

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

Celebrating our 35th year of Service!

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

www.hwcen.org/link/fashd

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2006 Public Information Session and Annual Meeting

Tuesday, May 30, 2006

7:30 p.m.

Hamilton Public Library

55 York Blvd.

"The Medicalization of Death: Writing the Final Chapter"

Speaker: Alison Roberts Miculan, Medical Ethicist,
Hamilton Health Sciences Research Ethics Board

What is a Medical Ethicist and what role can they play in assisting us to determine the best course of action during our loved one's final days?

Our topic will be a reflection on the ways in which death has come to be taken over by the health care system in North America, and some thoughts about alternative options. While there are no clear-cut answers, an ethicist has the skills required to assist us in making ethical choices concerning the death of our loved ones with their best interests in mind.

Alison Roberts Miculan currently teaches Professional Competencies in the MD programme at McMaster University and is the Ethicist for the Hamilton Health Sciences Research Ethics Board. She has served as the Senior Ethics Advisor for McMaster and has been

Everyone Is Welcome! Free Admission

a member of the Clinical Ethics Committee. She is a Research Associate of the Department of Philosophy and has had a longstanding relationship with the Department of Philosophy as a Sessional Lecturer.

In addition to her academic work Alison is the CEO of a Humanitarian organization called Relief Aid International that is currently assisting in restoring devastated communities in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and New Orleans. Come join us at the Hamilton Library on May 30th for what will surely be a fascinating subject: "The Medicalization of Death: Writing the Final Chapter." A question period will follow.

Bring a Friend! Refreshments will be served

Chairman's Message – from Pearl Davie

My annual remarks are always a pleasure in that I get to thank the board members and telephone committee for all their great work during the year. Attendance and participation at board meetings is always excellent. Treasurer Jake den Hartog does a great job of keeping our books. Secretary Martin Dooley manages the minutes and agenda and keeps us on schedule. V-P Alena Gabel, Karen Laposa, Jean Wheeler and Jim Sackville all make major contributions with their suggestions and willingness to take action in the best interests of the society. Also,

Membership Secretary, Miriam Kramer, is always there for us. Her duties include sending out FASHD material, preparing forms, keeping a database of the members, printing labels for the newsletter, attending most board meetings and acting as editor. Eileen Hayhoe has done a wonderful job as acting membership secretary when Miriam is away.

Our telephone volunteers, Connie Dunnett, Verna Stanek, Len Metcalfe and Maureen Wright provide a vital link in responding to inquiries from the general public and our membership.

An extra thank you goes out to Len Metcalf for his work in tracking down some of those members whose newsletters were returned by the post office. We have a great team working for the good of our members and all deserve our sincere thanks!

It is essential to note that all of the executive and committee members are volunteers who receive no financial compensation for their duties - just a real sense of satisfaction. Jim Sackville has been on the board for two 3-year terms and in accordance with our bylaws cannot stand for election this year. Jim is the only funeral director to ever serve on our board and it has been very informative to have a person from the industry (with a memorial society philosophy) to consult with. Thank you Jim, for your years of service!

During the year, in order to address some concerns of our members, it was necessary to visit one of our cooperating funeral providers. The Board then decided it would be best to visit all of our listed cooperating homes to ensure all staff was aware of the society and our mandate. Several visits have already been completed and it has proved to be a constructive and rewarding process for the board members involved.

Throughout the past year there have been some interesting and alarming developments in the funeral industry, which have received much media coverage. There was an unfortunate mix-up of bodies at a local funeral home and a disturbing story out of the USA involving the illegal sale of bones and tissue for transplant, which made headlines. We endeavour to act in the best interests of our members and members of the public in obtaining information and responding to concerns whenever possible.

The regulations being drafted for the Funerals, Burials and Cremation Services Act 2002 are still under review/revision. The new Act cannot be proclaimed until all regulations are in place. It is hoped it will come into force sometime in 2007. Enhanced consumer protection is foremost in the submissions being made by the Legislation Committee of the Federation of Ontario Memorial Societies which I chair.

The executive and committees of FOOMS are drawn from memorial societies across the province and are essential in consulting with the provincial government in matters related to the death care industry. Memorial societies are essential – both in their local efforts to encourage pre-planning and access to alternatives but also in assuming that legislation will include proper protection for the most vulnerable consumers.

