

Home of Peace Cemetery Association

Questions and Answers

4/15/2016

Membership

- Q. How much does it cost to buy a plot?
A. It doesn't work that way. Home of Peace is a cemetery association, begun as a benevolent society. Members pay an initiation fee and annual dues, which entitle them to burial in the cemetery. Members do not actually own a specific plot.
- Q. OK, so how much does it cost to join?
A. Your initiation fee is based on your age. The older you are, the more it costs to join. Anyone under 30 can join for free. Please refer to the current [fee chart](#).
- Q. How much are the annual dues?
A. As of 2013 they are \$100 per year per family.
- Q. When do I pay my dues?
A. Upon receipt of your yearly statement, typically sent out in January.
- Q. Do the initiation fees have to be paid in a lump sum?
A. Yes, in order to be considered a member in good standing. However, the Board of Trustees can make special arrangements, if necessary.
- Q. What happens if I fall behind in paying my dues?
A. Members in arrears for more than two years are no longer considered members in good standing.
- Q. If I'm already a member, do my kids need to join also?
A. Not until they are self-supporting.
- Q. Can anyone join the cemetery?
A. The Home of Peace Cemetery Association is a Jewish cemetery. Anyone interested in promoting the Jewish faith may join.
- Q. What if I join and then move away and decide to be buried elsewhere?
A. There are no refunds if you decide to be buried elsewhere.
- Q. What other costs can I expect at the time of my death?
A. Membership provides only burial space. Your family will choose a funeral home to arrange for a casket and other services. Fees for opening and closing the grave will vary depending on the services requested. The rabbi's fees are arranged privately between you and the rabbi.
- Q. Do my spouse and I both have to join?
A. Membership includes you, your spouse and your minor children who are not self-supporting. As a couple in good standing you get one vote at the annual meeting.

- Q. Is the Home of Peace Cemetery Association affiliated with any particular synagogue?
A. No. The Home of Peace Cemetery Association functions as a separate association from any temple or synagogue.
- Q. If I'm already a member, can I add my parents?
A. They can join if they choose, paying the standard fee based on their age.
- Q. Can my spouse and I reserve a specific burial space?
A. If an immediate family member is already interred, adjoining space can be reserved, if available. Again, you do not purchase a plot.
- Q. Do my kids keep paying dues for me after my spouse and I are both deceased?
A. No. Once you and your spouse are both buried, dues are no longer required. However, endowments are always welcomed.
- Q. What happens if a non-member chooses to be buried in the cemetery?
A. There is a non-member fee, currently \$5400 per person.
- Q. Is there a Chevra Kadisha society available in Tacoma?
A. At this time, only in Olympia and Seattle.
- Q. What is the annual meeting for?
A. As required by the [bylaws](#), the Board of Trustees presents annual reports to the membership, members have the opportunity to ask questions and voice their comments and concerns, and the membership elects trustees.
- Q. Are donations tax deductible?
A. Yes. The Home of Peace Cemetery Association is a 501(c)(13) non-profit entity
- Q. Who runs the day-to-day operations of the cemetery?
A. The Board of Trustees serves on a volunteer basis. They arrange for lawn mowing, irrigation, security and improvements and repairs at the cemetery as needed.
- Q. What do I do if I see a problem at the cemetery?
A. [Contact](#) any board member. If you see vandalism or inappropriate activity, please contact the Lakewood Police, (253) 830-5000.
- Q. Can anyone join the Board of Trustees?
A. New trustees are always welcome, as long as they are members in good standing. Trustees are elected at the annual meeting and the president can fill vacancies during the year.
- Q. Is there a listing of burials?
A. Burial information through 1999 for genealogy researchers is available at <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=76861&CScn=Home+of+peace&CScntry=4&CSst=50&> and also at <http://www.jgsws.org/cemeteryproject.php>

Cemetery Grounds

Q. Are headstones required?

A. Yes. Typically headstones are unveiled one year after death, signifying the end of the mourning period.

Q. Is any special wording required?

A. Your rabbi or monument company can help you choose words and a design appropriate for use in a Jewish cemetery. (Only Jewish or secular symbols or wording are allowed.) Typically your rabbi also will check Hebrew spelling.

Q. Are flat headstones required?

A. No. Currently, upright headstones are allowed.

Q. Does the cemetery association contract with a monument company?

A. No. You are free to choose any company you wish. Some of our members prefer Pacific Coast Memorials in Everett, WA at 425-348-9868 (www.pacificcoastmemorials.com). They provide service directly to families and will come to your home if you wish. Premier Memorial (formerly Tacoma Monument) also has served the Tacoma area for a long time but only provides service through a funeral home, not directly with the family.

Q. Who arranges for the tombstone unveiling?

A. You do, along with your rabbi, if you choose. Please inform the cemetery association of your plans.

Q. May I place fresh flowers on my family member's grave?

A. Traditionally, Jewish cemeteries are seen as a place of mourning and flowers are not appropriate. A pebble placed on the monument is used instead to remember your visit. Pebbles are available in two containers near the front of the cemetery. Our grounds keeping contract does not include removal of flowers.

Q. Can I plant a tree or bush next to my family member's headstone?

A. Plantings must not interfere with lawn mowing. Any plantings will be subject to the 3 inch height of the mower. However, trees and bushes for other areas of the cemetery may be donated, in conjunction with our landscape architect's site plan, and at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Before anything is planted at the cemetery, permission must first be obtained from the Board of Trustees. (See Home Of Peace Policy #1.) Our Policies Manual is posted on our web site.

Q. What are the water faucets for?

A. Hand-washing stations have been provided for your use as you exit the cemetery. Jewish tradition holds that washing your hands when leaving the cemetery prevents the Angel of Death from following you.

Q. Can anyone visit the cemetery and walk around or take pictures?

A. Signs are posted to the effect that the cemetery is private property, reserved for the use of our members.

Q. When are the cemetery gates open?

A. The gates are on an automatic timer, opening at dawn and closing at dusk. If the gates are closed when you arrive, there is a keypad on the right side of the driveway. Enter the four- digit code (contact any board trustee) and the gates will swing open into the cemetery. If you are in the cemetery after dusk and the gates are closed, slowly drive near the white curb stripe on the right side as you approach the gates (look for the reflective marker) and proceed, stopping about 10-15 feet away from the gates. A sensor will open the gates automatically, swinging into the cemetery.

Q. How do I find a specific grave?

A. Contact any member of the Board of Trustees for more information. Row markers have recently been added to assist you. (Also, see "Is there a listing of burials?" above.)

History

Q. How old is the cemetery?

A. The First Hebrew Benevolent Society was established in 1888. The society provided loans and aid to those in need. A separate group of three trustees was responsible for the Home of Peace Cemetery. The society was incorporated in 1891.

Q. Where were pioneer Jews buried before that?

A. In Tumwater, near Olympia, as early as 1872.

Q. How big is the cemetery land?

A. The association owns more than eight acres, two of which are currently in use.

Q. How many people are buried there?

A. As of 2012, just under 800.

Q. How fast is the cemetery growing?

A. For the first 110 years the cemetery averaged five or six burials per year. Over the past five years that number has doubled.

Q. Is the smaller cemetery on the corner older?

A. Actually, it is newer, established in 1914. The two merged in 1979.

Future

Q. Are there any long-range improvement plans?

A. As always, continued development of additional burial space is needed. Maintenance of trees, fences and irrigation systems is ongoing.