

Frequently Asked Questions about Crown Hill Cemetery Tours

- Q.** What's the difference between a "Public" tour and a "Private" tour?

A. Public tours are pre-scheduled guided tours which cover a variety of topics. They're usually conducted on a Saturday evening (sunset tours) or Sunday afternoon most weekends from late March through early November. These tours can be walking or driving tours and last 90 minutes to 2 hours and cover about one mile at a comfortable pace. Anyone can attend and just pay the per person rate of \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$3 for students. No reservations are required. If a tour is scheduled to begin after gate hours, participants need meet the guide at the 34th St. and Boulevard Place stone gate for after hour's entrance. If scheduled to begin when the cemetery is open, participants need meet the guide at the Gothic Chapel unless noted otherwise. Tours are held in the rain as long as it's not severe. See our calendar of tours and events for the latest schedule.

Private tours are guided for groups or individuals who want to schedule a tour on a specific date and at a specific time. Private group tours can be scheduled for any day and time, with the exception of holidays and at the availability of our tour guides. The above per person rates apply with a minimum fee of \$50 per tour. These can be walking or driving tours which typically last 90 minutes and cover about one mile at a comfortable pace. You must schedule private group tours at least two weeks in advance by writing or calling Marty Davis at mdavis@crownhill.org or (317) 920-2644. If you have a large group requiring multiple guides, or plan to tour during our busiest months of April, May, September or October, it's advisable that you schedule your tour as far in advance as possible.

Bus tours are private guided tours for larger tour groups (usually charter buses) who desire a step-on guide. Participants can get off the bus to see various monuments as much as they'd like. Most tour groups get off the bus at James Whitcomb Riley's memorial at the top of the Crown to see the stunning 360-degree view of the entire Indianapolis skyline. These tours must be scheduled at least two weeks in advance and are charged at the flat rate of \$150 for a 90-minute tour; \$125 for a 60-minute tour; and \$100 for a 30-minute tour. If desired, groups can pay the per person rate if it's less expensive. All groups must provide their own bus. (Please note that there's a circle drive around the Riley monument at the top of the Crown that can accommodate charter buses, so there's no need to turn around at the top.)
- Q.** Are all tours walking tours?

A. No, we offer driving tours as well, either by bus or car. (If you desire a driving tour you must provide your own bus, van, or car.)
- Q.** What are your walking tour fees?

A. \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors (55+), and \$3 for students with a minimum of \$50 per tour.
- Q.** When do I pay?

A. All private group tours have a 5-day in advance payment policy. You can send a check or reserve your tour with a credit card and pay on the day of your tour (with cash or check), or have your credit card charged for the full tour fee following your tour.
- Q.** What payment methods do you accept?

A. Check, credit card, or cash if paid on the tour date. (Please do not mail cash.)
- Q.** Where can my students use the restrooms & when should we use the restrooms?

A. There are restrooms available behind of the Gothic Chapel (attached to the building). We ask that groups use the restrooms well in advance of when their tour is scheduled to start or use them afterwards. If tour guides are required to delay the beginning of the tour due to restroom usage, they will still end at the scheduled time.
- Q.** Can we picnic at Crown Hill?

