



Published by the

Memorial Society of Kitchener-Waterloo and Area
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End-of-Life Planning **Perspective**
2007

Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, May 23, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.
Rockway Centre
(1405 King St. East, Kitchener)

Bring a friend!

Presenter 1: ART HORNETT on "**CRISIS IN CLIMATE CHANGE**"

Scientists have long warned us about the atmospheric warming effect of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and that we must immediately reduce such emissions by a significant volume. For 25 years Art was employed by Liquid Carbonate, a large manufacturer of CO₂, where he oversaw over 450 installations of CO₂-type refrigeration at companies such as Cuddy Farms, Weston and Schneiders. Art believes that we can safely solve the CO₂ problem by using liquid nitrogen in its place.

Presenter 2: BETH WARING on "**YOUR IMPACT ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**"

Beth became a member of our Board of Directors in 1978 and was at one time editor of the Memorial Society newsletter and later served as Public Relations Director. Protection of the natural environment is a major interest of hers and she has supported Green Peace, Preservation of the Rain Forests, the Suzuki Foundation and is a member of the Green Party. Our earth's atmosphere is badly damaged and Beth feels that effective measures to heal it require immediate action on local, regional, national and global levels. Like charity, environmental action begins at home and there are many ways you can lessen your impact on the natural environment and make better decisions for biodiversity.

A Personal Perspective

In 1973 the KW Record published a two-page article in a weekend supplement about the new Memorial Society. My husband and I were in our forties with two children, and the idea of preplanning and low-cost funerals was exactly what we were looking for. We joined the Society and a few years later my parents joined. When my parents died several years later, my brother and I really appreciated that all the arrangements were in place for them. I am sure that our children will one day appreciate that we took care of our own funeral plans too.

Soon after we joined the Society, I volunteered to serve on the board. The board members are usually a pleasant sort and there are not too many meetings throughout the year. In the past we had some colourful personalities. The first chairman was Fred Schneider, who had the difficult job of persuading the funeral directors to offer more choice in low-cost funerals. Then there was Alex Cairncross, a retired engineer, who had been building roads in China for Chiang Kai Chek. There he met his

wife, a medical doctor for a Christian Mission. They left China just before Mao Tse Tung took over. I admired the beautiful keepsakes they brought home from their travels.

Joe Suerich took over when Alex moved away. Since it was before the computer age, Joe single-handedly composed and typed a newsletter on his old typewriter. He was into recycling in a big way and reused all old large envelopes. We held a couple of largely-attended annual general meetings at the back of his camera shop.

In the beginning, we held board meetings at board members' homes. The last few years we have held meetings at the Rockway Centre in the early afternoon. Meetings usually last one to two hours. Lastly, I would like to say that a Memorial Society Prearrangement Plan is an excellent idea. I hope to see you at the Annual General Meeting on May 23rd at 7 pm.

Nina Furniss

(Nina is the longest serving member on the Board of Directors)

FOOMS— Federation of Ontario Memorial Societies

The annual Provincial meeting was held in September of 2006 at the Scarborough Mission in Toronto. Seven of the eleven local organizations were represented at the '06 meetings. Unfortunately the Kitchener-Waterloo society was not represented in '06, but a written report of activities was sent and read to those in attendance.

FOOMS remains very active with the Provincial government to support consumer concerns as the Province updates applicable legislation. FOOMS is also presently active in offering suggestions for the "Bereavement Sector Code of Ethics".

Membership fees for some local organizations have increased to \$35 & \$40.

"Greener Disposition" is becoming a growing issue for burials. There is growing recognition that chemicals introduce pollution to our environment, from embalming fluids to even the smoke created by cremation.

Attention was given to "pandemic planning", recognizing that emergencies could arise that would cause unusual demands on disposition services.

The 2008 meeting will also be held at the Scarborough Mission.

Some Creative Ideas for Human Remains

Some have put ashes in a ceramic urn, hung from a tree by a biodegradable string. After about 3 years, the string breaks and the urn drops and breaks open spreading its contents over the ground!

Some have made a birdfeeder of bird food combined with human ash, with the idea that a sort of reincarnation takes place as the remains are consumed by birds!

Some have had pencils made from the carbon contained in human ash. It seems that ash from the average person contains enough carbon for about 240 pencils, which can be printed with the person's name, and dates of birth and death!

