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Memorial Markers & Cemetery Operations

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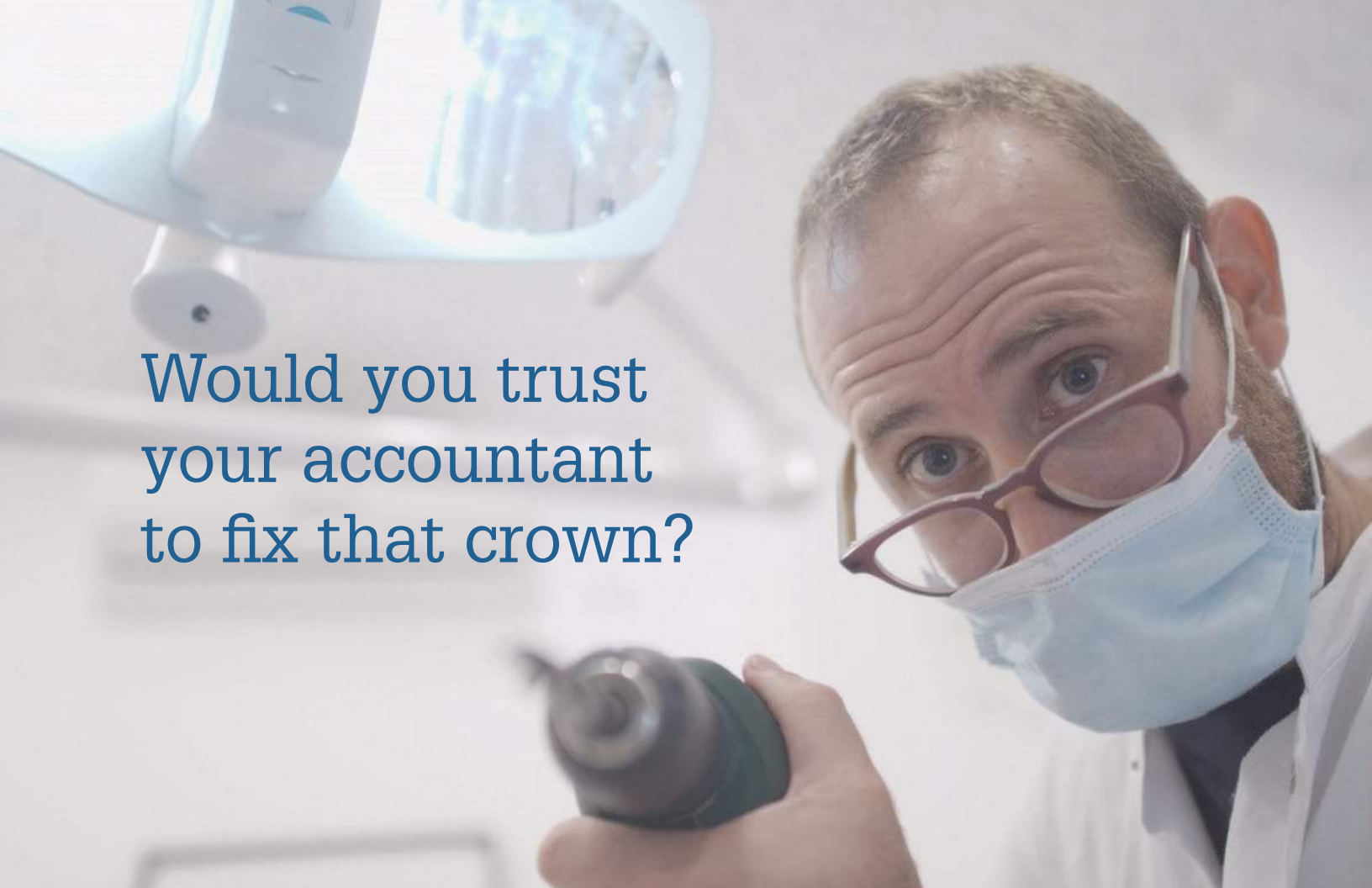
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The Modern Memorial Movement



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"Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go..."

- Unknown



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The Modern Memorial Movement

by Mariah Gregory

Columbaria is No Longer Niche for Resurrection Cemetery

Take a ten-mile trek north of the Motor City and discover one of the largest memorial parks in Michigan, Resurrection Cemetery. As one of six memorial properties operated by The Mt. Elliott Cemetery Association, it is part of a long history of careful development and earnest stewardship. Local families have entrusted Resurrection Cemetery to safeguard their lost loved ones since 1955. At that time, traditional in-ground burial and mausoleum interment options were enough to satisfy patronage. Almost seventy years later, cremation rates have skyrocketed and ushered in the demand for final disposition alternatives.

Understanding Influences

Environmental concerns, rising burial costs, and weakened religious prohibitions against cremation are top of mind for many dipping a toe in the pre-planning waters. These factors, combined with current cremation rates and a more transient population, are reshaping cemetery landscapes across the nation.

In addition, baby boomers reaching retirement age are paving the way for a more personalized form of dying. Data from the United States Census Bureau indicates that all baby boomers will be 65 or older by 2030. While the shared characteristics of generational labels are not an exact science, there are many commonalities in how baby boomers view death. In short, rather than a period of mourning, they are opting for end-of-life celebrations – infused with unique elements of their personality and experiences. This quest for personalization is making cremation an increasingly popular choice.

Rethinking Land Use

Resurrection Cemetery reframed this cultural shift as an opportunity rather than a problem. They proactively set out to meet the new tradition of cremation, conserve land, and increase their capacity by introducing columbaria to their landscape.

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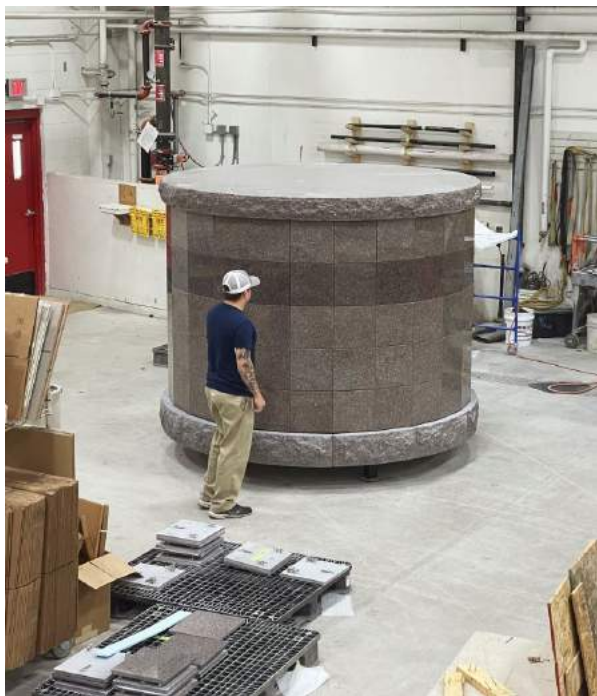
The Modern Memorial Movement

According to the Cremation & Burial Report released in 2022 by NFDA (National Funeral Directors Association), the national cremation rate is currently hovering around 60%. NFDA projects the rate to climb to nearly 80% by 2040.

However, many cemetery operators are struggling to challenge the status quo and sticking with the set-it-and-forget-it method of operation. Acre by acre, burial plots are selling at a slowed pace. For a cemetery that offers in-ground and mausoleum interment exclusively, this revenue is often the primary source of income for perpetual care and land management costs. On the other hand, cemeteries facing land scarcity are on the verge of becoming obsolete with limited options for additional funding.

Establishing progressive memorial solutions, such as columbaria, on existing land has too many benefits to ignore. It can expand profit margins to cover rising maintenance costs. It can sustain cemetery livelihood by revitalizing underused spaces. Finally, it can carry these historical places of remembrance into the modern age by expanding memorial options to appeal to a wide array of tastes in the community. All of this is made possible through the sale of multiple cremation niches in the space where only a few in-ground burials would be possible.

In 2015, the national cremation rate surpassed the casketed burial rate for the first time in U.S. history. Since then, Resurrection Cemetery promptly began laying plans to better serve their cremation clients.



Meeting the Need

Resurrection's latest endeavor to respond to the growing preference for cremation is dubbed the Mausoleum of the Saints Cremation Garden. A unique and serene place of remembrance beautifully sited on the southeast corner of the property.