It has been my pleasure to work on behalf of the membership. Pearl Davie, Chair

Funeral Advisory Society Trustees:

Pearl Davie, Chair
Alena Gabel, Vice-President
Jake den Hartog, Treasurer
Martin Dooley, Secretary
Karen Laposa, Jean Wheeler

Telephone Committee:

Connie Dunnett, Len Metcalfe,
Verna Stanek, Maureen Wright

Membership Secretary: Miriam Kramer
Assistant: Eileen Hayhoe

Privacy Policy

We are in the process of establishing a formal Privacy Policy for our members, in order to comply with the new Privacy Act. Members can be assured that we guard their privacy and have never released names or addresses to any other group or organization, and maintain the security of our membership list.

Our Finances

As you are aware, the society is run completely by volunteers. We pay no salaries, however our costs continue to increase due to postage, telephone, printing, and room rental expenditures. In recent years we have operated in the red and drawn on our modest surplus to meet our obligations. Any donation that you can make to the society will go a long way to balance our budget this year. Please use the enclosed donation form and accept our sincere thanks for your gift. **We value your continued support!**

FOOMS-FCA Annual Meeting 2005

Delegates from all eleven societies met last fall at the YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Discovery Centre near Bolton, ON. A Friday evening welcome reception was followed by a full agenda on Saturday and Sunday that focused on society updates, a Legislation Committee report, privacy policies, website/internet and other concerns. A PowerPoint presentation for P.R. was given. FOOMS-FCA President Pearl Davie received a special plaque in recognition of her long service.

A new focus was announced; "Toward a Greener Disposition". Various methods and new technologies for the disposition of bodies will be researched and memorial societies will be informed of any changes from the standard methods of cremation and/or burial in a casket/container. Jean Wheeler, Delegate

Green Funerals and Woodland Burials

“Green burial” is a concept that originated in the UK and is gaining acceptance in Canada and the US. When we speak about green funerals we are referring to a meadow or woodland burial. These burials promote the use of biodegradable products, like simple wood handmade caskets including wicker caskets or burial shrouds. No use of toxic embalming chemicals, metal caskets, steel or concrete burial vaults are allowed.

The environment is kept as wild and close to nature as possible by eliminating the use of memorials or headstones. Trees are planted instead to mark the gravesite and grave density is kept much lower than that of a typical cemetery. In this way the body is returned to nature and the resulting green space establishes a living memorial. This will become a protected wildlife reserve open to hikers and nature enthusiasts alike. The Federation is obtaining more information on these processes and will keep societies Informed.

2005 Annual Meeting

Jim Sackville introduced Nancy Hemrica and Scott Skinner of the Trillium Gift of Life Network who spoke on “Organ and Tissue Donation – Giving the Gift of Life.” A very interesting presentation on organ and tissue donation was followed by an extensive question and answer period. Jim thanked the speakers, who declined the usual honorarium, on behalf of all present. Readers interested in learning more about this worthwhile topic are referred to the Trillium Gift of Life Network (www.giftoflife.on.ca).

What is a Transfer Service?

A transfer service is a business licensed to provide the basic formalities in connection with a death. Its staff members may remove the body from the place of death, place it in a casket, deliver it to a cemetery or crematorium and file the necessary documents.

Transfer services, as the name implies cannot do any preparation of the body, including embalming or conduct or attend a visitation or a funeral. A transfer service can only provide a Memorial Society Type A funeral.

Tell your family about your funeral wishes

Discuss your funeral wishes with family and your decision maker. Over the span of a lifetime views may change, so it's important to keep the dialogue open.

Anyone who wishes some say in their end-of-life decisions should do the following three things:

- 1. Draft a durable power of attorney for health care**
This legal document designates who can make decisions for you when you no longer can make them for yourself. A lawyer can draft this for you or you can use a will-making kit.
- 2. Explore your feelings about end-of-life care**
Think about the kinds of care you would want in various situations. i.e. If you fell ill, would you consent to a feeding tube or other heroic measures to keep you alive?
- 3. Talk about what you want—and keep talking**
Your family and your appointed decision-maker need to know where you stand on these issues. You will not be able to settle end-of-life issues with one discussion, as your views on what is and isn't appropriate may change over time.

