Also see <a href="http://www.genealoj.org/ENtexte/page08.html" target="_blank">Cercle de Genealogie Juive - JGS cemetery information</a>. The burial register of the cemetery, beginning with the year 1753, contains the records of 5588 tombs. [August 2009]

Cemetery: One of the largest Jewish cemeteries in Alsace (presently in the département of Bas-Rhin in eastern France), the cemetery lies between beautiful agricultural lands and forests near Rosenwiller, a small village about a twenty-minute drive from Strasbourg, 25 km SW. In its heyday the cemetery served dozens of communities and is estimated to be the last resting place for about six thousand Jews. Except for the one or two Jewish families who ran the cemetery no Jewish community in the village of Rosenwiller ever existed. The adjacent village, less than two kilometers from Rosenwiller, is Rosheim, famous in Jewish history because of one of its former inhabitants, Josel (Joseph) ben Gershon (ca. 1478-1554), the most well known communal representative of medieval German Jewry. The Rosenwiller Jewish Cemetery, founded in the late fourteenth century, contains graves of Jews from several villages in Lower-Alsace, which had no cemeteries of their own (Balbronn, Baldenheim, Barr, Bergheim, Biesheim, Bischheim, Bischofsheim, Bonhomme, Brumath, Busswiller, Dambach, Dangolsheim, Diebolsheim, Dinsheim, Dornach, Duppigheim, Duttenheim, Ekbolsheim, Epernay, Epfig, Ettingen, Fegersheim, Genêve, Grusenheim, Gunstett, Kaysersberg, Kolbsheim, Krautergersheim, Kuttpilsheim, Lingolsheim, Molsheim, Mutzig, Niedernai, Obernai, Oberschaffolsheim, Osthoffen, Ottrott, Rosenwiller, Rosheim, Saint-Dié Sarreguemines, Schaffolsheim, Scharachbergheim, Schirmeck, Soultz, Stotzheim, Strasbourg, Traenheim, Vauf, and Zellwiller). Rosenwiller cemetery was in use at least from the middle of the seventeenth century, although no tombstones from its first decades have been found thus far. It is possible that the first "gravestones" were actually made of wood, and therefore did not survive. The burial registry of the cemetery, beginning on 1753, contains records of some five thousand tombs. The late Robert Weyl published (Strasbourg 1988) with pictures and inscriptions of some 50 graves in his book Le Cimetière Juif de Rosenwiller. The burial register of the cemetery, beginning with the year 1753, contains the records of some 5588 graves. One of the most ancient Jewish burying grounds of Alsace, the site was not destroyed or vandalized and is permanently opened and maintained by the village of Rosenwiller. Most stones on which the writing is extant and decipherable date from the nineteenth century onward. The cemetery is still used, albeit rarely: about one or two people have been buried at Rosenwiller each year during the last few decades. As of March 2003, the last grave dates from 2000.

Responsible for the site: M. Rolf BAER in Molsheim - T: 03 88 38 66 10 / Fax: 03 88 48 89 84 [January 2008]

[UPDATE] Mystery Among the Tombstones: "Women's Commandments" in Early-Modern Ashkenazi Culture [May 2015]

Photos courtesy <a href="mailto:Marie-Nicolas.Huot@orange.fr">Nicolas Huot</a> [May 2015]

{gallery}WesternEurope/France/Rosenwiller{/gallery}