What is the Difference Between a Funeral Service and a Memorial Service?

This is a simplified explanation of the main differences in our culture today. **Funeral** is usually used to describe a service where the body of the deceased is present. Pall bearers escort the casket to the front of the church or chapel and accompany it out after the service to a waiting hearse. The body will be delivered to the cemetery or crematorium and there may be an immediate additional service attended by close family and friends, or this may take place later that day (or not at all). Because of sanitary reasons, but not by law, the body will likely have been embalmed and if there has been public viewing, probably hair will have been styled and makeup applied.

A **Memorial Service** usually consists of a much simpler, less formal practice, and since there is no deceased body to consider, may be held any time or times, and anywhere. Families who have a summer home, for instance, may choose to have a Memorial Service at each location. The service may take place days, weeks or even months after the actual death. I have attended Memorial Services in churches, funeral chapels, a legion hall and once in the reception area of a retirement residence.

Sometimes, after cremation, family will place a decorative urn containing the ashes of the deceased along with a picture of him or her. Children are

much more comfortable than at a traditional funeral. The service may have informal eulogies and perhaps the favourite rock-and-roll music of the departed. As with a traditional funeral, there is usually a reception where those attending may have a time of fellowship with family and friends.

This is not intended to describe the Memorial Service held by members of the Orthodox Church, a liturgy performed in memory of the deceased at certain set intervals after the funeral. But the reception after some Memorial Services could easily be mistaken for an Irish wake!

Beth Waring

President's Report

Your board has remained active over the past year. We had an interesting shift in board membership, namely George Cross leaving but his wife Shirley joining, and also assuming the job of Membership Chair that George held formerly. Also, we are pleased to have Kurt Wilken join us as a new member.

You will find the full list of board members on the back page of this issue. We still feel a bit short, so if any of you would like to take on some meaningful volunteer work, please think about joining the board of your Memorial Society. And we would welcome you for just a trial meeting— with no obligation— to assess how you may like it and how you might fit in.

Perhaps our major focus over the past year has been revising our original Bylaws. After 30+ years, I think the new version much better reflects current matters. This revision will be submitted at our Annual General Meeting for your approval.

We have long published an annual newsletter and you are now reading from the latest issue. But as so many more are coming to be computer users, and since we now have a website to carry copies of our newsletter, we wonder if you might help us to reduce our mailing costs (and environmental waste) by reading issues online.

We ask those of you with computers to consider using electronic delivery methods rather than regular mail. Please let us know via email whether we may drop your name from our regular mailing list and add your name to our email list. Of course, we may still want to notify you with a regular mailing of any special news.

To respond affirmatively to this request for online reading of the newsletter, please notify us by sending your reply to **info@kwmemorialsociety.com**

Thank you.

We want to tell you that we became a part of the Annual Retirement and Living Show this year. This two-day event was last held on April 21st & 22nd, and I was struck by it's very professional and helpful presentations. You may want to watch for it next spring.

Finally, don't forget our Annual General Meeting. Beth will have some interesting things to share with you about changes in burial practices that address current pollution concerns. Read more about that on the first page of this issue.

John Wine

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Enclosed is a cheque for \$ _____ (\$20.00/person) for lifetime membership.

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

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Please update my address (as above).

Please discontinue mailing this newsletter.
I will access newsletters via the website, **www.kwmemorialsociety.com**.

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1 anonymous

Thank You!

A special note of thanks
 to members who donated
 to the Society in 2006,
 and to those who served
 on the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors

President John Wine
 Secretary Nina Furniss
 Treasurer Margaret Barker

Directors Jeff Bryce
 Shirley Cross
 Maryke Darron
 Peter Naus
 Keith Newport
 Beth Waring
 Kurt Wilken

Financial Statement (December 31, 2006)

\$ 736.27 Income (donations, membership fees and bank account interest)

\$1,345.08 Expenses (postage, telephone, newsletter publication, website maintenance and FOOMS support)

"This is to certify that the Society and bank statements together with this statement
 were examined by me and found to balance." — Kurt Wilken (March 17, 2007)

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DONATE

Enclosed is a cheque for \$ _____ as a donation.
 Name _____ Telephone _____
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My name may be published on the List of Donators in next year's newsletter.

I am interested in sitting on the Board of Directors. Please contact me.