

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

---

*Celebrating our 33rd year of service!*

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

[www.hwcn.org/link/fashd](http://www.hwcn.org/link/fashd)

---

Vol. 31, Spring, 2004

**2004 Public Information Session and Annual Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 4, 2004**

**7:30 p.m. Hamilton Public Library  
55 York Blvd.**

## **TV Takes a Look at Memorial Societies**

**Speaker: Kevin O'Keefe, Vision TV, Producer and Film Maker  
Presentation of Video as shown on Vision TV**

Mr. O'Keefe is the Senior Producer of Vision TV's weekly in-depth interview series *CREDO*. He is also a segment producer on Vision TV's weekly flagship current affairs magazine, *360 Vision*, and part of the production unit at Vision that received two Gemini Awards. Last year, he became interested in producing a *360 Vision* segment about access to simple, inexpensive funerals. He had heard of memorial societies' efforts on behalf of members (and the public) in advocating the pre-planning of simple dignified funerals at moderate cost. Last Fall, he contacted the Society's Chair, Pearl Davie, who agreed to be interviewed, and put him in touch with other participants. The resulting film appeared on *360 Vision* on December 10 and 11, 2003. We think it's excellent, and want members and friends to see it.

Born and raised on Cape Breton Island, Kevin graduated from Univ. of Kings College in Halifax, with a BA in Psychology, and received a Bachelor of Applied Arts from Ryerson Univ.; as a student, he received three Television and Radio Arts awards.

Kevin began his career on Vision TV's Gemini Award winning current affairs program, *It's About Time*, and Visions weekly arts show, *Art's Express*. His series on an Aboriginal Residential School reunion received a B'nai Brith Media Human Rights Award. Kevin also produced a touching, controversial, documentary about a gay ex-Mormon who adopted two children, which won a Planet Out Short Film Movie Award in international competition, and has been screened at many film festivals.

Kevin's recently completed his first feature film, *The Tar Ponds Loonie Give-Away*. This political satire follows an unsuspecting Cape Breton couple who win Canada's worst toxic waste site, the Sydney Tar Ponds, in a government scam. The film made its debut in February, 2004, at the World of Comedy International Film Festival.

Do come and meet this accomplished young man, and hear why he chose to produce a piece on memorial societies - and view the finished product. Don't miss this exciting event; remember to bring a friend or two.

**We hope to see you at the Library on May 4th.**

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

---

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

Once again I remind members of the importance of memorial societies in providing information and education about the funeral industry, both to our members and to the public. The society receives many calls from people with questions and concerns about funerals; our telephone people try to assist them.

When a person calls the society (905-389-8240) they are given the names and numbers of our volunteer telephone committee and can call and speak to any one of them. In this way, no one person receives too many calls. Volunteers all, most of these "front line" society

*(continued)*

members listed below have served for many years. We also salute Launa Ganann, just retired after over thirty years on our phone committee. We sincerely thank her for the time and effort she has committed to the society!

With Launa's retirement, we would welcome another person on the telephone committee. Helpful reference material will be provided to a new recruit.

Our board members, elected for three year terms, meet six times a year to discuss the business of the society and participate in current projects. We encourage members to consider participating in the life of the society and standing for the board in future.

Our membership secretary is Miriam Kramer. She maintains membership records and sends out materials. She appreciates the assistance of retired board member Eileen Hayhoe, who graciously fills in whenever asked.

As Chair of the Board of Trustees, I extend thanks on behalf of all members for the support the trustees have given the society. This past year, Jake den Hartog has done double duty as Treasurer and Secretary ( with thanks to his wife, Janine, for the typing). Trustees

Jim Sackville, Alan Bishop, Martin Dooley, Alena Gabel and Marjorie Kildare have done a fine job.

