

HOPEFIELD (Hoffnungsfeld) CEMETERY
Owned by
SWISS MENNONITE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



Cemetery Guidelines

The Hopefield (Hoffnungsfeld) Cemetery located west of Moundridge, KS near the site of the Hopefield Church is the historical burial place for the Swiss Volhynian Mennonites and others who migrated to the area in 1874 and later. It is located on a tract in the NE corner of the SW quarter of section 19 in township 21 of McPherson County. The cemetery was the only Mennonite cemetery west of Moundridge until the dedication of the new Eden Church cemetery in 1924. A large percentage of the original immigrants and pioneer families are buried there. In 1999, the cemetery became the property of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association (SMCHA), and it is being preserved as a historical site as well as an active cemetery.

The cemetery provides a final resting place with pleasant rural surroundings. The SMCHA Board would invite people who live in the area, as well as those who have roots here but have lived their lives elsewhere, and those who are contemplating a pleasant final resting-place to consider the Historical Hopefield (Hoffnungsfeld) Cemetery.

CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

Management of the Cemetery will be the responsibility of the Board and Trustees of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association (herein referred to as SMCHA or the Board). The Board will be responsible for the development and implementation of all policies relating to the cemetery.

The Board is responsible for establishing cemetery fees. These would include plot ownership fees, grave opening fees, and others as needed. Fees may be adjusted for persons with special needs or unique circumstances. The SMCHA Board reserves the right to make changes in the burial policy and fees as needed. This could include but is not limited to such things as headstone requirements, grave opening fees, etc.

The Board is responsible for appointing or hiring persons to care for and maintain the cemetery. Perpetual care will include mowing the grass, filling in settlings around gravesites, maintaining monuments that are properly placed, caring for any approved plants, and associated tasks. Interest monies earned from the investment of cemetery endowment funds and supplemented from other sources will finance perpetual care of the cemetery. All user fees will go into the cemetery endowment fund.

PURCHASE OF CEMETERY PLOTS

Cemetery plots may be purchased at the time of death or before death if desired. Plots may be purchased individually or in pairs for the use of married couples. Upon purchase of a plot, SMCHA will issue a certificate in the name of the intended user or users. Each certificate is good for 20 years from the date of issue; at that time an extension will be granted at no additional charge at the request of the certificate holder. The Board is responsible to contact the certificate holder before the 20-year expiration date. A burial certificate is not transferable except with the written permission of the SMCHA Board.

The location of plots may be assigned at the time of death or at the request of the certificate holder. No specific plots may be reserved in areas other than the active rows. In the event that the certificate holder chooses to be buried elsewhere, the certificate reverts back to SMCHA, and the plot may be resold.

The purchase of cemetery lots is open to anyone.

CREMATION

Cremated ashes will not require a vault. However, all plot costs and marker requirements will remain the same. The burial of cremated remains from two persons may be placed in one cemetery plot. Dual burials shall be limited to those living as married couples. Some vacant plots in the cemetery would be suitable for cremated remains and could be purchased at a reduced cost (see costs below). Ashes may be spread over the cemetery at no cost if no marker is erected. See the Sexton for burial details.

CEMETERY PLOT LAYOUT

Burial plots in the cemetery are 5 feet wide by 12 feet long. Starting with row AA, in order to keep the graves in line and orderly, when staking out a new plot, it should be measured from the row stone. (Row stones are the limestone posts along the north edge of the cemetery.) The north side of plot 1 row AA and all succeeding rows will begin at the south edge of the row stone and the west edge or top of the plot should extend one foot and 6 inches west of the west edge of the row stone. When staking out plot 1, the sexton shall measure south 2 feet and 6 inches from the south edge of the row stone. This will be the center of the first plot. Each succeeding plot will be on five-foot centers. When marking a grave to be dug, the flags should be set at 48" X 8' and the flags opposite the marker should be at the bottom of the plot.

The head stone should be lined up as close as possible with the row stone. If a mausoleum type vault is used for burial, the top of the grave should be one foot east of the top of the plot.

GRAVE MARKERS

All graves must be marked with a permanent marker. Grave markers must be placed on a permanent base that is to be at ground level and made of reinforced concrete at least 8 inches thick. The concrete base must be 8 inches larger than the grave marker in all directions with footings that extend below the frost level or below the level of the disturbed soil. An appropriate footing for a grave marker placed on undisturbed soil would be an 8-10 inch posthole drilled to below frost level (at least 30 inches) and filled with concrete. In the case of disturbed soil the post holes must be drilled to a depth of 6 inches beyond the depth of the disturbed soil and filled with concrete. The anchors would need to be placed every two linear feet. Thus it would take 3 anchors for a 6-7 foot headstone base. If the base is wider than 30 inches the anchors would need to be placed in tandem. All anchors must be tied together with rebar.

The distance between the concrete headstone base and the right or left boundary of the burial plot must be at least 6 inches. The base concrete may extend to the property line at the top of the plot. A double plot occupied by or to be occupied by a husband and wife will be treated as a single entity.

New graves may not be capped or outlined with anything that is not flush with the ground. All new graves must have a cement box or vault that will prevent settling of the grave. Prior to placement, either the sexton or the Board must approve all markers. Mausoleum type vaults are permitted.

DECORATION OF GRAVES

Decoration of the graves is welcomed and encouraged. However, decorations placed on graves at Memorial Day must be removed within two weeks to facilitate mowing. Decorations at other times may be placed there at the peril of the mower's schedule.

SEXTON

The Board's official representative to the cemetery is the Sexton. His duty is to keep all cemetery records including those of burials and plot holder certificates. He must be available to meet with families to show them burial sites. He will be responsible to stake out graves for digging, to be certain that graves are properly closed, and to stake out locations for monuments. **No graves sites may be staked or monument locations marked without the approval of the Sexton or his representative.**

The sexton will do a periodic survey of the cemetery and notify the board of anything that needs attention.

The sexton is responsible for identifying expired plot certificates. The sexton makes certain that the rules and guidelines established by the board are carried out.

CEMETERY LOT PRICING (February 14, 2015)

The cost of a cemetery plot for a single unmarried individual is \$350. The cost of cemetery plots for a married couple is \$600. If the couple chooses to be cremated, they may choose to be buried in a single plot or two adjoining plots. Certificates will be issued for all plots purchased. The name of the intended user must be listed on the plot certificate.

Some vacant plots in the cemetery would be suitable for cremated remains and could be purchased at a reduced cost. Currently these are priced at 75% of the full price as listed above. If interested, contact the Sexton or a SMCHA board member for details.

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association reserves the right to change these guidelines without notice.

Updated March 2015