Tim Burrows, the Director of Resurrection Cemetery, played a key role in the planning and implementation of a venture to create an array of cremation memorialization options for Resurrection's clientele. In Burrow's words "...the main catalyst for this project was seeing how well received our first cremation garden was in the community. In 2017, we opened the Prince of Peace Cremation Garden which provided roughly 150 cremation memorials and 350 cremation niches. The success of this garden prompted us to evaluate where our next memorial space would bloom. Once we defined a space, we were off and running."

The journey began with an architectural rendering commissioned by Michael Chilcote, General Manager & COO of the Mt. Elliott Cemetery Association. Chilcote stated that "...we wanted to serve the desire for personalization in memorialization, offer additional inventory without over-saturation, and preserve the peaceful tranquility of the space adjoining our existing mausoleum."

Mekus Tanager, an internationally recognized planning and design firm, rendered a memorial garden concept with an emphasis on beautiful aesthetics and meaningful functionality. At first, the concept only included a Pre-Assembled Ossuarium, a decision inspired by the memorial they installed at Mount Elliot Cemetery in 2019. However, as planning continued, Chilcote noted "...the concept grew a lot from the original thought..." and they decided to add two radiused wall columbaria and an additional straight columbarium wall. A later design evolution produced a statue feature of the Holy Family atop the Ossuarium. Inspired Artisans, a fine art studio in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was commissioned to craft the statue. For Chilcote, it was important to "interweave the contemporary style from the existing mausoleum into the new garden" making for a seamless transition from indoor to outdoor spaces.

Once the concept was completed, Eickhof Columbaria, a columbarium manufacturer based in Crookston, Minnesota, joined the project team. When interviewed about their selection process Chilcote shared that Eickhof is "...a leader in cremation products and their reputation through the years speaks volumes." As one of the first companies to solely focus on columbaria "...their designs are not just cookie-cutter," Chilcote continued, "...they produce elegant, curved columbaria that speak softly. The technology integrated into the hardware behind the scenes was also important to us from an operational standpoint."

The Eickhof Columbaria team meticulously drafted specified construction drawings for the columbarium walls and the Ossuarium at the center of the memorial space. Then, inside their Fabrication Facility, the build began. The Pre-Assembled York Ossuarium came together quickly, followed by two gracefully curved walls and a stately straight wall. Niche fronts were finished in Lac Du Bonnet Granite and attached to the niche cabinet using Eickhof's patented concealed hardware system. The capstone, base, and trim throughout were finished in warm Mahogany granite. Both stones were thoughtfully sourced from North American quarries. Base numerals, a new feature from Eickhof, were also carved under each column of niches to improve wayfinding for both cemetery operators and cemetery visitors.

In September of 2022, the Mausoleum of the Saints Cremation Garden embraced lush landscaping, marking the completion of Resurrection's newest expansion. As outlined in the concept by Mekus Tanager, the environment included "beautifully landscaped garden beds" with "meandering walkways for guests, a variety of cremation estate inventory, benches to rest and reflect, as well as columbaria tucked between the mature pine trees." Many factors were taken into consideration before selecting foliage and new varieties of plantings to enrich the memorial grounds. While preserving many of the existing trees, Resurrection also added vegetation that offered straightforward maintenance and longevity. Not to mention, curtail mischievous wildlife and withstand the changing seasons. In the end, a harmonious balance was created between old and new.



Turning the Page

Today, Resurrection Cemetery is well prepared to capture the at-need, pre-need, and post-need cremation markets.

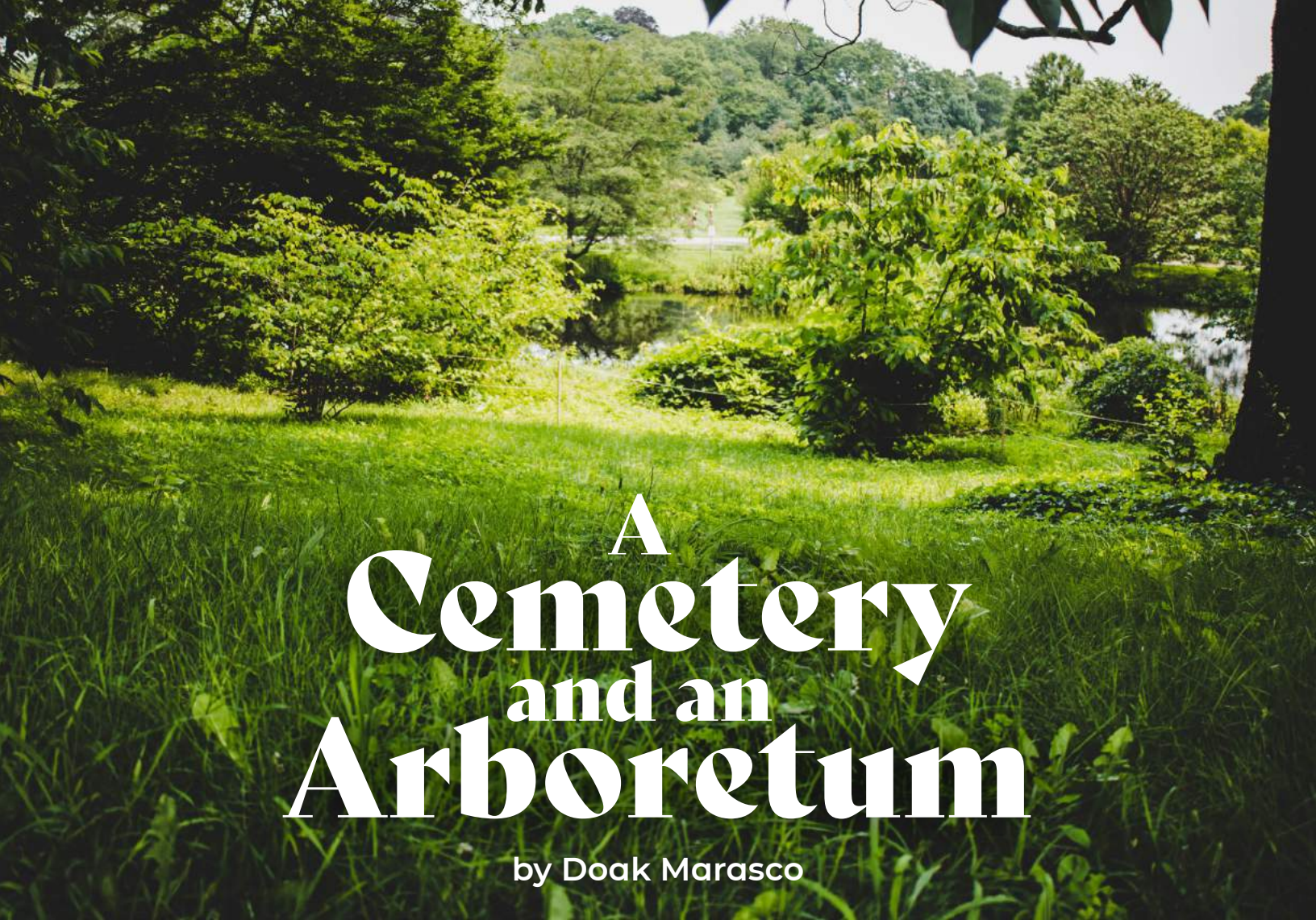
Good niche sales have been evident, in both the Ossuarium and curved walls since the installation. "The sales certainly reflect how well this new option has been received in the community," Burrow explained. He went on to mention "that the space gives families flexibility, which fulfilled one of our goals from the outset."

This venture created more than 1,750 urn spaces on a previously empty section of land. As a part of the variety of memorial options at Resurrection, the Cremation Garden is introduced to families every day. All in all, the Mausoleum of the Saints has been carried forward into the new age of cremation memorialization with niche and ossuary options available at a variety of price points. In turn, Resurrection boosted its relevancy to a growing clientele geared toward personalized cremation options. The formal dedication of this sacred space took place on August 5, 2023, in Clinton Township, Michigan.

About the Author

Mariah Gregory is a Graphic Designer with Eickhof Columbaria - a company whose sole passion is manufacturing the highest quality cremation memorials on the market. Gregory specializes in expressing ideas clearly through striking visuals and refined typography. She joined the Eickhof Columbaria team in 2018 and brings experience in graphic design, photography, and copywriting.





A Cemetery and an Arboretum

by Doak Marasco

What exactly is an arboretum? Briefly stated, the word arboretum can be broken down into arbor, which is Latin for “tree”, and the suffix *ētum*, denoting a collection of plants. The first use of the term arboretum can be traced back to an article in 1833 written by the Scottish landscape designer John Claudius Loudon in *The Gardener’s Magazine*. As a botanist and horticulturalist, Mr. Loudon was fascinated with showcasing the artistic qualities of trees and shrubs within the landscapes he designed. Individual plant specimens, especially exotics, became a focal point for appreciation and study. His unique style of design, which blends characteristics of both French formal gardens (geometric and symmetrical) and English picturesque gardens (wild and rustic), was described by Loudon himself as gardenesque.

