

GARDEN OF WOMEN

*A place of remembrance
with historic gravestones from
the graves of notable women
and a final resting place
for women*



What is the Garden of Women?

The Garden of Women is a memorial site where historical gravestones of important women are erected. Women can also be buried in the Garden of Women. A project that is unique in Europe.

Initiated and founded in autumn 2000 by Dr. Rita Bake with the participation of Dr. Silke Urbanski and Helga Diercks-Norden. The Garden of Woman is maintained, cared for, preserved and financed by the non-profit association Garden of Women e. V. It was founded for this purpose by the women mentioned above.

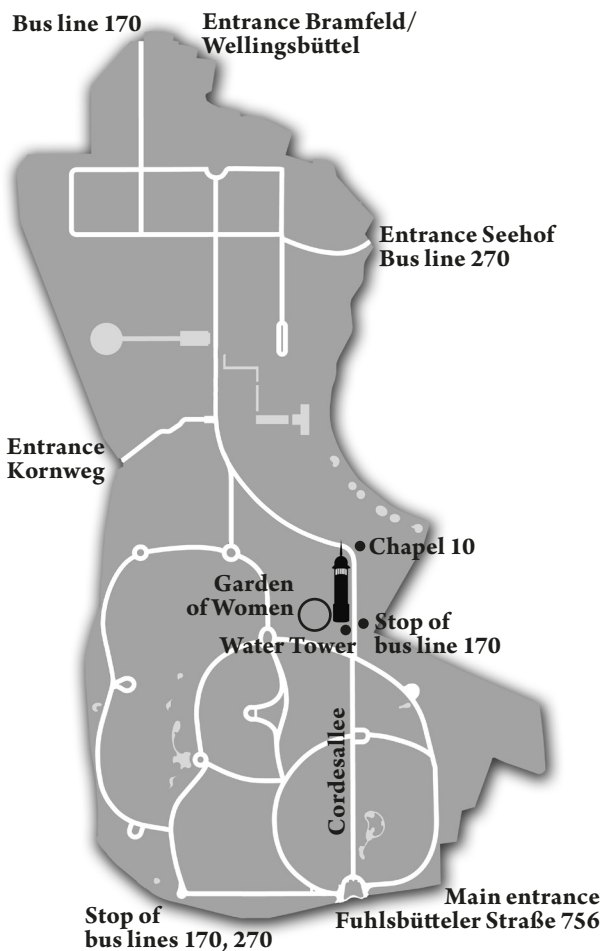
The Garden of Women was opened on July 1, 2001. The Garden of Women also wants to be a place where people can talk to each other about the deceased, but also reflect on their own life and death. The Garden of Women spreads out a carpet of remembrance, woven from thousands of threads of memory, which will never reach its completion. Because commemoration and remembrance know no end. Just as death has nothing final as long as it is accompanied by a companion called “memory.”

And so the Garden of Women makes tangible what the writer Thornton Wilder once said: “Between the realm of the dead and the living there is a bridge – love.”

Where is the Garden of Women?

The Garden of Women is located in the old part of the Ohlsdorf Cemetery near Cordes Allee by the historic water tower (stop on bus line 170) in the chapel area: Chapel 10, in a bright place surrounded by rhododendron bushes at (P 27).

How to find the Garden of Women



The Garden of Women

A continuously growing project

The Garden of Women is a “continuously growing project.” New historical gravestones are regularly relocated to the Garden of Women, and new memorial stones are erected. Ongoing research is conducted into notable women of Hamburg who were buried at Ohlsdorf Cemetery.

Information about guided tours of the Garden of Women

Guided tours of the Garden of Women take place on selected Sundays. Please refer to the Garden of Women’s website for tour dates.

Groups can arrange individual guided tours of the Garden of Women.

Contact: Sabine Rusch, Tel.: +49 (0)40 279 32 10

Email: Sabine-Rusch@t-online.de

Garden of Women website: www.garten-der-frauen.de

Here you will find all relevant information about the Garden of Women, as well as notices of events held in the garden. In addition, you can read short biographies of all the women whose historical gravestones have been relocated to the Garden of Women or for whom a memorial stone has been placed. The website contains all information in German.



