

# The Funeral Advisory Society of Hamilton & District (Hamilton Memorial Society)

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*Celebrating our 32nd year of service!*

P. O. Box 89026, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4R5, 905-389-8240

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Vol. 30, Spring, 2003

**2003 Public Information Session and Annual Meeting**  
**Tuesday, May 6, 2003**                      **7:30 p.m. Hamilton Public Library**  
**55 York Blvd.**

## Bereavement Support

What is it?                                      Who needs it?  
When can it help?                              Where to get it?

**Speaker: Barbara Brown, RN, BA, BScN, MScN**

“Grief counseling” and “bereavement counseling” are often mentioned as a means to help survivors cope with the loss of a loved one. In our community, such services are offered by professional counselors, and through self help groups. Many funeral homes have staff available to provide counseling support after the funeral is over.

Our 2003 Annual Meeting will focus on this topic. What is bereavement support? Is it always helpful? What supports are available, and what can they do to assist the bereaved to live through a difficult time?

Our speaker will be Barbara Brown, an Associate Professor at McMaster, in the School of Nursing. She is a Certified Grief Counselor through the Association of Death Education and Counseling,

and facilitates widows’ and general bereavement groups for the Burlington Bereavement Resource Council. She is a member of the Professional Advisory Committee for Bereaved Families of Ontario and supervises bereaved mothers groups for Bereaved Families of Ontario. She was the Clinical Nurse Specialist on the Nursing Bereavement Team at the Hamilton-Wentworth Department of Health Services for eight years; a founding member of Bereavement Ontario Network; Past President of the Burlington Bereavement Resource council and has facilitated student bereavement groups at McMaster.

We have asked Ms Brown to explain to us what bereavement support entails; when, for whom and in what way can it be helpful. **We hope to see you, with your friends, at the Library on May 6.**

***Everyone Welcome! Free Admission Refreshments will be served***

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### **Chairman's Message - from Pearl Davie**

Memorial societies are very important to the community in providing information and education about the funeral industry. They have, over many years, been of great assistance to those sharing the philosophy of preplanning simple, dignified funerals at modest cost. In addition, the memorial society movement has been responsible for changes in social attitudes and access to alternatives.

We need your participation! The existence of the society depends on volunteers helping out in various capacities. Over the years, a number of our members have, with great dedication, taken a turn at serving on our board. However, our bylaws allow for a maximum of two three-year terms in succession, after which a trustee must step down, at least for one year. We will have vacancies in May; I urge members to offer to help with the ongoing life of the *(cont'd)*

society. The role of a trustee is not onerous. We have only six board meetings per year - early evening, and not lengthy - the discussions are interesting, and the company is excellent. Please consider extending your interest in the society.

As Chair of the Board of Trustees, I thank our board members for their support and concern for the society and its members. Jake den Hartog continues his excellent work as Secretary (the assistance of his spouse, Jeannine Gautier is much appreciated); Shirley McGinley is now completing a third year as our efficient Treasurer. Trustees Eileen Hayhoe, Jim Sackville and Dorrie Morgan, and newest trustee, Alan Bishop, all contributed greatly to our work.

We are sorry to say goodbye to Shirley, who concludes her first three year term and declines to stand for a second term, and to Dorrie, in her fourth year as a trustee, who has resigned for personal reasons. We'll also miss Eileen Hayhoe, who has come to the end of her second term on the board. However, we are delighted at Eileen's offer to continue assisting the Membership Secretary, as she has been doing, so ably, for several years.

Another valued member of our "team" is Miriam Kramer, our Membership Secretary, who takes care of membership records, sends out the kits to members and edits the newsletter.

We could not do without our telephone volunteers, who respond to callers, members and the public, who contact us. They have a demanding job, since they never know when the calls may come. A sincere "thank you" to them all!

**Publicity:** in the past year there have been a number of funeral-related articles in the media which have resulted in calls to the society and a subsequent increase in membership. Thanks to the efforts of two of our members, an article about the society appeared in the October issue of the Hamilton Lawyer Newsletter, and two articles about us were included in newsletters at McMaster University.

**We extend sincere appreciation for donations received!** Operating expenses, such as printing, paper, postage, telephone, etc., are paid out of revenue from new memberships. (We have no staff costs.) Despite our thrifty ways, costs have increased faster than revenues, and our cash reserves are shrinking. Donations from members are an important addition to our income. **THANK YOU!**

Once again, I urge members to consider contributing to the society in whatever way is best for you - giving time, as a board member, arranging publicity distributing brochures, etc.; or making a small donation of money. I personally have found my efforts over the years very rewarding, and I take great pride in our society's accomplishments. .

