

Mount Hope Cemetery: (Jewish Sections) {indexed} Located at southern edge of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus, Mount Hope lies in both Urbana and Champaign, but most Jewish burials are in the Champaign section. Mount Hope Cemetery is located at 611 E Pennsylvania Avenue in Champaign Illinois.

In addition to the 306 burials identified in the Jewish sections in November 1999, Mount Hope Cemetery contains several thousand non-Jewish burials. The non-Jewish sections are owned and operated by a commercial organization, which also provides grounds maintenance for the Jewish sections. A Jewish community has resided in the twin cities of Champaign and Urbana since about 1854. Members of Ahavat Achim ("Brotherly Love"), a memorial society organized in October 1867 in Champaign, operated a Jewish cemetery in Urbana from 1870 to 1899. Ahavat Achim merged in March 1887 with Grand Prairie Lodge 281 of B'nai B'rith, which itself was organized in 1877. In November 1898, the B'nai B'rith Lodge proposed replacing the Urbana cemetery with a Jewish section within Mount Hope Cemetery in Champaign. On 14 March 1899, 21 8-plot lots were purchased from Mount Hope. Mount Hope Cemetery records indicate that fifteen of the burials in this new section were re-burials from the old Urbana cemetery. After all were moved to Mount Hope, the old Urbana cemetery was closed.

Since about 1950, the Jewish sections of Mount Hope have been owned and operated by Sinai Temple (organized in 1904 as Sinai Congregation of Urbana and Champaign). (3104 W Windsor Rd, Champaign IL 61822, (217-352-8140) and managed by the Sinai Temple Cemetery Committee. Congregations using Mount Hope include Sinai Temple, Congregation B'nai Israel (active between 1912 and 1954), and the University of Illinois Hillel Foundation (active since 1923). Submitted by Richard Allen Avner, 2413 Branch Rd., Champaign IL 61822-7626; phone (217) 352-6889; e-mail a-avner@uiuc.edu