Books about the Garden of Women

Two richly illustrated books provide information about the Garden of Women. In these two volumes (Volume 1 and Volume 2), you can, for example, read the detailed life stories of the women whose historical gravestones or memorial stones are located in the Garden of Women, or who were buried there as notable public figures.

These two books by Rita Bake, "The Garden of Women. A Place of Remembrance with Historic Gravestones from the Graves of Notable Women and a Final Resting Place for Women," Volume 1 (published in 2013) and Volume 2 can be purchased through the association at cost price: € 12.00 for Volume 1 and € 15.00 for Volume 2.

Volume 2 was published in August 2021 and includes, among other things, the life stories of those women whose historical gravestones and memorial stones were placed in the Garden of Women between 2014 and March 2021. All further biographies are published on our website www.garten-der-frauen.de. All publications are in German.

Publication "Remembrance"

This publication contains the 59 biographies of the women commemorated by the Garden of Women association through the sculpture installed in the information pavilion.

This publication by Rita Bake, "Remembrance," can be purchased through the association at cost price for €2.00.

Perpetual Calendar of the Garden of Women

This 26-page perpetual calendar of the Garden of Women, in DIN A4 format, features two color photographs from the garden for each month.

The calendar includes selected days of remembrance and the birthdays of the women whose historical gravestones and memorial stones are located in the Garden of Women, as well as the birthdays of the women buried in the Garden of Women whose short biographies can be found on the Garden of Women website. You may also add your own important dates to the calendar

The calendar can be purchased from the association at cost price for € 4.00 and can also be mailed upon request.

Fourteen elements

define the Garden of Women

Historical gravestones

They are distributed throughout the Garden of Women, with a greater concentration in the front area.

Remembrance Spiral

It is located to the right of the entrance to the Garden of Women.

Remembrance Column

It stands on the far left of the entrance, in close proximity to the sponsored grave monument.

Glass memorial cube

For the deceased infants and young children of forced laborers.

Memorial Stone: Killed because they were women

*Gertraud Bräuer, Anna Beuschel,
Frieda Roblick, Ruth Schult*

This stone commemorates four women who became victims of the serial killer Fritz Honka in the 1970s.

Memorial Roses

In the Garden of Women, two roses have been planted and named after the progressive educator, writer, and rose specialist **Alma de L'Aigle**, and the politician, author, and translator of gardening books **Anke Kuhbier**.

Installation dedicated to Lola Rogge

For the dance educator, choreographer and dancer Lola Rogge, the Garden of Women association relocated the hedge that once marked the boundary of the Garden of Women at the site of her former grave. This made it possible to integrate Lola Rogge's grave site into the Garden of Women.

This notable woman is now commemorated at this location by a box set into the lawn beneath the turf, covered with a glass pane. Inside the box, an image from the „Lübeck Dance of Death,“ the final work of this choreographer, can be viewed.

Communal burial areas

There are eleven communal burial areas, identifiable by stone waves set into the lawn. They are distributed throughout the Garden of Women and are designated for female members of the Garden of Women association who, during their lifetime, acquired this site as their final resting place.

Aluminum panels

Throughout the Garden of Women – often grouped together on stands in so-called ring binders – there are aluminum panels on which the short biographies of the women can be read.

Sponsored grave monument with blue glass panels

On the far left of the entrance to the Garden of Women stands a sponsored grave monument taken over by the Garden of Women association. The association equipped the monument with two blue glass panels, into which, from 2025 onward, the names of the women who have been buried in the Garden of Women for more than 25 years will be permanently inscribed.

Glass pavilion in Victorian style

This glass pavilion contains informational materials about the Garden of Women for visitors to take with them, such as invitations to events held in the Garden of Women, flyers, and maps.

Sculpture “Remembrance”

The sculpture “*Remembrance*,” created by sculptor Doris Waschk-Balz, stands in the information pavilion. With this sculpture, the Garden of Women association commemorates those women whose gravestones, for various reasons, could not be relocated to the Garden of Women.

In the base on which the sculpture stands, there are two drawers listing the names of these women and the locations of their graves. Their biographies can be read on the Garden of Women website as well as in the publication “*Remembrance*.”

