



# Perspective

Memorial Society of Kitchener-Waterloo and Area

2008

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## Annual General Meeting

**Monday, June 2, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.**

Rockway Centre

1405 King St. East, Kitchener

### Agenda

- **President's Report:**
  - Review of the past year's goals and achievements
  - Progress of meetings with funeral service providers
- **Membership Report**
- **Treasurer's Report**
- **Question Period**
- **Election of Directors**
- **Appointment of Executive Positions**

## Memorial Societies— Evolve or Die

By Jeff Bryce, President

Memorial societies have long served as consumer advocates for low-cost funeral arrangements and alternatives. The *Federation of Ontario Memorial Societies — Funeral Consumers' Alliance (FOOMS-FCA)* was influential in the *Funeral Directors and Establishment Act (1990)* which provided significant gains for consumers. For example, funeral home price lists must be complete and uniform, prepaid arrangement funds must be held in trust, families can handle their own arrangements, transfer of human remains to cemeteries and crematoria can be done by transfer service businesses, displays of supplies must include lowest cost items, and vulnerable individuals must be protected from direct marketing.

And FOOMS-FCA is involved in revised legislation. The *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act (2002)*, which is still in the parliamentary process, contains key issues for consumers. For example, the funeral business remains commercial and not pseudo Public Health, transfer service activities may become less restricted, and scattering of ashes is allowed on private lands, Crown lands and conservation areas with prior permission.

Unfortunately, despite these important consumer gains, the memberships of many memorial societies are declining as we all struggle to attract new members, especially those from younger generations. As baby boomers are more concerned about consumer choice than they are about low-cost, memorial societies must focus their efforts more on consumer choice regarding funeral alternatives than on getting the cheapest burial package. This is not to say that we should abandon our roots, rather that we must continue to advocate consumer choice as a top priority.

For example, memorial societies can promote efforts to secure more sites for green or natural burials. While natural burials have been popular for years in the UK and US, "red tape" has delayed the opening of a natural site in Southern Ontario until at least 2009. Another alternative called promession (from the Italian for "promise") involves the process of freeze drying using liquid nitrogen. Developed by a Swedish biologist in 1999, facilities are expected to open this year in Sweden and the UK. Please visit our website, [www.kwmemsoc.ca](http://www.kwmemsoc.ca), where we continue to provide updates on the funeral services industry.

### List of Donators

Andrew, Joan & James	Lubiw, Maryke
Capindale, Olive & John	Moran, Mr. & Mrs. William
Cross, Shirley (in kind)	Macredie, Margaret
Fast, Mary & George	Pick, Vera
Galley, Kathlyn & Robert	Spronk, Barbara
Hertel, Helen	Vahlenkamp, H. W.
Irmscher, Mr. & Mrs. W.	Voisin, Shirley-Ann & Douglas
Kurschner, Otto	Ward, Janina & Donald
Ledingham, Joan	Wareham, D. & M.
Lewis, L. & B.	Witmer, Evelyn & Ross
Lothead, Dr. & Mrs. J.	Zwingli, Jean & Richard

### Board of Directors

President	Jeff Bryce
Treasurer	Margaret Barker
Secretary	Shirley Cross
Directors	George Cross
	Maryke Darron
	Nina Furniss
	Kurt Wilken
	John Wine
	Peter Naus (on leave)

### Your Support is Appreciated

The Society's main funding is from membership fees & donations.  
The Society's activities are conducted by volunteers.  
Thanks to everyone who has donated time and resources.



### Financial Statement (December 31, 2007)

**\$2,236.63 Income** (donations, membership fees and bank account interest)  
**\$1,458.95 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 (April 21, 2008)

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### JOIN / UPDATE / DONATE

- Enclosed is a cheque for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a donation.  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_
- 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.