Shortly before Loudon’s death in 1843, he wrote a book entitled *On the Laying Out, Planting and managing of Cemeteries* and even submitted designs incorporating his stylistic principles for three English cemeteries: Histon Road Cemetery (1842), Southampton Old Cemetery (1842), and Bath Abbey Cemetery (1843). Loudon’s writings and gardenesque style would carry on and influence future architects and planners, including cemetery design, for generations to come. In fact, his interest in botanical diversity, especially trees, and blending of contrasting garden design elements can be seen throughout cemeteries here in the U.S. today.

Fast forward to the present, and many cemeteries, particularly those affiliated with the rural cemetery movement, are embracing the architectural history of their landscapes, encouraging the public to come and enjoy the beauty and diversity of their woody plants. Events such as tree tours, Arbor Day celebrations, and plant-themed scavenger hunts have become common attractions on cemetery grounds. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, visitation to cemeteries and memorial parks has surged as people seek out safe and tranquil places to escape the stress of everyday life during a global health crisis.

Consequently, the public’s perception of cemeteries as parks and arboretums is growing through this renewed discovery of cemetery landscapes.

For their part, ceterierians are going further to promote the history and aesthetics of these natural and woody landscapes by having their cemeteries and memorial parks become accredited as arboretums through a

program called ArbNet. Since its inception in 2011, ArbNet, which is coordinated by The Morton Arboretum, has accredited over 500 arboreta globally. Of these, approximately 10% are cemeteries or memorial parks. That's an impressive statistic that speaks to the influence landscape planners such as John Claudius Loudon had on cemeteries, as well as other gardens and parks.

To become accredited, an applicant must achieve a set list of standards set forth by ArbNet that vary depending on the level of accreditation desired. An arboretum may apply for any of the four levels of accreditation, with Level I critical set as the program's entry point. While participants are encouraged to build on the development of their standards and move up through the various levels of accreditation, there is no requirement to do so, and many arboreta find that Level I or Level II is the best fit for their purpose.

While there is no requirement to refer to one's landscape as an arboretum, cemeteries and memorial parks that achieve arboretum accreditation through the ArbNet program join a network of other accredited arboreta that share in promoting and enhancing woody plant conservation, and with this comes recognition within their local communities and among their peers as stewards of their landscapes. Participation in ArbNet is free of charge, and you can find out more here at www.arbnet.org

Mr. Loudon was onto something when he chose to bring attention to the individual beauty of trees and shrubs in the landscape, emphasizing their architectural splendor. His design theories greatly influenced the concept of cemeteries as gardens for all to enjoy. Regardless of whether your cemetery or memorial park is an accredited arboretum, your woody plants tell a story that in turn shapes the identity of your business and stands as a testimonial to your place in the community.

About the Author

Doak Marasco is Manager of Strategic Partnerships for The Davey Tree Expert Company and a Supplier Liaison for the Connecticut Cemetery Association. He is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist® NE-6393BM and has a B.S. in Urban Forestry from The Pennsylvania State University.



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How Cemetery Management Software Can Help Cemeteries to Mitigate Risk

BY GRAEME ARTHUR

What does risk look like for cemeteries? Are the impacts financial...legal...reputational? The simple answer is, like any organization, they are all of those and more.

Here we explore some of the risks common to most deathcare providers, the challenges they pose, and how they can be mitigated with the help of cemetery management software.

SPACE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Space, (somewhat inevitably), is one of the biggest risks faced by cemeteries.

Where opportunities for expansion are limited and land availability in parts a challenge - how can cemeteries remain sustainable and mitigate the risk of running out of space?

How well do you know your inventory? A good place to start is ensuring that you know exactly what you have, where you have it, and the rate at which you are running out of it.

A lack of visibility of your data may seriously limit your ability to effectively manage your inventory and maximize the space that you have. Up-to-date, interrogable information, linked to 'true' digital cemetery maps is key to helping you forecast accurately and plan for the future.

Some modern cemetery mapping tools utilize high-resolution aerial drone imagery for a truly digital cemetery burial plot map, showing locations with plot reference, linked to records within their database and updated in real-time.

When combined with data verification processes, this can also provide a forensic inventory audit of your inventory, and even identify untapped inventory for sale.

With cemetery operators looking for ways to stretch the lifespan of their cemeteries for generations to come; and where capacity is reached and additional land is hard to come by, it's also important to be able to find innovative ways to use the space that they have.

Not only this, but in such a perpetually challenging environment, the ability to make data-driven decisions is key to ensuring sustainability.

Key to making informed business decisions about the future is being able to accurately forecast the rate at which you are running out of space. That can be a challenge when information is not easily accessible as a result of using disjointed systems or multiple sources of data.

Having a clear picture of what you're selling against what inventory you have left - from week to week, or month to month - will provide a good indication of the rate at which you are running out of space, and in turn will allow you to take appropriate measures, such as reviewing the release of pre-paid plots, or revising your facilities management plans.

Consider then, the value in cemetery reporting tools that show you exactly what you have available at any one time - a single system linking live data records to plot locations providing the visibility required to make accurate, reliable forecasts, years in advance.



LEGACY SYSTEMS

Think about the wealth of information that you hold. Now think what would happen if that was to be lost - either to time, or an unforeseen event such as water or fire damage?

Think also about how long it takes to pore over that information to find what you need. How does that impact both your time and that of your customers?

Put simply, paper poses a risk.

Older, disjointed systems - even those that aren't paper-based - often mean that data comes from various sources, running the risk of conflicting information, and the increased chance of errors or mistakes being made, such as double or triple entry.

INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Quite often, we rely on 'institutional knowledge' - the knowledge carried 'in the head' of long-serving members of staff - often not written down, stored, or accessible by anyone else.

What happens to that wealth of knowledge when that person moves on or retires? What systems or processes are in place to avoid that loss?

It soon becomes clear then, the importance of protecting that legacy of knowledge and information by storing it digitally - backed up, protected, and easily accessible.

A single cemetery management system, with linked data, updated in real-time, backed up and accessible by everyone in your organization provides a safe home for your records.

Records management is one of the foundations of effective cemetery management, and by intuitively bringing deceased electronic records together into a single, quickly searchable database, cemetery software systems can protect and provide all of the information you need at the click of a button.

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UNSUPPORTED SOFTWARE

And while we're talking about backed-up information - did you know that running old, unsupported software not only poses risks in terms of data security but can also limit your future growth?

When the time comes to upgrade your hardware, you may simply not be able to run your old software on it, costing you valuable time and money.

Not only this, but software crashes can have a massive impact on your daily operations - without access to data, you're running blind - increasing the chance of mistakes, slowing productivity, and increasing the likelihood of unsatisfied customers.

These are just some of the risks that can be mitigated by using cloud-based cemetery management software and switching to a technology partner who operates a Software as a Service (SAAS) model.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Cemetery spaces pose several health and safety risks to both staff and the general public.

Hazards such as toppled or unsecured monuments, overgrown flora, downed trees or overhanging limbs, and cracked paths, to name just a few, can pose very real and literal risks to individual safety, and if overlooked or missed, may even expose deathcare providers to legal action (more of which in a moment).

It's therefore imperative that you have everything you need to ensure that the physical space in which you occupy is as safe as possible. That means carrying out regular safety checks, and risk assessments and keeping on top of your memorials management.

All of this can be made simpler using a cemetery management system that streamlines your workflows, refining processes essential to carrying out effective risk management.

Record memorial safety inspections and view risk assessment histories on each plot record - run reports to ensure compliance and see when plots are due their next risk assessment.

Do your teams have everything they need to mitigate safety risks? Do you have the right processes, procedures, and workflows in place to ensure tasks are completed efficiently and in good time?

LITIGATION

Double-sold plots, mislocated burials, wrong graves opened for burial, and installing a marker or monument at the wrong grave are just some of the many risks that can lead to the real possibility of litigation and a real human toll.

There have been numerous reports of families visiting the wrong graves for years - even decades - causing untold grief and distress, but also potentially millions in lawsuits for the cemetery operator.

Deathcare providers will always have the best interests of their families at heart, but without the right systems and processes in place, they run the risk of damaging that relationship.

It's imperative therefore that records are accurate, and matched exactly to plot locations on digital cemetery maps. This can be a challenge with records and maps stretching back many years, and information pulled from several different sources.