“Fairy Tale Bench”

To the right of the entrance is a “Fairy Tale Bench.” On this two-seater bench, whose back is framed by a brick wall, visitors can sit down and read fairy tales and poems about life and death in a book provided there.

Garden design

The design of the Garden of Women is intended to make reflection on the essential aspects of life easy. Through its historical gravestones and the life stories of the women preserved on aluminum panels, the Garden of Women creates a bridge between life and death.

The carefully selected flowers and shrubs – often bearing symbolic meaning related to life and death and to women’s lives – the park benches, the entrance arches with their gilded finials, and the fountain emphasize the natural coexistence of this pairing: life and death.



Details on the Fourteen Elements

Historical gravestones

One form of immortal, eternal life is the remembrance of the dead.

The Garden of Women is intended to keep women who helped shape Hamburg's history in lasting memory. In contrast to the way notable male figures are treated – whose achievements are acknowledged, honored, and whose legacy is preserved – female figures are often quickly forgotten.

The Garden of Women association seeks to ensure that women's achievements remain part of society's collective memory. For this reason, it intervenes when the gravestones of notable women located in Ohlsdorf Cemetery are at risk of being disposed of. Once the period of use for graves has expired and no one pays the renewal fees, these burial plots are cleared and the gravestones destroyed.

Many gravestones of notable women at Ohlsdorf Cemetery have been and continue to be affected by such a fate. The Garden of Women association relocates these historical gravestones to the Garden of Women, thereby rescuing them from destruction.

Who is considered “notable”?

The criteria the Garden of Women association applies to the term “notable” are not the same as those commonly used today for the term “prominent.”

The Garden of Women features historical gravestones and memorial stones by and for women who, for example, were politically active, advocated for women's rights, worked in education with a humanitarian focus, were able to develop their artistic talents, achieved something extraordinary or bore heavy responsibilities through their energy and personal commitment, established themselves professionally in so-called male-dominated fields, engaged in charitable work,

or were victims of domestic violence, fought in the resistance during the Nazi era, or became victims of National Socialism.

Where are the historical gravestones located?

A large number of these historical gravestones of notable women are installed in a museum-like area near the entrance to the Garden of Women. Others are placed throughout the Garden of Women.

The life stories of the women can be read on aluminum panels displayed in “ring binders” mounted on stands throughout the Garden of Women.

The Remembrance Spiral

In order to keep alive the memory of those notable women of Hamburg whose gravestones at Ohlsdorf Cemetery had already been disposed of (with a few exceptions), or who had neither a gravestone nor a grave, or were buried anonymously, memorial stones were installed in the form of a spiral – a symbol of recurring life.

Some memorial stones are specially designed:

On the memorial stone for **Zitronenjette** and **Vogeljette**, a small lemon and a small dead sparrow made of sandstone are placed.

With **Erna Hoffmann**, the female victims of Nazi “euthanasia” are commemorated – women who were starved to death through the deprivation of food. Their emaciated, translucent bodies are symbolized by shards of glass placed in the hollow of the stone. The hollow is enclosed by metal bars, emphasizing the imprisonment of these women.

In the hollow of the memorial stone for **Margaretha Rothe**, a swallow formed from metal is suspended. It symbolizes a leaflet folded into the shape of a swallow

by the Scholl siblings, flying to freedom from the cell window of the concentration camp behind which Margaretha Rothe was imprisoned. During the Nazi era in Hamburg, Margaretha Rothe secretly distributed the Scholl siblings' leaflets.

One memorial stone draws attention to anti-discrimination against **women who love women and against migrants**. The slanted top of the sandstone column bears a rotatable stone sphere/globe and symbolically represents migration. Butterflies are engraved on the globe. They correspond to the double-axe-shaped butterfly depictions found on Mycenaean vases. Since the New Women's Movement, the double axe has also been a symbol of women who love women.

Another stone, adorned with small Fröbel building blocks, commemorates **Margarethe Münch**, founder of the Hamburg School for Childcare Workers.

A stone perforated with holes commemorates **Christel Klein**, a female victim of domestic violence who was shot by her husband.

A stone made of black basalt, containing an eternal flame within, commemorates the **approximately 40 women who were accused of witchcraft and burned in Hamburg** between the 15th and 17th centuries.