A. Yes, groups are welcome to picnic at Crown Hill in our designated areas. (See our tour map.)

8. **Q.** Do you have picnic tables and trash receptacles?
A. No. Please bring blankets to sit on and take all your trash out with you.
9. **Q.** What if it rains?
A. All tours are held in the rain as long as it's not severe* and if the group chooses to. If you decide to cancel due to inclement weather, you must do so by calling the phone number on your confirmation, which is usually mine (317-920-2644). Sometimes you will be given the phone number of your tour guide. If so, please call them directly to cancel. To avoid the late cancellation fee for inclement weather, you must call and cancel at least two hours in advance of when your tour is scheduled to start. (*Severe means thunder, lightning and/or a total downpour.)
10. **Q.** What if we need to cancel for other reasons?
A. You may cancel for any reason, but to avoid the late cancellation fee, you must call and cancel with as much notice as possible, and no less than two hours in advance of when your tour is scheduled to start.
11. **Q.** Will I get a refund?
A. You will be given a full refund if you cancel far enough in advance. If not, you may be charged a late cancellation fee.
12. **Q.** Where do we meet the tour guide for a **Public** tour?
A. If the tour is scheduled to begin before our gates close, please meet your guide at the Gothic Chapel, which can be located by following the white line from either cemetery entrance. If the tour is scheduled to begin after gate hours, please meet your guide at the 34th St. and Boulevard Place gate entrance. There may be a few tours that start at the Waiting Station, so please check our calendar beforehand.
13. **Q.** Do you offer **Public tours** every day?
A. No, just on weekends, either on a Saturday night or Sunday afternoon from late March through early November.
14. **Q.** Are **Public tours** scheduled for a set time?
A. Yes, either on Saturday night or Sunday afternoon. Almost all Saturday evening tours are scheduled so visitors can watch the sunset from the Crown. See the calendar of tours and events for the exact start time and place.
15. **Q.** Where do we meet the guide for a **Private tour**?
A. Right inside the 34th St. and Boulevard Place stone gate entrance at the Waiting Station building on the north side. There is currently a "Rock of Ages" sign in front the building. From this location your guide will take you to the location where you can park and begin your tour, usually at the Gothic Chapel. Because your tour will not start from this location, please keep your students on the bus.
16. **Q.** What gate should we enter?
A. **Private group** tours should always enter at the 34th St. and Boulevard Place stone gate entrance and meet their guide at the Waiting Station building immediately on the right. **Public tour** participants can enter either gate during normal hours and follow the WHITE line painted on the road to the Gothic Chapel. If after hours they should meet the tour guide at the 34th St. and Boulevard Place stone gate entrance.
17. **Q.** Where do we park our cars?
A. You will be shown by your guide where to park.
18. **Q.** Where do we park our buses?
A. You will be shown by your guide where to park.

19. **Q.** Do you conduct “haunted” or “ghost” tours?
A. No. Our groups are historical in nature. Ghost hunting organizations are not allowed to bring their recording equipment on our tours and all group members must stay with the guide.
20. **Q.** How far are your walking tours?
A. Usually about one mile. It’s a comfortable pace for most people.
21. **Q.** How long do they last?
A. Most private group tours last 90 minutes. Many of our public tours last two hours.
22. **Q.** Can I bring my dog or a stroller?
A. Sure. Dogs must be people-friendly and on a leash. You must pick-up after your dog as well. Strollers are welcome but you should be aware that our tours don’t always follow the road.
23. **Q.** What about wheelchairs?
A. Wheelchairs are welcome but you should be aware that our tours don’t always follow the road, but you can follow along and catch up with the tour when they return to the road.
24. **Q.** What if some of us on the tour can’t walk but others can; how can they tour with us?
A. Many tour groups have members carpool and they can drive along while the others walk.
25. **Q.** Are there any hills on the tour?
A. Most of our terrain is flat or gentle rolling hills. The only exception is the “Crown,” which is a very steep hill leading to the memorial of James Whitcomb Riley, the famous Hoosier poet. Once at the top you will enjoy a stunning 360-degree panoramic view of the entire Indianapolis skyline. If someone in your group can’t walk up the hill they may stay at the bottom and wait for the group to come back down or the group can choose to skip the hill altogether.
26. **Q.** How high is “The Crown?”
A. 842.21 feet
27. **Q.** Is it really the highest elevation in Marion County?
A. No, it’s the highest **hill** in the county. The highest elevation in the county is actually about 915 feet above sea level on a plateau in the northwest corner of the county in a neighborhood of homes.
28. **Q.** What’s the most popular tour?
A. The Heritage Tour. It captures the highlights from other tours and includes many of our most recognizable monuments and well-known people. Please note our list of “Heritage Tour Personalities” to see who is included on this tour.
29. **Q.** Should I bring a flashlight on a night tour?
A. Flashlights aren’t usually needed but you’re always welcome to bring one.
30. **Q.** How about insect repellent?
A. Yes! In the summer it’s a great idea.
31. **Q.** Will I see any wildlife on my tour?
A. Maybe. We have a number of deer on the property as well as a coyote, fox, hawks, and squirrels. In some of our historical documents there are references to a panther and bear, but those are long gone!
32. **Q.** What are all those yellow and blue tags on the trees?
A. Those are the tags for our tree map and tree tour. The blue ones are trees on the tree tour and the map, and the yellow ones are just listed on the tree map. If you’re using our tree map to locate trees for a leaf collection or to study them, please note that the round silver numbered disks on many of our trees are **not** related to our tree map or tree tour; those are tree inventory tags.