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#### **Funeral Advisory Society Trustees:**

Pearl Davie, Chair	
Shirley McGinley, Treasurer	Eileen Hayhoe
Jake den Hartog, Secretary	Dorrie Morgan
Alan Bishop	Jim Sackville

#### **Telephone Committee:**

Maureen Wright, Verna Stanek, Launa Ganann,  
Len Metcalfe, Connie Dunnett.

<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	Miriam Kramer
<b>Assistant:</b>	Eileen Hayhoe

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#### **Membership Fees have been increased**

As of July 1, 2002, the trustees increased the fee for a new membership in the society to \$20 per person. The former rate of \$15 was set in 1986. Back then, that sum covered the costs of membership materials, of running the society and of providing the newsletter to all members for whom we have current addresses. We were able to build up a modest cash reserve.

Sixteen years later, the old amount was just not adequate, so the board reluctantly decided on an increase. Since there are still many brochures outstanding in the community, people who join now using brochures showing the old fee, will be asked to send us the additional five dollars.

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#### **Our Palls Are Available To Borrow**

The Society owns two handsome palls, which may be borrowed for members' funerals. The large pall will fully cover a plain casket during the service and at the cemetery, (the handles may show if the casket is lifted). The smaller one is sized for a cremation container.

One condition: please return the pall no less than five days from the date you borrow it. For more information, phone us at 389-8240.

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#### **Our Sincere Thanks to Members Who Made Donations to the Society!**

Your generosity is instrumental in enabling the society to serve its members and the community.

**“Forensic Pathologist - Medical Detective”**

Our 2002 Annual Meeting drew many members and friends to hear Dr. David E.L. King’s fascinating presentation about the work of a forensic pathologist. Dr. King elaborated on the following five points:

1. Identification of the deceased
2. Establishing time of death
3. Establishing cause of death
4. Determining why death occurred
5. Determining the manner of death

All of these can require more complex study than TV dramas suggest. Dr. King said the most important development he has observed during his career is the use of DNA - it can save the innocent.

**Federation of Ontario Memorial Societies:**

Our Society is an active member of “FOOMS”, through which we interact informally with the ten other Ontario memorial societies. The Federation also speaks for the societies, presenting to the Provincial Government their concerns about the funeral industry. See the item to the right:

**New Funeral Legislation:**

The Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act has received Royal Assent. This single Act will replace the current Funeral Directors Act and the Cemeteries Act, as soon as regulations are set. These determine how the industry shall meet the requirements of the Act. Representatives of FOOMS participated in the development of the Act, and will have input to drafting the regulations, particularly the Code of Ethics for the industry, in its dealings with the public. FOOMS has aimed to preserve, and improve the consumer protections contained in the current Act.

One positive change will affect **resale of interment rights** (in cemetery plots). At present, the cemetery must buy them back at the *original price*, less a percent for “care & maintenance”. They can then resell at current value; usually a profit for the cemetery. The new Act will allow the owner to sell the rights on the open market, unless cemetery bylaws prohibit this, in which case, the cemetery must repurchase the rights, at *current prices*, as shown on its latest price list. Any profit will go to the consumer, not the cemetery.

*Members, if you have had any positive or negative experiences in making funeral arrangements, or at the funeral itself, we would appreciate your telling us about them.*

**List of Cooperating Funeral Homes, Spring, 2003:**

J.B. Marlatt Funeral Homes (1985) Ltd.	615 Main St. East, Hamilton, L8M 1J4	(905)528-6303
	195 King St. West, Dundas, L9H 1V5	(905)627-7452
Markey-Dermody Rosedale Chapel	1774 King St. East, Hamilton, L8K 1V7	(905)547-1121
Cresmount Funeral Home Ltd.	322 Fennell Avenue East, Hamilton, L9A 1T2	(905)387-2111
Truscott, Brown and Dwyer Funeral Chapel	1309 King St. East, Hamilton, L8M 1H2	(905)549-2417
Donald V. Brown Funeral Home	36 Lake Avenue Dr., Stoney Creek, L8G 3N3	(905)662-2948
Smith's Funeral Homes	485 Brant Street, Burlington, L7R 2G5	(905)632-3333
Beckett-Glaves Family Funeral Centre	88 Brant Ave., Brantford, N3T 3H3	(519)752-4331
Hill & Robinson Funeral Home	30 Nelson St., Brantford, N3T 2M8	(519)752-2543
Thorpe Brothers' Funeral Home Co. Ltd.	96 West Street, Brantford, N3T 3E7	(519)759-2211
Ballard-McDonald Funeral Services Ltd.	315 Broad St. East, Dunnville, N1A 1G4	(905)774-7277
Ward Funeral Homes, Oakville Chapel	109 Reynolds St., Oakville, L6J 3K4	(905)844-3221