Two mask heads adorn the memorial stone for **Lavinia Schulz**, a mask dancer and creator of globally unique full-body masks in which she also performed.

A stone made of black basalt, depicting an inverted top hat, commemorates the magic merchant and is dedicated to the magic dealer and illusionist **Rosa Bartl**. When the lid is lifted, a white rabbit appears.

A cube-shaped stone commemorates the Bauhaus artist **Dörte Helm**. In addition to architectural designs,

textile works, and paintings, she also created, among other things, seating cubes.

A stone made of black diabase commemorates the French resistance fighter **France Bloch-Sérazin**. To join the resistance against the Nazi regime at that time meant walking a fine line between life and death. This precarious balance is symbolized by the stone narrowing toward the top. The upper end of the stone is carved so that a sharp edge can be felt – the blade of the guillotine with which France Bloch-Sérazin was beheaded in the Holstenglacis remand prison in Hamburg.

Remembrance Column

In the summer of 2021, the Remembrance Spiral was completed. Since November 2021, a Remembrance Column has therefore been used to commemorate notable women who were once buried at Ohlsdorf Cemetery but for whom no historical gravestones exist.

The names of these women are permanently recorded on medallions affixed to the column.

Glass Memorial Cube for the deceased infants and young children of forced laborers

Between 1943 and 1945, 250 infants and young children of forced laborers, as well as three older girls who themselves were forced to work, were buried at Ohlsdorf Cemetery during the Nazi era. In addition, two older boys were buried at the Jewish Cemetery at Ilandkoppel. Most of these graves no longer exist. The Garden of Women association commemorates these children with this glass cube, which is composed

of colorful glass blocks measuring 9×9 cm. Each of the 255 blocks bears the name and age of a child. Most of the children died as a result of neglect and malnutrition, as their mothers were forced to return to compulsory labor immediately after giving birth and themselves suffered from hunger.

Communal burial sites for women in the Garden of Women

The Garden of Women is not only a memorial site of a museum-like nature. The concept of a place for women at Ohlsdorf Cemetery that combines both a memorial and an area for burials makes it possible for women's history to be continuously carried forward. Women who wish to support the idea of the Garden of Women may therefore choose to be buried here.

Any woman who is a member of the Garden of Women association and who acquired a burial plot there during her lifetime may be interred here.

By acquiring their burial place, the women act as patrons contributing to the preservation of the historical gravestones.

There are eleven communal burial areas.

Design of a communal burial area

To illustrate the connection between history and the present, the historical gravestone of a notable woman is placed at the head of each communal burial area.

The monument for the women buried in the communal burial area consists of seven sandstone stones in the form of a stone wave modeled on a water wave, symbolizing eternal life. The last two waves show ripples, symbolizing the foam on the waves.

The first and last names as well as the dates of birth and death of those buried in these communal burial areas have been engraved on these stones.

Since 2021, glass panels have been installed at the

communal burial areas, on which the names and the dates of birth and death of the deceased are now inscribed.

Memorial panels

The association also offers women who wish to be buried in the Garden of Women the opportunity to have their life story permanently recorded on an aluminum panel. The Garden of Women association makes no distinction between so-called notable and non-notable women.

Sponsored grave monument with blue glass panels

On the far left in the front section of the Garden of Women stands a sponsored grave monument fitted with two blue glass panels. These blue panels have the following significance:

When the statutory rest period of 25 years has expired for a woman buried in a communal burial area, her name and her dates of birth and death are removed from the glass panel in order to make space for the names and dates of those to be buried subsequently. So that no name is “lost” and the memory of the women buried in the Garden of Women is preserved beyond the statutory 25-year rest period, the names and life and death dates removed from the glass panels are permanently affixed to the blue glass panels on the sponsored grave monument.



Purchase of a burial plot

Any woman may purchase a burial plot in the Garden of Women. A prerequisite for acquiring an urn burial plot is membership in the Garden of Women association.

An urn plot costs € 1,350.00.