33. **Q.** Can I schedule my **private** group tour to see the sunset from “The Crown?”
A. Yes! A great idea! When you call we can schedule your tour at the best time for this, depending upon the time of year.
34. **Q.** Do any of the **public** tours include seeing the sunset?
A. Most, if not all, of the Saturday night public tours are scheduled to see the sunset. Sometimes we offer night tours that take place entirely after dark.
35. **Q.** Do I need to make a reservation for a **public** tour?
A. No. Just show up about 10-15 minutes before the tour is scheduled to start.
36. **Q.** How far in advance do I need to schedule my **private** group tour?
A. As far a possible if your group is large and/or if it’s during our busy months of April, May, September or October.
37. **Q.** Do I need to have a **minimum** number of people for a **private** group tour?
A. No. We’ve given guided tours to just one or two people. No matter what size your tour is, you pay the per person rate, with a minimum of \$50 per tour.
38. **Q.** Is there a **maximum** number of people our group can have for a **private** tour?
A. The number of people permitted on a private group tour is determined by the availability of our tour guides. Often large school groups come on two separate days or split their group up and half the group picnics or does special projects while the other half is taking the tour, then they switch.
39. **Q.** Is there a minimum fee for a **private** group tour?
A. Yes, \$50 for a walking tour. For instance, if you have 17 or fewer students you will pay the \$50 minimum, but if you have more than 17 students you will pay the per person rate. The same is true for adult groups: adults are \$5 each so if you have ten or fewer adults your fee will be \$50; if over 10 adults your group will pay the per person rate.
40. **Q.** Are chaperones free?
A. Yes, one adult chaperone per every ten students is admitted at no charge. Additional adults are \$5 each. Bus drivers are free too.
41. **Q.** How do I schedule a **private** group tour?
A. Email or call Marty Davis at mdavis@crownhill.org or (317) 920-2644. Information needed is:
The name of your school or group
Your name, address, regular phone number and cell phone number
Number of people in your group
Age (or grade level) of group members (adult, senior citizen, or student)
Date and time you’d like to have a tour
How you plan to pay for your tour
Credit card number with security code if reserving your tour with a credit card. (Please don’t email your credit card number.)
42. **Q.** Where do I send my check to pre-pay my **private** group tour?
A. Crown Hill Cemetery
Attn: Marty Davis
700 West 38th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
Make checks payable to the **Crown Hill Heritage Foundation**. You may also reserve your tour with a credit card and pay when you arrive.
43. **Q.** Do I tip my tour guide?
A. It’s not necessary, so it’s up to you or your group. Charter bus groups often tip their guide and that’s

fine.

44. **Q.** Do you have tree maps and tree tours?

A. Yes, we offer tree maps free of charge (donations are greatly appreciated). This map includes the scientific and common names for fifty marked trees native to Indiana and where they're located. Our Tree Tour follows the tree map route.

45. **Q.** Is my student allowed to collect leaves at Crown Hill for their leaf collection?

A. Yes! Crown Hill is a very popular location for students doing a leaf collection. We ask that you are respectful of those visiting the graves of their loved ones in the area and that you don't take leaves from our small trees. (If defoliated they may die.)

46. **Q.** Can homeschool groups tour even with all different ages?

A. Yes, we have many homeschool groups that tour Crown Hill each year. Our guides typically share information that is geared toward the older students on the tour, which has been the preference of the parents.

If you have further questions, please contact Marty Davis by email or phone at mdavis@crownhill.org or (317) 920-2644.