Friends of New Jersey Jewish Cemeteries, inc.

The Eternal Vine

Connecting those with roots in New Jersey's Jewish Communities

A publication of Friends of New Jersey Jewish Cemeteries, Inc.

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Our Message

e are very grateful for all the generous support we have received since our organization began --- including monetary donations, ideas, and eagerness to help. While fundraising for cemetery maintenance and restoration remains the cornerstone of our mission,

our preservation efforts have accomplished so much more. We have reunited several communities and their descendants, whose overwhelming encouragement and support have enabled us to honor our ancestors and the communities that built these cemeteries, which are the final resting places for many of them.

Although we plan and hope to undertake projects at all of our partner cemeteries, especially those in need of repairs, our ability to achieve these goals depends on receiving enough support to do so. One of our recent cemetery restoration projects included removal of several large trees in the Bingle Street section of Shaarey Tefiloh Cemetery in Perth Amboy. We recognize that trees are usually beautiful and beneficial. In addition to their important role in Jewish culture (e.g., Etz Chaim - Tree of Life), trees reduce air pollution, control storm water, reduce energy consumption, provide animal shelter and food, and prevent soil erosion. However, trees can also present dangers and cause damage. Significant damage can occur when trees and branches fall, and trees' aggressive roots can damage sidewalks, pipes, drains, and especially cemeteries. Our organization has already undertaken and completed significant work at several of our cemeteries to repair damage to cemetery monuments, foundations, grave borders, and foot stones caused by toppled trees and aggressive tree roots. Although we regretted having to remove the trees responsible for this damage, we recognized that it was advisable to remove the trees before their roots caused any more damage to the cemetery. Roots benefit trees and community connections, but they usually damage cemeteries.

We are especially grateful to our supporters with roots in the Jewish community of Perth Amboy and its neighboring areas, where our organization began. In contrast to the detrimental effects of aggressive tree roots at our cemeteries, the community roots of our supporters are always beneficial and are, in fact, responsible for our success in following our mission and achieving our goals. We hope those with roots in the New Jersey Jewish communities represented by all our



partner cemeteries will be inspired and encouraged by our Perth Amboy Jewish community supporters, so that we can accomplish significant restoration work at all of our partner cemeteries. We direct all donations toward the cemeteries specified by our donors, and we look forward to undertaking significant work at several of our partner cemeteries as soon as we receive sufficient funding from your donations. We plan to restore deteriorated walkways, fences, and roadways and to repair damages resulting from storms and vandalism. Although individual families are responsible for repairing damage to individual cemetery monuments, our organization has funded the repair of some monuments in cases where surviving family members either were unknown or could not be located.

Our Cemetery Tours have continued to provide great opportunities to visit our cemeteries, honor our deceased relatives and friends, and learn about the histories of these cemeteries and the communities they represent. Our 2024 Cemetery Tour dates are listed in this newsletter, and we hope many of you will be able to visit our cemeteries with us on these dates.

Our hearts and prayers remain with the people of Israel, as we reflect on the war and the many disturbing antisemitic reactions to it. The horrors that plagued our ancestors have not ended, and we must remain hopeful that better days are ahead. As we sing "Am Yisrael Chai," we must continue to support Israel and its people. We hope we can also count on your continued support for our cemeteries, which are the final resting places for many of our ancestors and those who built the Jewish communities in which we grew up and lived. We remain very grateful for your support, and we know our ancestors and all those buried in these cemeteries would be honored too.

—Mona Shangold and Bennett Epstein











Thanking our Donors

The following list includes all donations received and processed between October 21, 2023 and March 13, 2024. All donations received prior to to October 21, 2023 were listed in previous issues of *The Eternal Vine*. All donations received after March 13, 2024 will be listed in the next issue of The Eternal Vine. We gratefully acknowledge generous donations from the following individuals:

Ed and Beatrice Albaum

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Anonymous – in memory of Steve Safran

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Stacy and Lawrence Zeller – in memory of Melvin and Irma Zeller

Stanley and Joanne Zimmerman Mitchell Zucker

Cemetery Tours

Our Cemetery Tours resumed in 2022, after pausing during the pandemic, and they have continued to provide a unique opportunity for us to honor and remember our loved ones together. These tours have also provided many attendees with opportunities to meet friends and relatives, connect with their pasts, explore family genealogy, locate graves of special interest, understand cemetery art and traditions, and learn about the fascinating history of our communities.

Our 2024 Cemetery Tours have been scheduled for the following Sundays at the locations indicated:

- May 5 Shaarey Tefiloh Cemeteries (in Perth Amboy and Woodbridge)
- June 9 McClellan Street section of Newark Jewish Cemeteries
- June 23 Beth David Memorial Park (in Kenilworth)
- July 21 Samptown Jewish Cemeteries (in South Plainfield)
- August 11 North Arlington Jewish Cemeteries (in Kearny)
- October 6- Newark Jewish Cemeteries (joining the Community Relations Committee of Greater MetroWest NJ at its annual Newark Cemetery Visiting Day in Newark)

All tours (except Newark Jewish Cemeteries on October 6) will begin at noon and will last approximately 2 hours. The Newark Cemetery Tour starting time has not been announced yet. All are welcome to attend these free tours, at which we will visit graves of interest to attendees, discuss the cemeteries' histories and the communities' histories, and honor and remember those interred there.

Please register, as soon as possible, to let us know you plan to attend one or more of these tours and to give us the names of any graves you will want to visit. We will notify all registrants of the meeting location for each tour and any weather-related cancellations. To register for one or more tours, please contact us by email at FPMCJC@gmail.com, by phone at 856-222-1418, or through the "Contact Us" form on our website at https://friendsofjewishcemeteries.org.

Contact Information for all Cemeteries

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











Kenilworth, NJ 07033 -1703

856-222-1418

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Tree damage, fallen tree, & aggressive tree roots.







After tree removal.













