

Temple Beth Hatfiloh Cemetery

The Temple Beth Hatfiloh cemetery is the oldest Jewish cemetery in Washington State. Established in 1874, the cemetery was established by the Hebrew Benevolent Society of Puget Sound (HBS), the first Jewish communal organization in Washington, and predates TBH by 63 years.

At the time of the establishment of the cemetery, the HBS purchased 3 acres of land from the local Masonic Lodge. In the 1920s, the HBS deeded back to the Masons all but .4 of an acre, to be maintained in perpetuity as a Jewish cemetery.



During the 1950s the HBS disbanded and transferred responsibility for the cemetery to Temple Beth Hatfiloh, which had been established in 1937. Subsequently, an additional section of the Masonic cemetery was purchased for use by the Jewish community.

TBH currently maintains two cemeteries for use:

- The **TBH Historic Cemetery** is for exclusively Jewish burial.
- The **TBH Family Cemetery** is for burial of Jews and their non-Jewish partners.

Both are located within the grounds of the Masonic Memorial Park, off North Street in Tumwater. Currently TBH works in partnership with the Masonic Memorial Park for the care and maintenance of this sacred space.

TO PURCHASE CEMETERY PLOTS

All sales of cemetery plots are handled through Temple Beth Hatfiloh. Once payment is made to TBH, a deed will be issued by Masonic Memorial Park. Purchase and use of plots in the TBH cemeteries are subject to all rules and regulations as established by the TBH Cemetery Committee and Board of Directors. Cemetery rules are found on the opposite side of the page. For more information, contact the TBH Office at tbh@bethhatfiloh.org or (360) 754-8519.

Rabbi Seth Goldstein is available to answer questions regarding Jewish burial practice, eligibility for burial, etc. and can be reached at rabbi@bethhatfiloh.org. Plots are available for advance purchase in either cemetery, and payment plans may be available at the discretion of the Cemetery Committee.

Costs per plot for either cemetery (as of January 1, 2018) are as follows:

- **\$1,800** for members of Temple Beth Hatfiloh (price rising to \$1800 on July 1, 2018)
- **\$3,600** for non-members who are residents of Thurston, Mason, Lewis and Grays Harbor Counties
- **\$5,400** for non-members from other locations

Rates dependent on membership status and geographic area of the deceased at the time of death. One must be a member of TBH in good standing for at least one year to be eligible for the member rate. The member rate applies to TBH members and dependent children; non-member life-partners of TBH members and other family members must pay the non-member rate. Members not in good standing and former members must pay the non-member rate. All cemetery plot sales are subject to approval by the TBH Cemetery Committee.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The above fees are for plot purchases ONLY. At the time of burial you will also incur charges from the Masonic Memorial Park (for opening and closing of the gravesite) and the funeral home you choose to use (for preparation, transportation, coffin, and other related costs) that are unrelated to the plot purchase and not managed by Temple Beth Hatfiloh. Traditional Jewish burial preparation (*Chevra Kadisha*) is arranged through TBH by donation.



Temple Beth Hatfiloh Cemetery Rules

- TBH owns and operates the Temple Beth Hatfiloh Historic Cemetery and the Temple Beth Hatfiloh Family Cemetery for the benefit of the South Sound Jewish community. The cemeteries are located within the Masonic Memorial Park at Cleveland Avenue and North Street in Tumwater.
- Only Jews may be buried in the Historic Cemetery. You are Jewish if your mother or father, or both, by birth or adoption, are Jewish and you affirm your Jewishness through positive acts of Jewish identity, or if you have been converted to Judaism by an ordained Rabbi.
- Jews, their non-Jewish life partners and immediate family members may be buried in the Family Cemetery.
- Cemetery plots will be sold at two rates—Member and non-Member—dependent on the status of the deceased. The “Member rate” applies to Members in good standing of TBH and minor children. The “Non-Member rate” applies to everyone else, including life partners and other immediate family members of Members. In addition, there will be two “Non-Member rates,” dependent on geography (one rate for those whose last living location was Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason or Thurston Counties; and one rate for everyone else).
- The Member rate for a cemetery plot is available only to those who have been TBH members in good standing for a minimum of one year, or as approved by the Cemetery Committee.
- Cemetery plots are available for pre-purchase, and one may enter into a payment plan with terms set with the Cemetery Committee. Full payment is required at the time the plot is to be used. If a Member in an active payment plan is no longer in good standing, or resigns from the congregation, they are then required to pay the Non-Member rate.
- Plot purchase must be finalized prior to any burial taking place.
- TBH will purchase back, at the original purchase price, burial plots offered for sale. Plots may not be independently sold to a third party.
- At the beginning of each fiscal year, or at other times as warranted, the Cemetery Committee will present to the Board for approval a rate schedule. This information, along with procedures for how to purchase cemetery plots, will be published in a document available to the community.
- The family of the deceased is obligated to place a permanent marker or headstone at the grave within one year of use of the plot. There shall be no display or placement of non-Judaic religious symbols on the marker in either cemetery.
- Services conducted in TBH cemeteries if not of Jewish character shall be religiously neutral. Non-Jewish religious services for those interred in the cemeteries may be held on other premises.
- Jewish religious custom and practice calls for prompt interment of remains of Jewish deceased. Cremation and inurnment are not part of Jewish tradition and are prohibited in the Historic Cemetery and discouraged in the Family Cemetery. Application of Jewish funeral practices for those who have been cremated will be at the discretion of the Rabbi.
- No burials may take place on Shabbat or Jewish holidays without express permission of the Rabbi or his/her designee.
- Interpretation of the rules regarding eligibility for burial in the cemeteries, membership qualifications or other issues is the prerogative of the Rabbi of Temple Beth Hatfiloh. The Rabbi is to be notified of any burials, unveiling ceremonies or other uses of the TBH cemeteries whether or not he/she is the officiating clergy.
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