It's clear, then, that deathcare providers can mitigate these risks by having a cemetery software management system that provides them with 'a single source of truth' - one which gives clear visibility of data and inventory, as well as confidence in the accuracy of the information they hold - allowing them to get ahead of any potential issues.

For more, visit: www.plotbox.io



About the Author

Graeme Arthur is a content specialist with leading deathtech software provider PlotBox. Graeme has over 20 years of experience working in a variety of marketing roles and is passionate about deathcare management. PlotBox is a cloud-based deathcare management solution that facilitates cemeteries, crematories, and funeral homes to operate to world-class standards.

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by DEANNA WILKINSON

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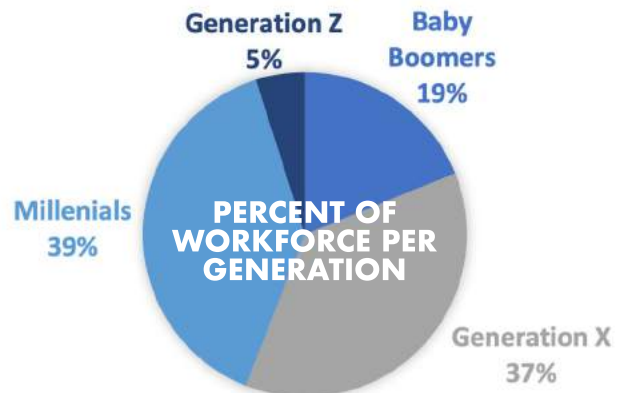
UNDERSTANDING YOUR MULTIGENERATIONAL TEAM AND HOW THEY USE TECHNOLOGY

From the Boomers to Generation Z, there is no doubt your business or place of work likely includes an array of generations working under one roof. While each generation exhibits its own unique characteristics and work habits, it also possesses their own technological skill set. Understanding each generation and how they utilize technology is essential to maximizing your organization's productivity and efficiency.

The following is based on information gathered from the US Census and Pew Research Center.

CURRENT WORKFORCE GENERATIONS:

- Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964)
- Generation X (Born 1965-1979)
- Millennials (Born 1980-1994)
- Generation Z (Born 1995-2009)



Baby Boomers (1946 – 1965)

- Population: 71.6 million
- Approximate workforce: 27 million
- Pioneered technology: Television
- Communication media: Telephone

Characteristics:

Boomers tend to have a strong work ethic, are competitive, goal-oriented, are self-reliant, and usually good communicators. While boomers do show interest in learning new technologies, they are the generation with the least number of owned computers and devices.

According to Martech, only 49% of young boomers (ages 57-66) own a laptop with 65% owning a desktop computer. Conversely, 43% of older boomers (67-77) own a laptop and 64% own a desktop computer. Additionally, as few as 4% of younger boomers own a tablet such as an iPad while only 3% of older boomers own such a device.

As early adopters of the telephone, boomers have shown interest in the latest telephone technologies and advancements with 85% of young boomers and 84% of older boomers owning a cell phone. While younger generations have found ways to utilize the internet and incorporate social media into their work lives, only 12% of boomers think it is appropriate to talk, text, or surf the internet during work hours.

Key Takeaway: Boomers are interested in learning more about technology but do not feel the need to incorporate it into all aspects of their lives. Do not force them to use devices and computers but rather show them the benefits, offer assistance, and let them transition at their own pace. Offer your boomers front-facing roles and utilize them to improve organizational communications.

Generation X (1965 – 1980)

- Population: 65.2 million
- Approximate workforce: 53 million
- Pioneered technology: Computer
- Communication media: Email & Phone

Characteristics:

Gen X are often entrepreneurial and seek a work-life balance. While pragmatic and skeptical, Generation X proved to be adaptable and independent. Generation X saw a significant evolution in technology growing up and are comfortable with the efficiency technology provides at home and in the workplace.

According to Martech, 92% of Generation X own a cell phone, while 61% own a computer and 5% own a tablet like an iPad. This generation values work-life balance highly and finds technology as a useful resource so they tend to be more exploratory with new gadgets, programs, and tech tools.

Key Takeaway: Gen Xers have strong technical abilities and should be involved when researching new programs, tools, or gadgets at the office. They likely prefer email communication (as pioneers of the communication forum), so utilize this platform when communicating projects or goals. Offer your Gen X colleagues flexibility and remote work options to help maximize their work productivity and help them keep a happy home balance.

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Millennials (1980-1996)

- Population: 73 million
- Approximate workforce: 56 million
- Pioneered technology: Smartphone & Tablet
- Communication media: Social Media & Texting

Characteristics:

Millennials are tech-savvy, highly tolerant and confident. In the workplace, they are creative, innovative, and flexible.

Millennials were introduced to technology at a young age and were the first generation to grow up with technology such as cable TV, the internet, computers, social media, and smartphones. Millennials value personalization, authenticity, and social responsibility and continue to be the generation with the broadest technology usage.

Key Takeaway: Millennials have the majority share of the current workforce and will expect technology to be incorporated into their work environment. Focus on using email and text as forms of communication with your millennial colleagues and ask their preferences regarding devices, programs, and work environment. Millennials can be utilized to help incorporate new technologies at your organization and assist other generations in adapting to those with their flexible and tolerant attitudes.

Generation Z (1997-2012)

- Population: 68 million
- Approximate workforce: 7 million
- Pioneered technology: Virtual & Augmented Reality
- Communication media: Handheld devices and smartwatches

Characteristics:

Gen Z are self-aware, innovative, educated, want to make a difference and value convenience.

Generation Z primarily uses handheld communication devices and accessories to communicate. They also received smartphones younger than any other generation. According to Martech, 57% of Generation Z uses messaging apps half of the time when on their phones. Among the top messaging apps are, Snapchat, iMessage, Skype, and Facebook Messenger. Over 40% have tried virtual reality and 12% use it daily. Generation Z only knows a world with technology and highly values accessibility, convenience, and technological advancements.

Key Takeaway: Gen Z is likely to be the most skilled with technology in the workplace. They grew up with the world at their fingertips and will expect the most advanced technology tools. Message apps and texting will work best when communicating with this generation as they often avoid talking on the phone. Having Gen Z workers skilled in technology can help with productivity and innovation just make sure they have the latest gadgets. Offer team collaborations and an environment for Gen Z'ers to grow and learn and this will make them most productive.

As Steve Jobs said, "It's not a faith in technology. It's faith in people." Technology was meant to improve our lives and should be utilized with the team you have to maximize your organization's effectiveness. Rapid technological change has forced nearly every generation to adapt, whether they're ready to or not. Technology can help bridge generational gaps in the workplace, especially when you're able to cultivate effective communication to identify your team's strengths, weaknesses, expectations, and the resources they need to succeed. Finding ways to embrace your colleagues' talents and utilize technology will not only improve comradery but also make for an overall more effective team.



About the Author

Deanna Wilkinson serves as director of sales and marketing for Express Funeral Funding. A Maryland native, she earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Towson University, mastering knowledge in marketing and mass communications. Wilkinson began her funeral service career in 2015 with one of the nation's largest casket suppliers. She joined Express Funeral Funding in 2017 and is responsible for implementing strategic sales and marketing objectives to maximize annual growth while leading in efforts to ensure brand awareness is present to funeral professionals nationwide.



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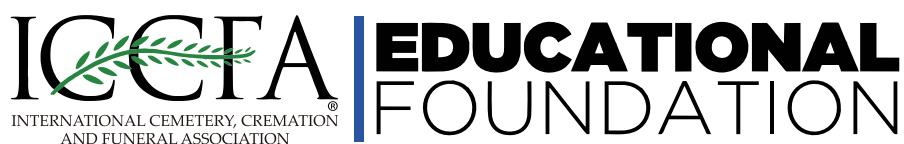
*I made sure to note the date I came to ICCFA University because I know I will be using it in the future as **the day that changed my life.***



-Tony Armogida, Global Atlantic Financial Group

Every year, the ICCFA University changes the lives of students all across the deathcare profession. Last year, the ICCFA Educational Foundation provided financial support for over 100 students by covering the registration cost of the ICCFAU.

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ICCFA ANNUAL CONVENTION & EXPOSITION LANDED IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI ON MAY 16-19, 2023

STERLING, VA (August 8, 2023) – Kansas City, Missouri set the stage for more than 936 attendees, including over 200 first-time guests, and 1,012 exhibitors to connect during the 2023 International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA) Annual Convention & Exposition which took place on May 16-19 at the Kansas City Convention Center.