TO: THE FUNERAL ADVISORY SOCIETY, P. O. BOX 89026, HAMILTON, ONTARIO L8S 4R5

**I ENCLOSE \$..... as a voluntary donation to the Society**      **Please send a Receipt: .....**

NAME ..... TELEPHONE .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY/TOWN ..... POSTAL CODE.....

*Questions, Complaints, Comments; request for additional publications (see reverse)*

**What To Do When a Death Occurs:**

If the deceased was a memorial society member and filled out pre-arrangement forms (or a similar detailed list) and filed them with a funeral director, many decisions about the funeral will have been made. Ideally, the deceased gave a copy of the form to a family member, or to the executor. Still, there will be many details left for family and/or friends to handle. If the deceased left a completed Vital Information Record, that, too, should help with many of the following items:

Call the funeral director, giving the name of the deceased and location of the body, and mentioning if the deceased was a memorial society member. Set up appointment, to decide time and place of funeral and/or memorial service.

Go to the funeral home, with the pre-arrangement form copy, if available, and any prepayment receipts for the funeral and/or cemetery plot. If possible, take birth and marriage certificates of the deceased.

Ask the funeral director to give you several copies of the Death Certificate.

Make list of family, friends, employer or business colleagues to be informed, by phone, if appropriate.

Notify lawyer and executor.

Select, notify pall bearers (including honorary) if desired.

Prepare obituary (optional). This may include age; place of birth; date and cause, of death; list of immediate family; occupation; academic degrees; memberships; military service; achievements; other appropriate information. (*The Hamilton Spectator* charges \$4.48 per printed line, plus taxes, per insertion, as of Jan., 2003.)

Where should *in memoriam* donations be directed? Plan for disposition of flowers after funeral; call intended

recipient to confirm they can be accepted.

Arrange for family members or friends to answer the door or phone; keep a notebook to record all calls.

Delegate someone to be at home during the funeral service (a favourite time for attempted break-ins).

Coordinate supplying of food for the first few days. Other needs, such as cleaning could perhaps be done by friends?

Prepare a list of distant people to be notified, and whether by mail and/or printed notice.

Check life and casualty insurance and death benefits, including CPP (these must be applied for) and affiliations - credit or trade union, fraternal, military, motor club, etc.

Check promptly all debts and instalment payments. Some may carry insurance clauses that will cancel them. If there is to be a delay in meeting payments, consult with creditors and ask for more time.

If deceased lived alone, notify utilities (and landlord), and tell post office where to send mail. Canada Post will forward a deceased's mail for six months without charge. Take precautions against thieves.

Notify Funeral Advisory Soc.; we will update our records. (*With thanks to the Memorial Society of Edmonton*)

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**Publications available, for Members Only:**

Member's Information Handbook \$3.00

Replacement Pre-Arrangement Forms \$4.00

Replacement Membership Card - Free

List, Cooperating Funeral Directors Prices - Free

**For Anyone, (at no charge) upon request:**

Society Brochure - Membership Application

"Consumer Information, Facts About Funerals"

"Vital Information Record"

"Readings for a Memorial Service"

M.O.R.E. Organ Donor Card

"Preparing for Approaching Death", palliative care

article, North Central Florida Hospice, Inc. 1996

Powers of Attorney Kit, Ontario, with forms

*N.B.: this latter item is costly to mail; a donation towards postage would be appreciated.*

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**I WOULD LIKE TO HELP THE SOCIETY:** As a candidate for nomination to the Board of Trustees .....

With publicity or other volunteer role: .....

Community group(s) that should know more about the Memorial Society are:

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Please send me the following publications:

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Please add cheque or money order for priced publications, and put your name and address on the reverse of this coupon. Thank you!