downtown Perth Amboy, I wrote:

Although Smith Street, the seven-block-long main shopping drag in Perth Amboy, had the occasional national chain — F. W. Woolworth, Kresge, Thom McAn shoes — what I remember best are the vast array of small shops...Roth’s Furniture, Littman’s Jewelers, Schlesinger’s School Supplies, Plaid ‘n’ Tweed clothes, Roy’s Young Men’s Shop, Allyn’s Shoes, the Kotton Shop, and others were not just stores or centers of consumption. These small-business men and women were the parents of friends and classmates; representatives of our community; members of our churches, synagogues, and Parent-Teacher Associations; and sponsors of our Little League teams.

This book is **your** story. It will reflect our collective experience growing up in Perth Amboy – or in the surrounding area --- and how it formed the people we have become. It was a Golden Age; a little bit of Camelot on the Raritan. This book is for your children, grand-children, and great-grandchildren, who one day will want to know about your roots—their roots—and what made **your** Jewish community in Perth Amboy so special. This is your gift to them.

I am excited about finishing this labor of love and sharing it with you. We expect it to be in print and available for distribution by December 2011 – in time for Chanukah gifts. Please join us in making the dream of this book a reality. If you haven’t already sent a donation or sponsored a Family Tribute Page, we hope you will – and we hope you will purchase enough copies of this treasure to place one on the coffee table of each of your children and grandchildren – as well as one on your own coffee table, of course.

Robert Spector

2010 ANNUAL HONOR ROLL

We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the following donors, each of whom contributed at least \$1,000.00 to our organization during calendar year 2010:

\$1,000+

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CEMETERY REGISTRY FOR JOWBR UPDATE – A MESSAGE FROM PROJECT COORDINATOR CAROL ROBERTS



The JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry lists monument information from Jewish cemeteries worldwide to enable people to locate ancestral graves and trace family history. We have been collecting and compiling monument information at our cemeteries for more than two years, and we anticipate sending these records to JewishGen within the next few months. Soon afterward, you – and the rest of the world – will have online access to these data at www.jewishgen.org. We are grateful to all those who have participated in this project for our cemeteries – collecting, compiling, and translating – especially Marcia Weinstein Stern, Richard Stern, Norma Jacobson Messing, Miriam Katz Daitz Vogel, Daniel Chazin, Reuven Herman, and Mona Shangold.

Carol Levine Roberts



Sharyn Bey Turchin, Sandy Belafsky Ruthberg and Doris Belafsky Rosenberg chat at February’s Perth Amboy Reunion Breakfast (see page 4) in Boca Raton.

THANKING OUR DONORS

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(Right) Henry Safran, Les Wurtzel, Gary Kroop



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Judy Meistrich Buchband, Sandy Safran

FLORIDA REUNION BREAKFAST

Our third annual Perth Amboy Reunion Breakfast in Boca (February 13, 2011) attracted a warm and enthusiastic crowd, filled with memories of growing up in or near Perth Amboy. Attendees included some who now live in South Florida year-round or during winters only and others who came only for this event. All enjoyed this social event, and most expressed the hope that this tradition will be continued. See photos in this newsletter.