The convention featured four well-received keynote presentations from Mark Panciera, CEO of the Pacific Institute; Andre Dawson, MLB Hall-of-Famer and funeral home owner; Carmen Best, the first African American Chief of Police at the Seattle Police Department, and Maddy Dychtwald, co-founder of Age Wave. Attendees also had the opportunity to learn from global deathcare leaders at 39 breakout sessions which featured topics such as cremation marketing, implementation of pet services, embalming, leadership, strategic planning, natural organic reduction, and more.



Throughout the week, the ICCFA had the honor of recognizing many members of the deathcare profession for their achievements and contributions. Quarter & Half Century Club inductees had their dedication to the association celebrated during the Annual Meeting of Members on Wednesday, and later that evening Doug Gober was awarded the ICCFA Educational Foundation's prestigious Lasting Impact Award for his commitment and contributions to the deathcare profession over his 44-year career. Keeping It Personal (KIP) winners were recognized on the mainstage on Thursday morning for their extraordinary dedication to the personalization of services and products to better serve families.

More highlights from the week include a rousing opening concert from 7 Bridges: The Ultimate Eagles Experience band on Tuesday following the Grand Opening of the exposition hall. First-time attendees were welcomed by ICCFA's Board of Directors and Committee Chairs during a reception and the Green Burial Council hosted a meet and greet to teach attendees about their mission to advocate for environmentally sustainable death practices. The Convention came to a close at Friday's banquet which began with a moving performance of, "A Day in the Life of a Funeral Director," followed by the annual Celebration of Remembrance, all made possible by the team at SCI Funeral Services of Florida.

Outgoing ICCFA President Gary Freytag said the following regarding the event, "This year's Annual Convention & Exposition was a great success and one that highlighted the ICCFA's efforts to provide education and networking opportunities to deathcare professionals of all kinds. I want to thank our convention co-chairs, Don Winsett and Phil Zehms, for their hard work and excitement around this amazing event. I look forward to another successful event next year in Tampa."

The 2024 ICCFA Annual Convention & Exposition will be held at the JW Marriott Tampa Water Street and Tampa Convention Center in Tampa, Florida, on April 10-13, 2024. More information on next year's event will be available soon at iccfa.com/annual.



ICCFA ELECTS NEW OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS DURING THE 2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION & EXPOSITION

STERLING, VA (June 29, 2023) – The International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA) elected new leadership during its 2023 Annual Convention & Exposition, May 16 – 19 in Kansas City, Missouri. The ICCFA officers for 2023-2024 are:

- President: Robbie L. Pape, Carriage Services, Houston, Texas
- President-Elect: Lee Longino, Service Corporation International, Houston, Texas
- Vice President, Education: John Bolton, CCE, CCrE, CS, CXE, Park Lawn Corporation, Houston, Texas
- Vice President, Membership & Marketing: Shawna de la Cruz, Forest Lawn Memorial-Parks & Mortuaries, Glendale, California
- Vice President, Internal Affairs: Lauren Blevins, CCFE, CPLP, Williams Funeral Homes & Crematory, Columbia, Tennessee
- Vice President, External Affairs: Mitch Rose, CCFE, CCrE, Oahu Cemetery & Crematory, Honolulu, Hawaii
- Treasurer: Chris Keller, Life Remembrance & CPRA Studios, Littleton, Colorado
- Secretary: Robert Gordon Jr, CCE, Cypress Lawn, Colma, California

Regular members elected to serve three-year terms on the ICCFA Board of Directors are:

- Spencer Hines, NorthStar Memorial Group, Houston, Texas;
- René Negrete, Inglewood Park Cemetery, Inglewood, California;
- Rafael Ochoa, Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary, Los Angeles, California;
- Andrew Parsell, Parsell Funeral Homes & Crematory/Parsell Pet Crematorium, Lewes, Delaware;
- Kent Robertson, Foundation Partners Group, Orlando, Florida;
- Jeremy Weaver, NorthStar Memorial Group, Houston, Texas

The Supplier/Professional member elected to serve a two-year term on the ICCFA Board of Directors is:

- Don Winsett, Winsett Consulting, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Members of the 2023-2024 Executive Committee are as follows:

- President: Robbie L. Pape, Carriage Services, Houston, Texas
- President Elect: Lee Longino, Service Corporation International, Houston, Texas
- Immediate Past President – Gary Freytag, CCFE, Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Appointment by Past Presidents – Fred Lappin, CCE, Knollwood Cemetery Corporation, Canton, Massachusetts
- Appointment by President – Jay Dodds, CFSP, Park Lawn Corporation, Houston, Texas

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DOUG GOBER HONORED WITH THE ICCFA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION'S LASTING IMPACT AWARD

The International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association's (ICCFA) Educational Foundation presented its "Lasting Impact Award" to Doug Gober during the 2023 ICCFA Annual Convention & Exposition in Kansas City, Missouri.

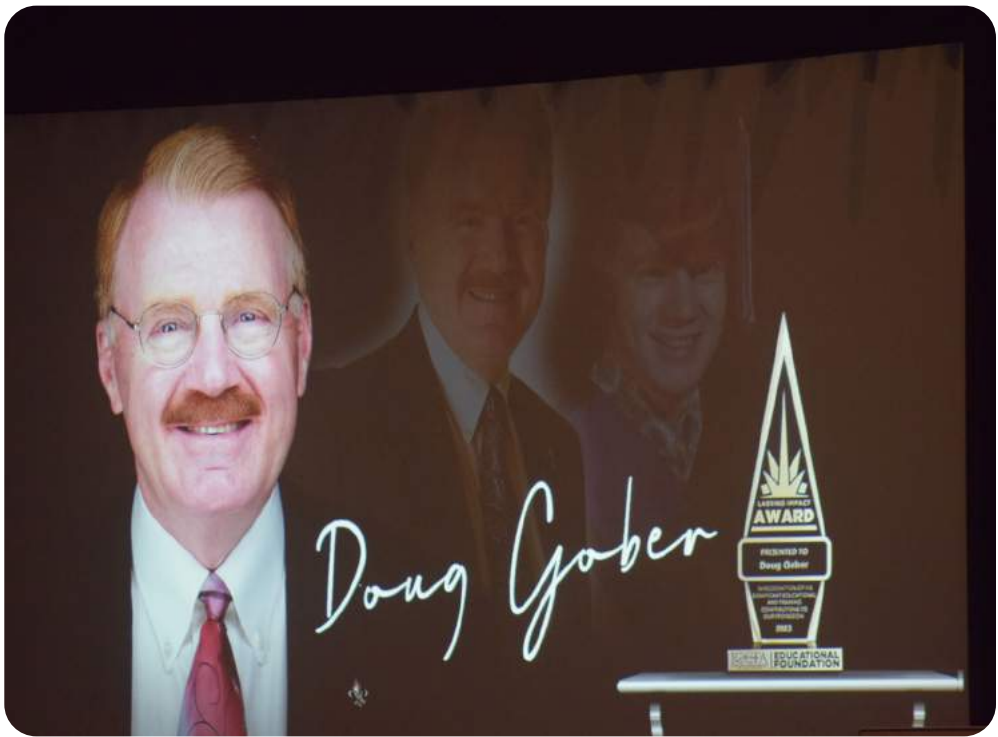
Doug has logged hundreds of hours as a speaker and educator at deathcare events across the globe and has presented at many ICCFA events including the ICCFA Annual Convention & Exposition, the DEAD Talks Sales Conference, and the ICCFA University. He has earned numerous national awards within the deathcare profession and has served as a consultant for marketing and merchandising projects on an international scale. Doug currently serves on the ICCFA Sales & Marketing Committee.

Doug began his career in deathcare 44 years ago as a sales representative for Batesville Casket Company. In 1995, he joined The Doody Group as Executive Vice President working in the United Kingdom and France. During that time, he was instrumental in planning and implementing several innovative merchandising concepts and products created by The Doody Group, Matthews International, and other leading manufacturers. From there, Doug joined Carriage Services as the Director of Development and Marketing, then became a Senior Loan Officer and industry liaison for Live Oak Bank. Currently, Doug serves as Partner at The Foresight Companies through his own company, Gober Strategic Capital.

"The remarkable connection across all of Doug's career is his commitment of time and passion to education in our profession," said Jim Price, ICCFA Educational Foundation President. "His ideas, perspective, and innovations aren't reserved for customers or paying clients, but freely shared with anyone who is interested in making our profession better. We are honored to have the opportunity to recognize Doug's remarkable contribution to deathcare with this prestigious award."

