

# Home of Peace Cemetery Association

## Questions and Answers

4/1/2024

### 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 2020 they are \$120 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, as defined in by our [bylaws](#).
- Q. If I'm already a member, do my kids need to join also?  
A. Yes, when they are adults or self-supporting, as defined by our [bylaws](#).
- 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, but your support helps provide for the cemetery maintenance.
- 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, which can often be around ten thousand dollars. Fees for opening and closing the grave will vary depending on the services requested, but are about two thousand dollars. Clergy fees are arranged privately.
- Q. Do my spouse and I both have to join?  
A. Membership includes a married couple and your 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 I have to pay annual dues throughout my life?  
A. I Yes. However, you can choose to make a lump-sum payment, if you wish, based on your age.
- 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, plus burial costs.
- 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](#), to provide annual reports, to elect trustees and to give members an opportunity for communication.
- Q. How will I know when the annual meeting is scheduled?  
A. The date, time and location are typically included on your annual dues statement, or sent in a separate mailing at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- Q. Are donations tax deductible?  
A. As a 501 (c) (13), initiation fees and annual dues are **not** deductible. Donations made which are voluntary, made to and for the use of the cemetery and are irrevocably dedicated to the care of the cemetery **are** deductible.
- Q. Who runs the day-to-day operations of the cemetery?  
A. The [Board of Trustees](#) as elected at the annual meeting, serve on a volunteer basis. They arrange for lawn mowing, irrigation, security and improvements and repairs 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 feel free to contact the police.
- 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 for genealogy researchers is available on the website: <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/76861/home-of-peace-cemetery>

## **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 or pictures appropriate for use in a Jewish cemetery. (Christian symbols are not allowed.) Typically your rabbi also will check Hebrew spelling.

Q. Are headstones required to be flat?

A. No. Headstones may be your choice of upright or flat

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

A. No. You are free to choose any company you wish, or work with your funeral home representative. Edgewood Monuments in Puyallup has an online catalog at <http://edgewoodmonuments.com>

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. No. However, the cost of trees and bushes for other areas of the cemetery may be donated, in conjunction with our landscape architect's site plan, at the discretion of the board of trustees.

Q. What are the water faucets for?

A. Hand-washing stations have been provided for your use as you exit the cemetery.

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 its members.

Q. When is the gate open?

A. The gate is on an automatic timer, opening at dawn and closing at dusk.

Q. What do I do if I come to the cemetery to visit and the gates are closed?

A. There is a keypad on the right side of the driveway, just before the gate. Enter the four-digit code and the gates will swing open, into the cemetery.

Q. How do I get out if the gates are closed?

A. Drive slowly toward the gate, stopping about 10-15 feet away. A sensor on the gate will open it automatically. Remember that the two parts of the gate will swing in toward you, so don't pull up too close.

Q. How do I find a specific grave?

A. Contact any member of the board of trustees for more information.

## **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 over eight acres, two of which are currently in use.

Q. How many people are buried there?

A. As of 2020, just under 800.

Q. How fast is the cemetery growing?

A. The cemetery averages five or six burials per year.

Q. Is the smaller cemetery on the corner older?

A. It actually is newer, established in 1914. The two were merged in 1979.

## **Future**

Q. Are there any long-range improvement plans?

A. The Board of Trustees will develop additional burial space as needed. Maintenance of trees, fences, irrigation systems, and roadways is ongoing.