The Fall of 2003 was exciting for me, working with Kevin O'Keefe of Vision TV, on the video mentioned above. We began with phone conversations and exchanges of information. Then the filming began, first at my home for an interview about how I personally became involved in the society (in 1971) . We next went to a co-operating funeral home, Donald V. Brown, Stoney Creek; finally Mr. O'Keefe interviewed Pat Briand, a former telephone volunteer whose husband had died a few months earlier. All in all, several hours of taping resulted in a 15 minute segment, which aired nationally, December 10 and 11, 2003. It will be shown at our meeting on May 4th.

In addition to the video, we're delighted that producer Kevin O'Keefe will be on hand to tell us about the transition from idea to finished film.

I enjoy telling people about the society! This past year I spoke to several local organizations, including two Women's Institutes. *If you know of a group that would like a speaker from the society, please call us.*

---

**Funeral Advisory Society Trustees:**

Pearl Davie, Chair  
Jake den Hartog, Secretary &  
Acting Treasurer      Alan Bishop  
Martin Dooley            Alena Gabel  
Marjorie Kildare        Jim Sackville

**Telephone Committee:**

Connie Dunnett        Len Metcalfe  
Verna Stanek            Maureen Wright.

**Membership Secretary:** Miriam Kramer  
**Assistant:** Eileen Hayhoe

---

**We have two velvet palls** available for use at members' funerals. The large dark green pall will cover a plain casket, and the small blue pall will drape a cremation container. The only condition for use of either pall is that they be returned no less than five days from the day borrowed. For more information please call 905-389-8240 or 905-385-3616.

**Our new brochure: a copy of our revised brochure should be enclosed - please give it to someone who might benefit from membership. Thank you!**

---

**We'd like you to tell us...**

Your experiences with our co-operating funeral directors. We hope you've been satisfied; if they have been especially helpful, we'd like to know. If you've had problems, we'd like to hear about those also.

What you would like to have as a topic at an annual meeting. Recent meetings have featured bereavement counseling , forensic pathology, wills/powers of attorney, estate planning, funeral practices in other cultures, cemetery/crematory/casket sales.

We're all in this together and want to hear from our members; we welcome your comments/suggestions.

**Very Important Record**

Have you filled out your Vital Information Record (VIR - green) form? It helps you assess your financial situation, and saves work for your executor later. The VIR should be reviewed and updated regularly. We'll have copies on hand on May 4th; come, pick one up

**E-mail, Anyone?**

To reduce postage costs, we hope soon to offer the newsletter by E-mail to those who want it - please use the attached coupon to send us your address.

---

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

Your generosity has been instrumental in making it possible to print and distribute this newsletter.

**For Help with Planning a Memorial Service:**

If you are uncertain about how to plan a memorial service, The First Unitarian Church of Hamilton has two chaplains willing to counsel families about the nature of the service; upon request, they will also conduct the service. They are:

- Kath McIntyre 905-522-5869
- Marylin Robinson-Hui 905-388-9910

**We are grateful for donations**

Donations have assisted the ongoing work of the society and are becoming increasingly important as our operating expenses continue to increase (just as yours do), even as we have cut expenses whenever possible. Every contribution is much appreciated!

**Addition to Our List of Funeral Homes:**

Dodsworth & Brown, Robinson Chapel, has been added to our list of cooperating funeral homes. Two of our Board members visited the funeral home manager and believe that our philosophy of arranging a simple funeral at moderate cost will be respected.

**Talk It Over**

Family discussion is important when preplanning your funeral arrangements, to avoid conflict when death occurs. Preplanned arrangements are not usually altered after the death of the preplanner, but changes can be made on request of the bereaved. Dead bodies have no rights in Ontario! If you want a simple arrangement, try to ensure that your loved ones understand, and are in agreement.

**2003 AGM: "Bereavement Support"**

Barbara Brown, a grief counselor and specialist in bereavement issues, spoke at last year's AGM. She pointed out that we in North America attempt to deny death. We make no provision for long periods of official mourning. People are expected to mask their grief and get on with life; however, they often need help at some point. Bereavement support is available, in varying forms, e.g., support groups, one-on-one support, either professional or volunteer, and specific help for bereaved children. For information, start by contacting Bereaved Families of Ontario (Hamilton/Burlington) at 905-318-0070.