The Lasting Impact Award is presented annually to an individual that has made significant contributions to the deathcare profession in education and memorialization.







8 HISTORIC FUNERAL HOME BUILDINGS LIVING AN EPIC 2nd LIFE!

by JESS FARREN

No one looks forward to attending a funeral service. It's not an experience one typically relishes. However, for those with an appreciation for history and architecture, walking through the doors of a mortuary can offer one the feeling of being transported backwards in time. With so many funeral homes in America established during the turn of the century, these historic buildings are often adorned with many gothic revival style elements from the Victorian era. They display rare architecture features and details that preserve our connection to the past.

As funeral professionals look to expand into more modern facilities and developers look to maximize space in populated areas, more of these historic gems are lost every year. It's always a sad thing to see an old mortuary building being demolished. It's not like there are very many people today building mansions with stacked bay windows, tiffany glass doors, high pitched gabled roofs and dumbwaiters. Every one that is torn down can never be replaced.

Fortunately, while some mortuaries do meet the cannon ball, many others are sold to someone who decides to preserve their history while giving the building a completely new purpose. From hipster coffee shops to paranormal-themed B&Bs, these former funeral homes survived by being reborn into something new. By recognizing what makes these buildings unique and blending it with modern touches, today's architects have helped preserve the history of mortuaries.

Here Are 8 Epic Ways Funeral Homes Have Been Repurposed

1 AN UPSCALE RESTAURANT

You may be surprised to learn there are quite a few restaurants in America that are housed in former mortuaries. When setting out to create this list, we knew about one or two of these famed dining spots, but we were floored to discover you can actually find them all over the country. It definitely makes sense why this seems to be the most common way a funeral home is repurposed. There are a lot of the people who appreciate a unique atmosphere while enjoying a meal. In addition to impressing guests with striking architectural elements, owners can also embrace the macabre and build their restaurant theme around their former occupants. Who wouldn't want their business to be included on one of those tourist trap ghost tours every city offers?

While we stumbled upon quite a few mortuary-turned-restaurants, our favorite two are both located in former funeral homes with storied histories. Up in Halifax on the island of Nova Scotia, the Five Fisherman Restaurant is the former site of Snow & Company Undertaker. During its time as a mortuary, it served as the morgue for bodies recovered from the Titanic as well as those killed in the Halifax Explosion in 1917.



© Andrew Catellier on Flickr (Creative Commons)

Located in the former **Olinger Mortuary**, the funeral home that famously stored Buffalo Bill's remains while Wyoming and Colorado disputed which state would provide his final resting place, Linger Eatuary fully embraces its famed past. From keeping the old building sign up to serving cocktails in formaldehyde bottles, this popular restaurant is overflowing with funeral-themed accents.

2 A (HAUNTED?) B&B

While watching a recent episode of "The World's Most Amazing Vacation Rentals" on Netflix, we were fascinated to learn about a growing "paranormal tourism" trend taking hold across America. From bona fide ghost hunters equipped with high tech sensors to average folks looking for a good scare, there are a whole host of people out there wanting to stay in a place reportedly visited by the dead. Mortuaries, both by virtue of their purpose and their gothic architecture, often provide the ideal location for establishing a haunted B&B. Like restaurants, there are much more of these across the country than you might have ever suspected. In addition to offering rooms for rent, many also hold murder mystery dinner events for guests.

Located in the former **Hrabak Funeral Home** in the isolated town of Chelsea, IA, the Periwinkle Place Manor features videos on their website supposedly captured during previous "ghost hunts." The funeral home, established in 1892, was the first mortuary built in the state of Iowa.

Spooky lore abounds at the **Stone Lion Inn** in Guthrie, OK. The majestic Victorian mansion has a rich history dating back to 1907. Over the years, the building has served as both a family home and mortuary, with many reported sightings of paranormal activity taking place under its roof.



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3 A FAMILY HOME

When looking for a property to convert into their future dream home, some couples set out to find a historic building they can renovate. Since there isn't exactly an excess of Victorian-style mansions on the market at any given time, it's not surprising some end up at the doorstep of an old mortuary. The idea of living and raising a family in such a building might seem extreme to those outside of the profession, but funeral home families have been residing within their buildings for generations. So, this is only really a factor for those who watched *A Haunting in Connecticut* maybe one too many times. For those brave enough to take on such a project, transforming a mortuary into a family home is one way to guarantee you will undoubtedly stand out from the other houses on the block. Renovating an old funeral home building can also save would-be home buyers a lot of money and headaches, especially if they reside in competitive housing market. One Minnesota couple was able to purchase a former funeral home for only \$60,000 which they now plan to remodel.

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4 A STORIED MUSEUM

People visit museums to understand and celebrate our past. What could be a better location for a museum than a building with a history all on its own? There are quite a few of these dedicated to funeral history, including the **Turnbull Heritage Museum** in Biggsville, IL, which is located in the former **Turnbull Funeral Home**. The museum displays funeral relics dating back to the 1880s. **People's Mortuary Museum** in Marietta, OH offers a similar funeral history museum experience, displaying items such as antique hearses and vintage embalming equipment.

Beyond funeral history, old mortuary buildings have also become museums for artwork and community history. There is the **Douglas Mansion** in Cedar Rapids, IA, which once housed **The Turner and Linge Mortuary** and is now owned by a historical society that embraces the building's impressive history. Then there is the **Rapoza Center for Arts** in Adams, MA which is located in the former **McBride Funeral Home**.

Finally, if you ever find yourself in Buffalo, NY, you can visit the **Iron Island Museum**, which houses community history artifacts but is more known for its ghost lore. The building was erected in 1883 and was first used as a church before serving as a funeral home from 1956-2000. Today, it is used by the Iron Island Preservation Society of Lovejoy to display antique items like vintage bicycles and military memorabilia. In recent years, it is visited more often by ghost hunters than history buffs, placing it on many "paranormal tourism" lists.

5 A HIP COFFEE JOINT

You may remember a few years back when a funeral home made headlines by opening up a Starbucks within their building to serve families. While this certainly got a lot of attention, it was actually not the first time coffee has been brewed and sold in a mortuary. That honor goes to **Under Grounds Coffee & Roastery** in Buffalo, NY, which opened in 2017 inside the former **Peter K. Leslie Funeral Home**. The aptly named cafe pays homage to its previous occupants in multiple ways, such as preserving the original guestbook stand and including a "cremation station" to hold coffee creamer. From our research, Under Grounds appears to be the only coffee shop built in a repurposed funeral home building. We hope they serve Death Wish Coffee!

"I've been to plenty of wakes here and a bunch of my friends have, but we often get people that come in and show you this is where grandpa was laid out and that's part of the reason we decided to pay homage to what was here before us," shared owner **Sarah Heidingerew**.

6 AN ESCAPE ROOM, MYSTERY DINNER THEATER OR HAUNTED ATTRACTION

In 2020, the entertainment company, **PerpExodus Escapes**, made headlines when they announced they planned to convert a nearly 100-year-old former mortuary into a new escape room attraction. Located in Johnson City, TN, the building was originally built in 1927 and was previously the location for **Gray Funeral Home**. Today, it serves as a fun entertainment attraction featuring escape rooms and a murder mystery dinner theater. Meanwhile, down in the Big Easy, **The Mortuary Haunted House** is a 150-year-old, 3-story mansion that served as a mortuary for roughly 80 years and has been the site of numerous paranormal sightings. Billed as "a haunted house in a REAL haunted house", it has been operating as a popular Halloween attraction in New Orleans since 2007.

7 A TRENDY NIGHTLIFE SPOT

Like restaurants, you don't have to look too far to find a bar that is in a building that used to house a mortuary. There's **Fat Matt's Vortex** in Kansas City, KS, which still has a crematory located in the basement. Over on the west coast, you can find the **Pine Box** in Seattle, which was once the home of E.R. Butterworth & Sons Family Funeral Business and still features interior relics from the mortuary like the original chapel pews. Rounding out our list is the **Abbey** on Butler Street in Pittsburgh, PA, which offers a coffeehouse, pub and bistro all under one roof. The impressive historic building was once a church meeting hall, a stonemasonry, a brass foundry, and a funeral home at different times throughout its history.

