



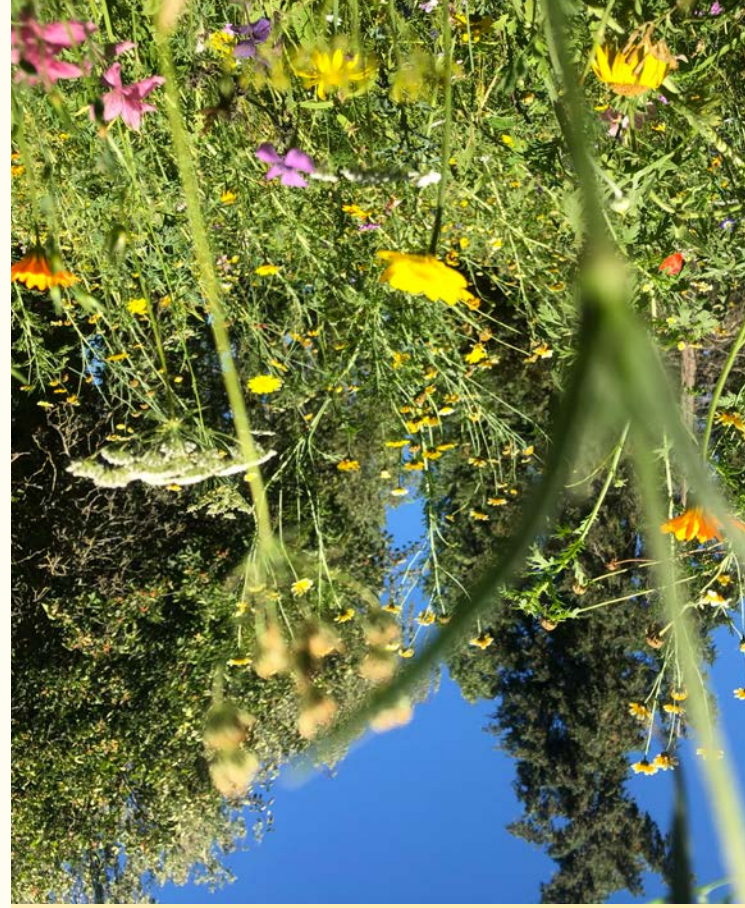
# ASSISTENS CEMETERY



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**Free, guided tours of Assistens Cemetery**  
Every year from April to September there are free guided tours for the public in Assistens Cemetery. Separate tours can be booked for groups all year round. Scan the code at the bottom of the page to read more about conditions, times and themes.

**Download the app and get a digital tour**  
Embark on a tour precisely when it suits you. Download the free app and read the fascinating stories to make it easy to navigate among the tombstones on your own. You can find the app ARTOUR where you normally get your apps. Search at *assistens* when you have installed it. There is also an English language version.



**Variegated townscape with many different trees**  
At Assistens Cemetery there is a great variety of trees, plants and flowers. This diversity is due to the fact that that over the centuries lot owners have planted both native and imported species. Another cause is that already in the 1980s the city council discontinued the use of pesticides in the cemetery – to the benefit of both humans and insects.

In spring 2022 a small area in Section 1 was devoted to wild flowers, thus providing nourishment and shelter for insects and something beautiful for visitors to look at. The flower meadow is a trial set to run until 2024 while we gather experience of flower species and the site.

## Assistens Cemetery

For more than 250 years Copenhageners have buried their dead in Assistens Cemetery. And all that time the place has been full of life. 200 years ago Copenhageners also took their Sunday walks here and sat down with their picnic baskets – and their aquavit. Today it's more likely to be coffee, and an entire urban district has grown up around the site. The number of visitors has increased to more than two million annually, and it would seem that there has been a corresponding growth in the local inhabitants' affection for the place. Nonetheless, the cemetery remains basically unchanged. It is still both a deeply personal site of remembrance for those who have lost loved ones and also an extensive collective resource for all others.

Assistens Cemetery has many attractions: the relative quiet in the midst of a hectic town, the old trees and bushes, the pulse of history from the ancient tombstones and the names of the famous dead. Here there is room for the reflection invited by the presence of the dead and the meeting with our own transience. This is what the graveyard is for, a special place for grief and the grieving – not as a contrast to the life of the place but a defining feature. A stroll through Assistens Cemetery is not like a walk in the park: there is always an existential dimension. As the poet Klaus Høeck puts it on one of the churchyard's artworks, Megaron:  
What are you seeking here/ where life has become stone / find your own death



