

JCANA Conference Highlights  
May 21 – 24, 2017  
Vancouver, British Columbia, CANADA

Keynote Speaker – Michael Geller

Michael Geller has had a career as an architect, planner, and real estate developer. He also serves on the Adjunct Faculty of Simon Fraser University. A frequent commentator on urban issues, he writes a bi-weekly column in the Vancouver Courier.

Since arriving from Toronto in the mid 1970s, Michael has been active in Vancouver's Jewish community, serving on the boards of the Jewish Community Centre, Family Services, Federation, Louis Brier Home and Hospital, and as trustee of the Jewish Museum and Archives of British Columbia.

Over the past five decades Michael has travelled extensively including a 9-month around-the-world journey in 2007. During his trips, he has photographed Jewish institutions and cemeteries on six continents and brought back many stories on the theme where Jews go to remember, which he will share.

The conference will include many topics to be covered by experts in their respective fields that are of great interest to Jewish cemetery operators. Below is a synopsis of these topics:

Cemetery Restoration

Shirley Barnett is a long-time community leader in Vancouver. After some vandalism that took place in the Jewish section of Mountain View Cemetery – an old, almost abandoned Jewish cemetery located inside a public cemetery – Shirley decided that simply repairing the damage was not enough. Instead, Shirley put together a committee and raised over \$600,000 to fully restore the property that had been used in recent years only for the burial of indigent Jews.

Today, the fully restored cemetery is a showpiece of the Greater Vancouver Jewish community, where the remaining burial sites are now sold for more than \$20,000.

This is a truly remarkable property that was brought back to a pristine state. What is even more incredible is that the event that triggered this restoration was vandalism, proving once again that Jew respond to attacks by performing good deeds.

Shirley will speak about her experience leading this project.

Cemetery Design and Project Management

Bill Pechet, Principal of Pechet Studios in Vancouver, is a world-renowned architect with a specialty in cemetery projects.

When Shirley Barnet decided to restore the Mountain View Cemetery, she knew she needed the best cemetery architect around, and brought Bill in to design the restoration.

The PECHET Studio is based in Vancouver, Canada, with a combined interest in art, architecture, urban infrastructure, public space and landscapes. The studio has been the creative generator of over 25 years of projects including cemeteries, memorials, public art, parks, plazas, lighting, street furnishings, interiors, exhibitions, stage sets and houses.

In all this work, Bill Pechet and his team have been committed to the idea that public and private space must be designed to offer a depth of experiential encounter. The public art pieces attempt to uncover not only the optical possibilities of a site but also try to reveal something specific about the spatial, social and environmental conditions of their settings. We try to imbue the cemetery and memorial projects with renewed ritualistic and aesthetic relevance to the various communities they serve.

Bill will speak at the conference about cemetery design and architecture and how to truly transform a cemetery into a 'place to remember'. You can visit Bill's website at [www.pechetstudio.ca](http://www.pechetstudio.ca) for more information.

### Large Cemetery Management

Glen Hodges is the General Manager of the Mountain View Cemetery. He oversees Vancouver's only cemetery is located west of Fraser St, between 31st Ave and 43rd Ave. Owned and operated by the City of Vancouver since 1886, Mountain View is made up of 106 acres of land with approximately 92,000 grave sites and 145,000 interred remains.

The Cemetery's central location and spectacular views make it a unique place to honour the memories of family and friends, and to engage with Vancouver's nature and history.

The restored Jewish section is part of this cemetery, and Glen will talk about how a small section of a public cemetery can be used for Jewish burials. He will discuss policy issues about how a public cemetery can be operated to serve the greater community, while preserving the importance of maintaining the rituals and laws governing the operation of Jewish cemeteries and burial rites.

Glen is also the President of the BC Funeral Association.

### Cemetery Security

This most relevant and timely topic will include a presentation by Dave Jones, Principal of JSI Security and Investigations Inc.

JSI Security & Investigations Inc. has been in business since 2007 and offers professional private investigation and security consulting services in British Columbia. JSI is a licensed security business in the Province of British Columbia. JSI only uses qualified licensed private investigators and/or Security Consultants.

JSI personnel are members of the Professional Investigators Association of BC, PIABC, and bound by the BC Security Services Act/Regulations and PIABC codes of ethics.

Dave will present to the group his ideas on how to properly and effectively secure cemeteries using not only the latest technologies, but smart technologies and smart design.

With the recent wave of vandalism and threats against Jewish institutions and cemeteries through North America, this presentation alone is worth coming to the conference to hear.

### Medical Assisted Dying

Many jurisdictions in the United States are now adopting various laws permitting medically assisted dying. In Canada, federal laws now allow physicians to provide their patients (under strict guidelines) to perform lethal injections for their patients to ease end of life suffering.

This is now an issue that the Jewish community must face head on. Rabbis, chevra kadishot, and cemeteries, are all important players in the development of policies and practices that will be implemented in dealing with this new societal legal framework.

There will be a panel discussion on the topic with Rabbis from the broad spectrum of the Jewish community.

### Green Burial

A new and growing demand has emerged over the past few years for “green burial”. Many people today who care deeply about the environment and human’s impact on it are opting for green burials as their last act of environmental responsibility.

For over 3,000 years, Jews have been following what is general adopted as green burials as defined by the Green Burial Council.

While we have not as yet confirmed who will be the presenter, we will have a presentation on how fully compliant green burial can be implemented in Jewish cemeteries.

The green burial market is a growing sector in the industry, and Jewish cemeteries should know all the details about how this will affect our operations into the future.

### Tours

The conference will include tours of Jewish cemeteries in the Vancouver area. It will also include participation in a community sponsored unveiling ceremony for a number of baby headstones in Mountain View Cemetery. This ceremony will see the unveiling of headstones on the graves of infants who died almost a century ago and have never had any markings on their graves. This community effort will be a moving experience for everyone.

Also included will be a tour of Vancouver.