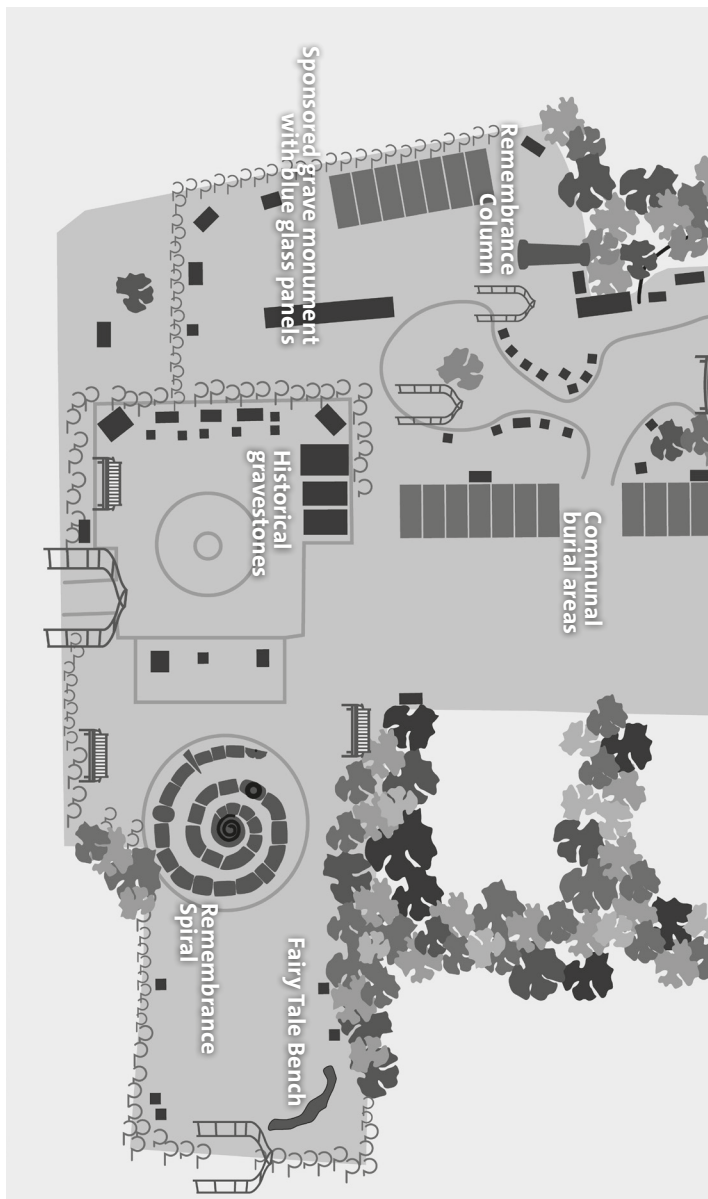
The price includes:

- the burial plot for the duration of the statutory rest period of 25 years, beginning at the time of death,
- planting,
- grave maintenance for 25 years,
- the glass panel, and
- the stone wave.