8 A PSYCHIC ACADEMY (YES, YOU READ THAT RIGHT)

Perhaps the most interesting, although not entirely unexpected, usage of a former funeral home is as a site for mediums to commune with dead spirits. After sitting vacant for over 10 years, the **Rhodes House** in Dunkirk, NY was purchased in 2021 by **Rev. Ivy Rivera** who now uses the site to hold classes and seminars for fellow psychics. Built in the late 1800s, the Victorian-style building was formerly the site of **Gardner-Colletti Funeral Home**. Today, it is the new home of the **Ivy League Psychic Academy** where Rivera keeps busy renovating the property and "raising up the next generation of lightworkers." Rivera, who also uses the property for her active psychic reading business and to offer "supernatural tours" to the public, has stated that the spirits directed her to purchase the Rhodes House.

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Three Funeral Service Veterans Join Anthem Partners *Appointments Strengthen Executive Team as Company Continues Explosive Growth*

July 17, 2023 – Anthem Partners, a premier operator of funeral homes and cemeteries, is pleased to announce that Kevin Krizak, Dewey Akers, and Dave Sullivan have joined the organization. Krizak will be Vice President – Sales and lead the sales organization for Anthem's U.S.-based funeral home and cemetery locations. Akers has assumed the role of Vice President of Cemetery Operations throughout the Anthem network and is responsible for the overall operations of the cemetery properties. Sullivan will serve Anthem in a senior advisor role, providing insights and strategic counsel to Anthem's executive team.

"I am excited to augment our already experienced executive team with these three individuals. Kevin, Dewey, and Dave each bring a wealth of talent and experience to the Anthem organization," stated Will Andrews, President of Anthem Partners - US. "Their deep and multi-faceted backgrounds in funeral service will serve them well in their new roles and benefit our company as we execute our longer-term strategic priorities."

Krizak has more than forty years in funeral service – including time as an owner of a funeral home, cemetery, and monument company as well as working for several of the major consolidator companies. He most recently served as Vice President of Sales for the Midwest and Northeast Regions of one of the largest publicly traded funeral, cremation, and cemetery providers. Kevin and his wife Nellie have two daughters, a son, and eight grandchildren. Although they have lived in many states, they now call Texas home and reside in Seabrook just southeast of Houston.

"I am thrilled to join this exceptional company, particularly at this crucial time in its development," said Krizak. "I am looking forward to strengthening Anthem's sales processes and contributing to the company's goal of being the preferred option for leading funeral homes and cemeteries with which to align."

Akers has been involved in various aspects of funeral service since 1990. Just before joining Anthem, Akers was the VP of Operations, Southeast Region for one of the largest publicly traded funeral, cremation, and cemetery providers. Earlier, Akers was the VP of Operations for Saber Management, LLC. Akers began his career in 1990, working for Gibraltar Mausoleum Corporation. He has a Bachelor's degree in accounting from Indiana University. He and his wife currently reside in Sellersburg, Indiana, and have three grown children.

"I can't wait to leverage my decades of experience to enhance the operations at each Anthem cemetery property," said Akers. "The culture that Will has developed since launching Anthem two years ago is truly inspiring. I look forward to working with the entire leadership team to develop the best tools and solutions for our employees and families."

Sullivan boasts a long and storied career in funeral service. He joined Gibraltar Mausoleum Corp. in 1977 and rose to become the executive vice president of sales and marketing. He stayed with that company for 18 years until he formed Saber Management in January 1998. He remained as Saber CEO until he sold the company to a large funeral home consolidator. He earned a degree in Educational Psychology from the University of Virginia.

"Joining Anthem presents an exciting opportunity to contribute to their vision of providing partners with maximum value for their companies and to increase the opportunity of value growth creation," commented Sullivan. "I am deeply committed to helping drive strategic growth and further positioning Anthem as a leader in funeral service."



Kevin Krizak



Dewey Akers



Dave Sullivan

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Anthem Partners is a privately-owned operator of cemeteries and funeral homes. Founded by a group of industry professionals and backed by long-term, patient investors, Anthem Partners is actively seeking opportunities to grow with like-minded professionals and firms who share their vision. To learn more, call 972.418.2908 or visit www.anthempartners.com.



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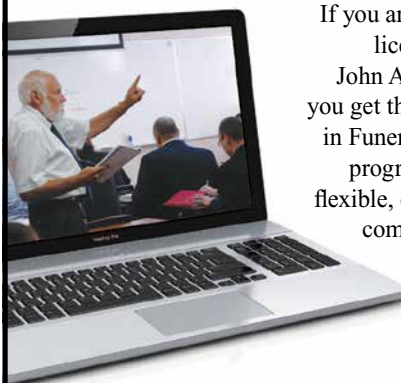
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Fong Joins Premier Preneed as Business Development Director

Preneed Professional Boasts Extensive Experience Managing Sales Teams

Premier Preneed Marketing, a prominent preneed marketing company, has announced hiring a new business development director. Michelle Fong, a licensed insurance professional, is experienced in the development of sales and training programs in the funeral profession. In her new role, Fong will work closely with the Premier team to better serve current partners as well as develop new relationships with funeral homes throughout the country.

Fong brings to Premier deep industry sales training expertise gained over the past 17 years in funeral service. During her career in funeral service, Fong has held key preneed positions at several companies that provide the funeral profession with preneed solutions, sales training programs, and technology offerings.

"Michelle is a fantastic addition to the Premier team, and we look forward to leveraging her experience and strategic mindset to continue to grow and serve our partners," stated Jeff Wright, Vice President – Preneed at Premier Preneed Marketing. "I'm confident that Michelle will play a key role in providing and implementing high-quality solutions for our partners."

"I have a deep passion for this profession and I'm incredibly excited to join the Premier team," Fong said. "Premier's expertise and resources combine to create the perfect opportunity for solutions to support all aspects of our partners' needs. I'm thrilled to add my experience and knowledge to the team and help take Premier to the next level." Fong holds a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Nevada, Reno, and holds a health and life license from the Ohio Department of Insurance. She lives in Hudson, Ohio.



Michelle Fong



Premier Preneed Marketing has provided pre-need support, training, and leading life insurance solutions to funeral homes nationwide for over fifty years. The company connects funeral homes with multiple carriers from which to choose and offers single pay, multi-pay, and preneed annuity options as well as standard and guarantee issue plans. For more information about Premier Preneed Marketing, visit www.premierpreneed.com.

Express Funeral Funding Launches Express API Service for Streamlined Claims Management Integration

CLARKSVILLE, IN. (August 31, 2023) – Express Funeral Funding is excited to announce the launch of Express API, a new service revolutionizing claims management integration. With this seamless connectivity integration, businesses can now unlock the power of automation and elevate efficiency within their own systems.

Express API enables effortless submission, viewing, and editing of claims data directly from existing ERP, CRM, or Web-Application Systems. Users can download assignments, funding receipts, and essential claim documentation while seamlessly managing and monitoring all claim activities within their funeral/cemetery business applications.

"Express API will allow our partners to manage their claims from their existing funeral/cemetery software with real-time tracking on all EFF claim data. We're thrilled to provide our customers an even better experience to help maximize their business and operational efficiency," said Jesus Sosa, IT systems and development executive.

Once the integration process is complete, users can enjoy continuous live communication between their system and EFF's Express Hub. The development team is consistently working on new functionalities and features, providing timely notifications for seamless implementation.

For more information visit <https://www.expressfuneralfunding.com/api/> or contact clientrelations@expff.com.



Express Funeral Funding has been providing funeral homes and cemeteries nationwide the ultimate funding experience since 2002. Express Funeral Funding eliminates the challenges of working with insurance companies by limiting administration, providing immediate payment and advancing complete policy funds. For more information on Express Funeral Funding, please visit www.expressfuneralfunding.com or call 812.949.9011.

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NGL's Preneed Sales Team Growing with the Addition of Two New Regional Vice Presidents

MADISON, WI. (July 25, 2023) – National Guardian Life Insurance Company (NGL) is pleased to announce the addition of two new Regional Vice Presidents to the Preneed Sales Team. Tim Fish and Kim Price have joined the team and will focus on developing and enhancing Preneed business development opportunities with NGL's marketing organizations, independent agents and agencies.

Tim Fish, Regional Vice President, Sales

Fish has more than 25 years of sales and marketing experience in the funeral and cemetery profession. His background in sales and leadership supports him as he works toward driving sales growth and enhancing partner relationships.

"We are thrilled to welcome Tim to the NGL team. The passion he brings our profession is contagious and his deep understanding of the industry and relationships will make him an asset to NGL. We continue to strive and serve our partners daily. His experience will continue to allow NGL to be best we can be," shared Cameron Black, Vice President, Sales and Business Development at NGL.



Tim Fish

Prior to joining NGL Fish was Vice President of Sales and Business Development at Ring Ring Marketing. He has also held senior leadership positions for several insurance carriers and industry suppliers.

