HONORING PARENTS After they pass away

Today is the 27th day of Tebet, 5771

Honoring parents is a Mitzva that extends after our parents pass away. The Laws of Abelut (mourning) are stricter for parents that for any other relatives. There is a natural reason for it: unlike any other family member (spouse, children, brothers) we can only have one father and one mother. But the main reason is that this is part of honoring our parents after they are deceased.
From Me'am Lo'ez: *"A person must honor his parents even after they are dead. if he mentions them or says something in their name during the first twelve months after their death he should add: hareni kaparat mishkabo ('I'm the atonement for their resting place'). Indicating his readiness to accept any retribution destined to be meted out to the parent. After the twelve moths are over one should say: zikhrono librakha lechaye ha'olam habba "May his or her memory be for a blessing in life in the future world". One should do this when mentioning his parents in speech or in writing".*

More examples:

When we do the keri'a -tearing apart our clothing in sign of mourning- for any other relative we cut our right side. But for our parents we cut on our left side, specifically because that is the side of the heart.

For our parents we keep 12 months of full mourning, while for every other relative we mourn for 30 days.

When a holiday cancels out the mourning, one can shave even before 30 days are over. Except for our parents that the 30 days have to be actually counted before shaving.

Read about the book Me'am Lo'ez in Wikipedia (notice that the author's name have been mistransliterated: It is Ya'akob "KHOLI"). http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meam_Loez

Rabbi Yosef Bitton. YMJC | 130 Steamboat Rd. | Great Neck | NY | 11024