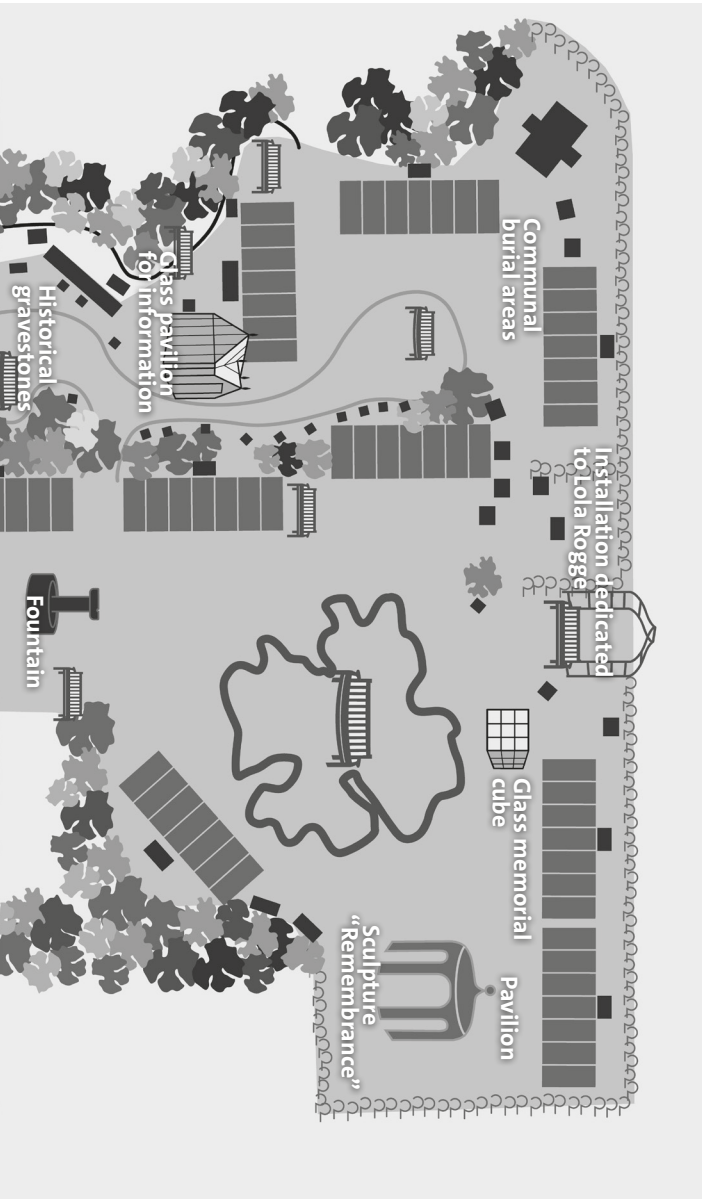
The engraving of the name as well as the dates of birth and death on the glass panel must be paid for by the purchaser.



View on the Garden



Please, turn the booklet!



Communal
burial areas

Installation dedicated
to Lola Rogge

Glass memorial
cube

Pavilion

Sculpture
"Remembrance"

Glass pavilion
for information

Historical
gravestones

Fountain

Female public figures buried in the Garden of Women

In the Garden of Women, not only historical gravestones and memorial stones commemorate notable women.

Female public figures are also buried in the Garden of Women. These include, for example:

Gerda Gmelin, actress and director (principal) of the *Theater im Zimmer*,

Domenica Niehoff, dvocate for the rights of sex workers, street worker, and known as “St. Pauli’s Big Heart,”

Prof. Dr. med. Thea Louise Schönfelder, psychiatrist and university lecturer, the first woman in Germany to be appointed to a professorial chair in child and adolescent psychiatry,

Helga Pilarczyk, chamber singer and long-standing member of the ensemble of the Hamburg State Opera,

Dagmar Meyer, the first cycling officer of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg,,

Karin Wilsdorf, active in the New Women’s Movement and managing director of the “Hanseatin” Hotel, Hamburg’s only women’s hotel,

Rosamunde Pietsch, head of the Hamburg Women’s Protective Police,

Urte Clasing, professor of artistic speech training,

Annemarie Weighardt, chairwoman of the German Association of Secretaries,

Marie Nejar, known by the stage name “Leila Negra,” was a singer, actress, and nurse,



The Historic Water Tower

On Cordesallee, close to the Garden of Women, stands a historic water tower that serves the Garden of Women association as a point de vue – a visual landmark indicating the location of the Garden of Women. The water tower is guarded by a sphinx that poses a riddle to us all.

The Garden of Women Association

All work for the Garden of Women is carried out on a voluntary basis; every contribution is unpaid and freely given. To manage the wide range of tasks, the Garden of Women association has established various working groups. One example is the gardening group, which supplies the Garden of Women with fresh water, removes weeds, and keeps the garden well maintained.

Both women and men may become members of the Garden of Women association.

Support the work of the Garden of Women association:

- Become a member of the Garden of Women association.
- By doing so, support the preservation of the historical gravestones of notable women as a patron.
- Upon request, the association organizes guided tours of the Garden of Women.
- Each year, the Garden of Women association holds various cultural events. Dates can be found, for example, on the Garden of Women website:
- www.garten-der-frauen.de
- The association offers opportunities for voluntary work.
- It provides human connection and a sense of community.
- Any natural person or legal entity may become a member of the association.
- The annual membership fee is € 70.00.

Your Contacts

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The Garden of Women association
is recognized as a non-profit organization.

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