"I am honored to join NGL and continue their effort to help our partners grow through connection, collaboration and compassion. NGL is a leader in the Preneed industry and their commitment to serving others is one of the reasons why I'm excited to join the team. I'm focused on creating an environment that allows our partners to serve more families and offer the comfort and peace of mind that prearranging a funeral provides," said Fish.

Fish is a native of St. Louis, Mo. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University of Missouri and an MBA from Webster University. He serves on the ICCFA Sales & Marketing committee, was co-chair of the inaugural "Dead Talks" sales conference and a graduate of ICCFA University. He is also a certified Celebrant.

Fish and his wife, Gena, along with their two kids live in O'Fallon, Mo. As an avid sports fan, Fish enjoys traveling and attending various sporting events throughout the United States while indulging in the local cuisine.

Kim Price, Regional Vice President, Sales

Price joins the NGL Preneed Sales Team with more than 30 years of experience in the funeral service profession.

"We are excited for Kim to join our Sales and Business Development Team! Her expertise in sales, marketing, team building and strategic planning in the funeral home profession are a great benefit for the partners we serve. Her experience will strengthen our support and enhance NGL's overall commitment to drive Preneed growth as she continues to build strong relationships in the industry," said Jennifer Kaset, Vice President, Sales and Business Development at NGL.



Kim Price

Prior to joining NGL, Price was a partner and Vice President of Sales for Memory Glass, LLC. She was the first employee of Prime Succession and served in many capacities of executive support and office administration. She also worked for the Director of Sales at The Forethought Group (now Global Atlantic).

Price has been the Tournament Director for The Memorial Classic Golf Tournament for the past 30 years and will continue to do so. She also currently serves as the Supplier Liaison to the Board of Directors for the Cremation Association of North America (CANAm).

"I am thrilled to join such a dynamic company and sales team! NGL's rich history, excellent products and dedicated customer service all combine to offer families a superior and valuable product. I am proud to join the team and look forward to further developing partner relationships," said Price.

Price graduated from Indiana University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice.

She resides in Tampa, Fla. and has three children and four grandchildren. Price is very active in her church and her interests include fitness, decorating, reading and spending time with her family.

Kenn Peterson joins NGL as Vice President, Business and Lending Development

MADISON, WI. (June 21, 2023) – National Guardian Life Insurance Company (NGL) is pleased to welcome **Kenn Peterson** to the team as Vice President, Business and Lending Development. Peterson is a leader in the Preneed insurance industry with 36 years of experience helping Preneed companies grow their revenue. In this newly created position, he joins NGL's leadership team and will be developing a consultative business model, establishing NGL's lending program and assisting the sales team in achieving company objectives.

"We are thrilled to have Kenn join the team. NGL is dedicated to providing superior service to our partners and focused on continued growth in the industry. After 25 years in Preneed, we understand how to serve our partners and believe in evolving with them to meet their unique needs. Kenn's new role strengthens our support to our partners and NGL's commitment to the Preneed industry," said Jeremy Ragsdale, Executive Vice President, Chief Marketing Officer at NGL.

Peterson has held multiple leadership roles, including most recently Vice President, National Sales at Great Western Life Insurance Company, where he and his team helped the company achieve record revenue. Prior to that role he was Regional Director at Homesteaders Life Company for 18 years where he and his team helped the company achieve record growth and revenue.

"NGL is a financially strong company that is known for its commitment to providing a great customer experience and offering valuable products that benefit families. This is an exciting time to join NGL because it's expanding and focused on the development of future collaborations with partners," said Peterson. "I'm passionate about Preneed because it's a solution that helps make the worst day of a family's life a little easier. I'm honored to work with our partners to find ways that help share the benefits of preplanning. Knowing something that can help those you care about and figuring out the best way to tell them is what motivates me to learn and grow every day."



Kenn Peterson

Peterson earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, Master of Science Degree from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and Master of Business Administration from the University of Toledo in Toledo, Ohio. He is a certified Celebrant, Life Tribute Professional, serves on the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science Board of Trustees, and is a past recipient of the Daniel A. Hillenbrand Award.



Established in 1909 National Guardian Life Insurance Company (NGL) is an insurance company headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin. Licensed to do business in 49 states and the District of Columbia, NGL markets preneed and individual life and annuities, as well as group markets products.

Information about NGL can be found at www.nglic.com; Facebook: [Facebook.com/NGLIC](https://www.facebook.com/NGLIC) and LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/national-guardian-life-insurance-company.

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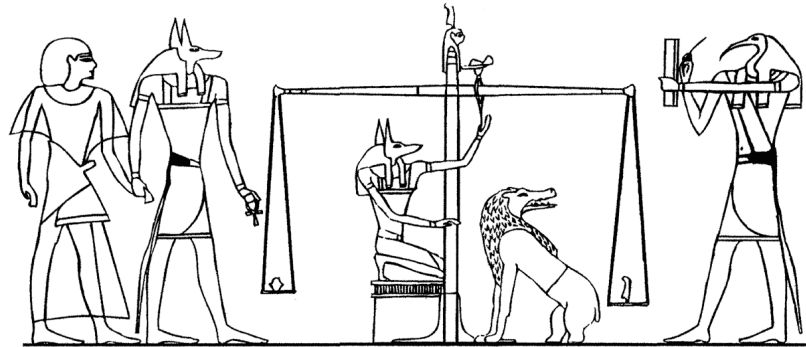


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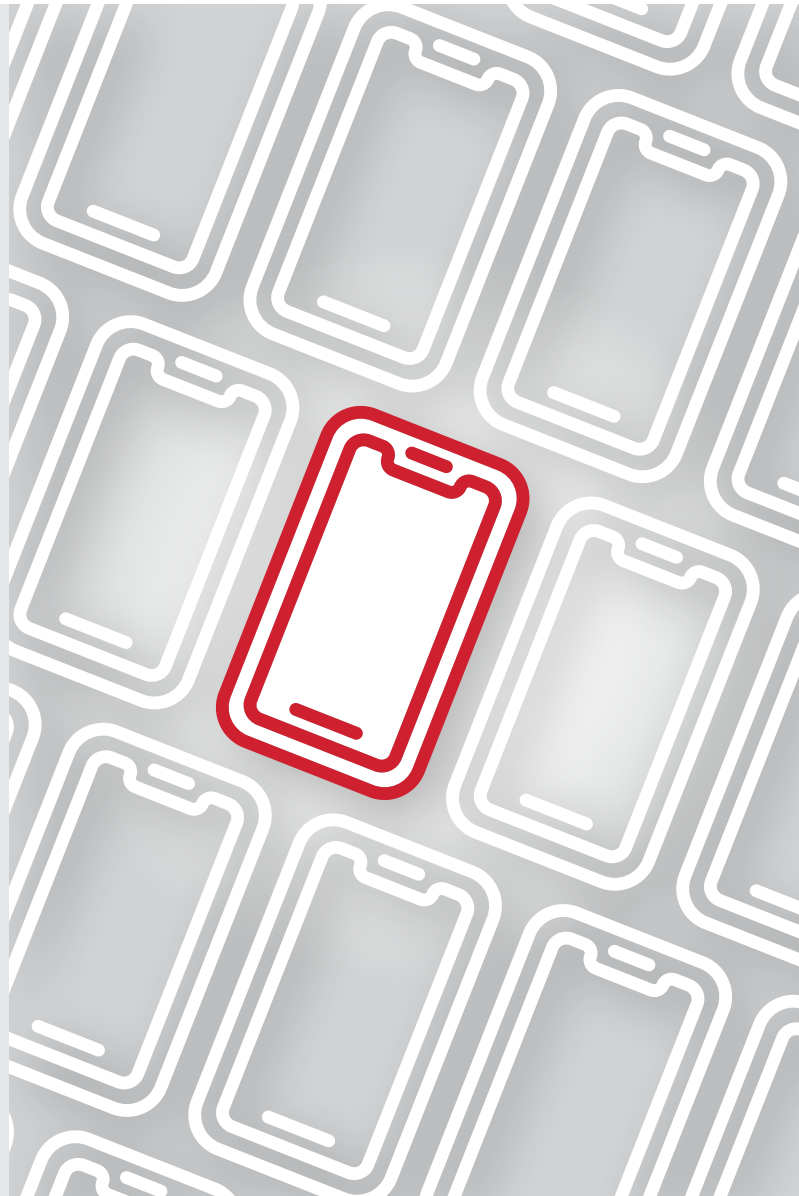
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