## Assistens Cemetery from 1760 to the present day

- 1760** The churchyard is taken into use in what is Section A today. It is governed by five churches and two institutions for paupers, each of which is assigned a lot, and for many years the cemetery functions as a graveyard for the poor.
- 1785** Johan Samuel Augustin is the first person of substance to be buried in the churchyard.
- 1802** The cemetery is extended in the years 1802-06 with an area corresponding to Sections B-G. Copenhagen's at that time longest wall is erected towards Nørrebrogade. Catholics and the congregations of the German and French Reformed Churches are given their own areas.
- 1805** Interments inside churches are forbidden leading to a strong demand from the wealthy who could afford large tombstones for burial places in Assistens Cemetery.
- 1808** The sexton's house by Nørrebros Runddel is erected. It is today the oldest building in Nørrebro.
- 1811** Von Scholten's mausoleum – the cemetery's first and only memorial of that kind – is erected in Section D.
- 1828** The cemetery is expanded again. The expansions, which comprise the present-day Hans Tavsens Park, continue until 1864.
- 1851** Burials within Copenhagen's ramparts are prohibited.
- 1853** The cholera epidemic kills 5000 Copenhageners, many of whom are buried in Assistens Cemetery.
- 1860** For long periods in the 19th century there are quite chaotic conditions in Assistens Cemetery. When the Municipality of Copenhagen takes over the administration of the cemetery in 1860, this proves to be the first step towards the liquidation of the so-called "Gravedigger Rule" and the establishment of more regulated conditions.
- 1867** The chapel, designed by architects J.D. Herholdt and Valdemar Ingemann is built.
- 1880** The wall towards Jagtvej is erected and the following year the missing section of wall towards Kapelvej is added.
- 1892** Cremation is legalised in Denmark. Henceforth the deceased begin to arrive in the cemetery not only in coffins but also in urns.
- 1907** The cemetery yields land for the establishment of Hans Tavsens Park.
- 1938** The first section reserved only for urns is established, and it becomes possible to purchase lots of 1m<sup>2</sup> for the interment of urns instead of the larger and more expensive lots for coffins.
- 1950** The cemetery's first communal grave for urns – also called "The Grave of the Unknown" – is established. In such lots the urns are buried close to one another, at present 9 per lot, and there are no tombstones. Today these communal repositories for the ashes of the deceased constitute Copenhageners' preferred form of burial.
- 1951** The City Council repeals a decision from 1879 decreeing that Assistens Cemetery shall be reconstituted as a park in 1980. Now the Cemetery will not be closed down until 2020. This decision is changed once more in 1989.
- 1979** The chapel ceases to function as the setting for funerals. Today the building serves as a meeting-place for the society Turning Tables, which works to strengthen young people through music, films and photography.
- 1985** The cemetery's many old graves are reviewed by experts. Almost 1,900 plots are deemed to be of such culture-historical interest that they should be preserved. A restoration workshop is installed in the chapel.
- 1989** The City Council adopts a plan prolonging the lifetime of the cemetery to 2150 and dividing it into an active part and a more recreative and cultural-historically oriented part.
- 1997** Cycling is now permitted on Poppelallé. It is also permitted to cycle on a route across the cemetery.
- 2008** To meet a marked and steadily growing trend towards a romantic approach to nature a new form of burial is introduced with the Malus Section, in which urns are buried beneath apple trees.
- 2009** Construction of a metro station at the corner of Nørrebros Runddel begins. In this connection archeologists excavate more than 2300 individuals. They are all reinterred in Section E.
- 2013** A special section for "People of the Street" (the homeless) is established.
- 2015** Assistens Cemetery is listed in order to preserve the cemetery as an integral whole: a historical and working cemetery and a recreative area. The cemetery is still available for all who wish to be buried there.





## Interesting burial sites

| The deceased   | Plot   | The deceased   | Plot     |
|--|--------|--|----------|
| A1 Director and poet Peter Faber (1810-77)                 | A-58   | K2 Sisters from Den franske Skole ( -1945)                 | K-5-2-51 |
| A3 Composer Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832)                   | A-97   | K4 Architect Finn Juhl (1912-89)                           | K-300    |
| A9 Painter Christen Købke (1810-48)                        | A-315  | M2 Burial site for People of the Street (Gadens Folk)      | -        |
| A17 Philosopher Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-55)          | A-738  | N1 Writer Jakob Ejersbo (1968-2008)                        | Iris-48  |
| A25 Widow Gertrud Birgitte Bodenhoff (1779-98)             | A-1026 | N2 Rainbow burial plot                                     | N-625    |
| B4 Painter and author Hans Scherfig (1905-79)              | B-164  | N3 Entertainer Morten Lindberg (Master Fatman) (1965-2019) | N-180a   |
| B13 Writer Dan Turèll (1946-93)                            | B-333b | P1 Writer H.C. Andersen (1805-75)                          | P-513    |
| B16 Pianist and composer Thomas Koppel (1944-2006)         | B-1109 | P6 Sculptor Sonja Ferlov Mancoba (1911-84)                 | P-994    |
| B21 Poet Benny Andersen (1929-2018)                        | B-917  | Q2 Actor and artist Emilie Sannom (1886-1931)              | Q-977    |
| B22 Writer Vita Andersen (1942-2021)                       | B-1074 | Q3 Historian Astrid Friis (1893-1966)                      | Q-1070   |
| E4 Politician Mathilde Hauschultz (1885-1929)              | E-325  | Q6 Physicist Niels Bohr (1885-1962)                        | Q-1233   |
| E7 Writer Anne Marie "madam" Mangor (1781-1865)            | E-554  | R1 Pianist, and composer Karen Jønsson (1909-42)           | R-59     |
| E9 Physicist and chemist Hans Christian Ørsted (1777-1851) | E-1009 | R5 Jazz tenor saxophonist Ben Webster (1909-73)            | R-660    |
| H2 Writer Martin Andersen Nexø (1869-1954)                 | H-211  | V1 Poet Michael Strunge (1958-86)                          | uV-15    |
| J4 Rapper, singer and songwriter Natasja Saad (1974-2007)  | J-21   |  |          |
| J5 Artist Jørn Larsen (1926-2004)                          | J-220  |  |          |