

- News
- New York
- National
- International
- Israel
- Short Takes
- Briefs
- Tel Aviv At 100
- 36 Under 36: TJW
- Sport
- Editorial & Opinion
- The Arts
- Jewish Life
- Food
- Travel
- Calendars
- Classifieds
- Special Sections
- Singles
- Write On For Israel
- Fresh Ink for Teens
- Directories
- Blogs

NY Resources  
select below



[Home](#) > [News](#) > [New York](#)

07/15/2009



[Email this article](#)

[Print this Page](#)

## Bayside Cleanup Efforts

by Julie Wiener

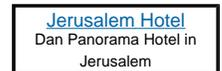
While nothing matches the scale of the current cleanup project, over the years, there have been numerous efforts to improve conditions at Bayside Cemetery. In the 1990s, shortly after an influx of 20- and 30-somethings reinvigorated the membership of the near-dying Shaare Zedek, the congregation — led at the time by Rabbi Hillel Norry — organized several cleanup days. In 2003, hundreds of Mormon volunteers, many from impoverished neighborhoods like East New York and Williamsburg, cleared away weeds and debris for four days. Shane Wamsley, the Mormon from Salt Lake City who organized that effort and smaller follow-ups, remains interested in Bayside and told The Jewish Week he hopes to raise money for it, and other Jewish cemeteries, through a nonprofit he recently established called



Olive Branch Cemetery Restorations. Wamsley is also updating the cemetery's section maps and creating a database of all the graves that he hopes one day to post online for genealogical researchers. Among the historically significant individuals buried at Bayside are Civil War veterans, victims of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire and Rabbi Avraham Aaron Yudelovitch, an early leader of the Lower East Side's Eldridge Street Synagogue. (Barry Yood, one of the board members of the Coalition for

At-Risk Jewish Cemeteries, which is overseeing the current cleanup effort, is Rabbi Yudelovitch's grandson.) Close on the heels of the Mormon cleanup, several funeral directors, led by Leslie and Ralph Francisco of Ozone Park, volunteered to re-inter remains from vandalized mausoleums. However, the Franciscos, who are not Jewish, quickly became frustrated by Shaare Zedek's leadership, which they said was uncooperative and ungrateful. Cleanup successes at Bayside have often been short-lived, at best. The areas cleared by the Mormons became overgrown, and this fall several of the repaired mausoleums were vandalized again. Between 2003 and the current cleanup, the synagogue limited volunteer efforts at the cemetery, because it "made such a minimal difference" and was "hazardous to people who don't know what they're doing," explained Shaare Zedek Rabbi Julia Andelman, who was hired in 2006. All that has changed. "Now that the professional cleanup is happening, it's great," said Rabbi Andelman. "Now the volunteer efforts can have a real impact."

[Back to top](#)



Privacy • Site Map • Terms of Use • Jewish Week Wireless

[Jewish and Single?](#)  
Meet fun Jewish singles online...  
Communicate free for 2 weeks!  
[JewishCafe.com](#)

© 2000 - 2009 The Jewish Week, Inc. All rights reserved. Please refer to the [legal notice](#) for other important information.