Young people in good health usually scoff at the thought of disability. However, as they get older, they may discover that disabilities can be accommodated, and that life may still be worth living.

New Membership Drive

In order to maintain a strong consumer presence, we are constantly seeking new members. As an existing member of the Funeral Advisory Society of Hamilton and District, you are already aware of the exceptional advocacy work done on behalf of our membership.

Our one-time \$20.00 fee pays for itself in the first mailing of a new member's package, which includes many forms and invaluable information on pre-planning and planning funerals. Having the information contained in our kits on hand, may help eliminate some of the stress associated with end-of-life issues. Other benefits include our Annual Newsletter and Meeting. **Please ask a friend or family member to join!** If you or they require more information, give our telephone volunteers a call @ 905-389-8240.

Membership Report for 2005

During the year we had 53 new members join, and one person transfer into our society. Three members transferred into other Canadian Societies. We are also sorry to learn of the deaths of 33 members and extend our sympathy to their families and friends. Please call us with your new address if you are planning a move.

Cremated Remains

Many funeral homes will no longer pick up or store cremated remains for clients. This is now the responsibility of the survivors. Discuss with your funeral provider what their policy is and how to go about picking up the remains. Remember it is not necessary to purchase an urn or other container from the funeral provider. A simple container, usually an cardboard or plastic box is provided by the crematorium.

There are 3 crematoriums located in Hamilton & District, Bay View, White Chapel and Holy Cross (Paris, ON). Your funeral provider will advise you of the one they normally use.

Publications available, for Members Only:

- Member's Information Handbook..... \$5.00
- Replacement Pre-Arrangement Forms..... \$5.00
- Cooperating Funeral Directors' Price List.... Free
- Replacement Membership Card Free

For Anyone, (no charge) upon request

- Society Brochure – Membership Application
- “Vital Information Record”
- “Readings for a Memorial Service”
- M.O.R.E. Organ Donor Card
- “Preparing for Approaching Death” (palliative care)
- *Powers of Attorney Kit, Ontario, with forms
- *N.B.: this latter item is costly to mail; a donation towards postage would be appreciated.*

Scattering of Cremated Remains

It should be noted that the Federation of Ontario Memorial Societies, through their Legislative Committee has always urged that the public has the option to scatter cremated remains (ashes) personally, and is reviewing proposed regulation to ensure that this consumer right continues. Occasionally misinformation is given by funeral providers indicating that cremated remains must be scattered in a licensed cemetery. This is not the case now, and the option will likely continue in new legislation.

List of Cooperating Funeral Providers, Spring 2005:

J.B. Marlatt Funeral Homes (1985)	615 Main St. East, Hamilton	L8M 1J4	905-528-6303
J.B. Marlatt Funeral Homes (1985)	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 Ltd.	322 Fennell Ave. East, Hamilton	L9A 1T2	905-387-2111
Truscott, Brown & 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 Ave., Stoney Creek	L8G 3N3	905-662-2948
Smith's Funeral Homes	485 Brant Street, Burlington	L7R 2G5	905-632-3333
Beckett-Glaves Funeral Homes	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-Minor Funeral Home	315 Broad St. East, Dunnville	N1A 1G4	905-774-7277
Ward Funeral Homes	109 Reynolds St., Oakville	L6J 3K4	905-844-3221
National Cremation Society	2289 Fairview Street Unit 319, Burlington	L7R 2E3	905-631-3128 1-866-627-9474
Canadian Cremation & Burial Services Ltd.	1919 King St. E, Hamilton	L8K 1V9	905-545-8889
Affordable Burial & Cremation	697 Mohawk Rd. East, Ham.	L8W 3J6	905-389-2998

TO: the Funeral Advisory Society, P.O. Box 89026, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4R5

***please check the appropriate box/boxes

- I enclose \$.....as a voluntary donation to the society** **Please send a Receipt:.....**
- I enclose \$20.00 to become a Lifetime FASHD Member**

Name Telephone

Address City/Town

Postal Code Email address

- I enclose \$..... for the following publications.....**

N.B. Photocopies or handwritten copies of this form are acceptable. Questions, Concerns, Comments, can also be included.