**List of Cooperating Funeral Homes, Spring, 2004:**

|   |  |               |
|---|--|---------------|
| Marlatt Funeral Home and Cremation Centre | 615 Main St. East, Hamilton, L8M 1J4       | (905)528-6303 |
|   | 195 King St. West, Dundas, L9H 1V5         | (905)627-7452 |
| Markey-Dermody Funeral Home               | 1774 King St. East, Hamilton, L8K 1V7      | (905)547-1121 |
| Cresmount Funeral Home                    | 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 |
| Dodsworth & Brown, Robinson Chapel        | 15 West Ave. North, Hamilton, L8L 5B9      | (905)522-2496 |
| Donald V. Brown Funeral Home              | 36 Lake Avenue Dr., Stoney Creek, L8G 3N3  | (905)662-2948 |
| Smith's Funeral Home                      | 485 Brant Street, Burlington, L7R 2G5      | (905)632-3333 |
| Beckett-Glaves Funeral Home               | 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             | 96 West Street, Brantford, N3T 3E7         | (519)759-2211 |
| Ballard-McDonald Funeral Home             | 315 Broad St. East, Dunnville, N1A 1G4     | (905)774-7277 |
| Ward Funeral Homes, Oakville              | 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 ..... ADDRESS.....

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

*(Please indicate if this is a new address)*

I PREFER NEWSLETTERS BY E-MAIL .....

*E-mail address*

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

**Guide to Programs & Services for Seniors**

That's the title of a (free) publication designed to introduce seniors to programs and services funded or delivered by government and local community organizations in Ontario. The book is loaded with general information on many topics, listing sources of help related to each of these. To obtain a copy, call:

Seniors INFOLine: 1-888-910-1999  
on line: [www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/seniors](http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/seniors)

**Federation of Ontario Memorial Societies-Funeral Consumers Alliance (FOOMS-FCA)**

Our society is active in this group; our Chair, Pearl Davie is Federation President. Through FOOMS-FCA we interact with the ten other Ontario societies. FOOMS-FCA also speaks for the societies regarding consumer protection, and legislation governing the funeral industry.

**New Legislation:**

As reported last year, The Funeral Burial & Cremation Services Act received Royal Assent in December, 2002. When proclaimed, it will govern the entire "death care industry" - funeral homes, cemeteries, monument dealers casket stores, etc. FOOMS-FCA representatives took part in developing the new Act. Now they are reviewing the draft regulations, with regard to consumer protection, and an industry Code of Ethics. The process is slow; the Act will likely not be in force before early 2005.

**FOOMS-FCA Annual Conference**

Hamilton sent two delegates to the FOOMS-FCA annual conference, held last October in Sudbury.

One session featured a report about the Board of Funeral Services (BFS), by a member of the Memorial Society of Northern Ontario, who is a Public Member on that Board. The BFS' purposes include enforcing current funeral legislation, and resolving disputes between a consumer and a funeral director, if they cannot reach a satisfactory agreement on their own.

The BFS requires funeral directors to attend professional courses, increasingly focussed on business ethics, as well as practical training. A stated aim of the Board of Funeral Services is to become more accessible to consumers, (most of whom have never heard of it) to provide information and receive any complaints.

Board of Funeral Services: 1-800-387-4458  
Web Site: [www.funeralboard.com](http://www.funeralboard.com)

This presentation raised an ongoing debate: should memorial societies put less stress on arranging an inexpensive funeral and more emphasis on arranging a funeral which will satisfy the family, and be good value for money? It was agreed that memorials consumers are, and will continue to be, advocates for the consumer.

NB: The 2004 FOOMS-FCA Conference, planned for Oct. 1-3 in St. Catharines, is open to any society member.

**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.*

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

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

Please send me the following publications: .....

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