

The Hebrew Cemetery: A Place of Love and Community

By Brian Yesowitch, Board President, Hebrew Cemetery Association

Between Passover and Shavuot, Jews all over the world reflect on the Exodus from Egypt and the presentation of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. While the Hebrews of the Biblical age experienced horrible trials

both in slavery and wandering through the desert, today we are aware that many of us, our families and neighbors, also are going through difficult struggles. Our modern problems are often dismissed as #FirstWorldProblems, but they are real. Issues like extended illness, divorce, and accidents pull us out of our normal

sphere of experience – and can lead to long paths of recovery before we, or our friends, families, and neighbors, become whole once again.

One situation many of us find ourselves in is the loss of a parent or grandparent. Even if that loved one lived a long and healthy life – like my 92 years old grandmother,



Photo of cemetery by Brian Yesowitch.

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DRAWING: Tuesday September 2, 2015



Contact us anytime to discuss your upcoming celebration!

Jay Parton, Operations Manager, Foundation of Shalom Park
704-944-6842 • jparton@shalomcharlotte.org



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"All of the students have a wonderful time learning new dances, and Joe has a way of getting everyone to the dance floor, even the shy ones! His interactive crowd entertainers get students involved and participating. Students often go back their home school and request him for their prom." – West Virginia Department of Education

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For more info on AAA Entertainment, contact:

Joe Kerner, President/GM of AAA Entertainment
866-422-2357 • jk@citynet.net

To view our Bar Mitzvah video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpPq4Oerx0s>

*Drawing Rules: Only new bookings are eligible. Non-transferable. Rental Deposits are non-refundable. Drawing winner will be notified by email only. Based on availability – if AAA Entertainment is not available for the event date/times of the drawing winner, additional entries will be drawn to determine the prize winner. All taxes on any prize won are the sole responsibility of the winner, including, without limitation, any federal, state, or local taxes, which may be deemed applicable in such winner's jurisdiction of residence. Entry into drawing constitutes permission for AAA Entertainment to contact each entrant. Acceptance of the prize constitutes permission to use winners name, city, state, and winning entry for promotional purposes, including, but not limited to, any photos and/or video clips from the event, on the websites (or other promotional materials) of Foundation of Shalom Park and AAA Entertainment, without further compensation. Sound, lighting and video upgrades are available at an extra charge.



Rabbi Ezring teaching the Temple Israel Genizah participants the appropriate way to bury books at the Hebrew Cemetery. Photo by Sandra Goldman.

Henrietta Witzer, who died in 2012 – the pain of the loss can linger long beyond the date of passing. I feel that grief tends to be intensified by love we feel toward the one we've lost. Grief is diminished when it's shared with loved ones. At the cemetery, during a funeral or unveiling, it's commonplace to see cousins and other extended family exchanging tearful hugs and smiles with one another. Love is what creates family, and love creates the communities that share their significant life events at the cemetery. The Song of Solomon states in 8:7, "Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away."

As the seasons have changed from winter to spring to our glorious summer, we've seen much growth and activity at the cemetery. Last fall, the completed first stage of the Blumenthal Memorial Garden began to bring color and variety to our cemetery. Our Tu BiShvat tree planting ceremony brought cemetery members, the greater Jewish community, and friends from area neighborhoods together to add 35 new trees to our landscape. Additionally, a much needed new roof, fresh paint, and brick work brought new life to our small historic chapel. It is the oldest building in Charlotte still in service to the Jewish community. We thank our members and donors for their generosity and continued support, and extend a special thank you to Norman Steinberger, whose philanthropy knows no bounds for his role in the historic chapel renovations.

Many of you are aware of our ongoing history project with the Levine Sklut Judaic Library. Each month, we recognize one #ThrowbackThursday on Facebook; along with LSJL, we profile an individ-

ual buried in our cemetery. In January, we honored Martin Luther King Day by highlighting an individual mentioned by name in the famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." In February, for President's Day, we noted a relationship between George Washington, who once referred to Charlotte as "a trifling place," and the Jews of Charlotte. March brought Women's History Month and the matriarch of Temple Emanuel in Gastonia. In April, we discussed Jewish comedy and Groucho Marx's connection to our community. In May, we celebrated Israeli history and an accomplished individual whose artistic legacy endures today in Plaza Midwood. To follow these posts, we welcome you to visit www.facebook.com/HebrewCemetery right away and like our page. We're only getting started sharing the many stories that can be told "between the fences" at our Hebrew Cemetery.

One way stories are told is through Jewish books and Hebrew texts. However, what do you do with these books when they have served their purpose, helping children and adults to study and pray? They should be buried appropriately, in accordance with Jewish law. The location where these books and texts are buried is called a Genizah. We have many of them on our cemetery property. This spring, materials from the communities at Temple Israel, Temple Beth El, and the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library all made their way into Genizot at the Hebrew Cemetery. Please check with your clergy to learn when the next one will be planned so you can experience this once-in-a-lifetime mitzvah for yourself.

For 145 years, the Hebrew Cemetery has been a very real testament to the sustained successes of our Charlotte Jewish community. I hope you will consider adding the Hebrew Cemetery Association to your Create Your Jewish Legacy bequests. For more information about membership (\$72/year), funeral preplanning, Memorial Wall plaques, legacy planning or any of the programs discussed, please contact our director, Sandra Goldman, at director@hebrewcemetery.org or 704-576-1859. ✨

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Also Painting Days will be at Shalom Park, Sept. 3rd & 10th by appointment.

