

# Funeral Consumers Advocacy of London and Windsor

(A Memorial Society)

## Newsletter 2017

### Annual General Meeting

Wednesday  
April 26, 2017  
7:00 pm

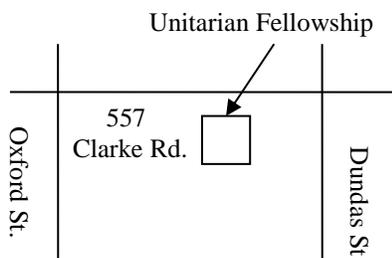
Unitarian Fellowship  
of London

557 Clarke Road

Speaker is:  
Maureen Dwyer

Topic:  
“Thinking Outside the Box:  
Saying Goodbye in 2017”

Coffee and refreshments  
will be provided



### Greetings

There are major upheavals occurring in the provincial status of memorial societies. Although the London-Windsor group is still functioning well, others are not. The latest shock is that the Toronto organization is disbanding. It is by far the largest and its loss will be serious.

There are two main reasons for the folding of individual societies. The first is that there is the belief that our work is done. On a provincial level, the societies fought for decades for legislation to protect funeral consumers from unfair commercial practices. The statutes were put in place. This culminated recently with the launching of the BAO (Bereavement Authority of Ontario – thebao.com).

The second reason for the decline in memorial societies is the difficulty presented by the on-line world. The current model of maintaining a membership and communicating with printed newsletters such as this one is too cumbersome, expensive and ineffective.

There are still issues in the funeral industry that could well be pursued by a consumer organization such as ours. These include the advocacy of green burial practices and the protection from aggressive and misleading sales methods used by insurance companies among others. These might best be done on a provincial level rather than by local organizations.

## Current Executive

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

The annual general meeting was held in September 2016. Four societies were represented. They were London-Windsor, Toronto, Ottawa and Kitchener-Waterloo.

The guest speaker was Carey Smith of the Bereavement Association of Ontario (BAO) (thebao.com). The FOOMS executive was very happy with what it heard in the talk and with his answers to questions afterwards.

Much of the meeting addressed the failing of the individual societies that make up FOOMS. The pros and cons of amalgamating the remaining groups into one were discussed. The question of how such an organization would look was widely analysed.

The reasons for the existence of a group such as FOOMS were debated. Several uses for this organisation included the following:

It would ensure that the boards of the BAO would include members that would represent consumer interests.

It could promote and describe the advantages of various "green burial" methods.

Several insurance companies are targeting the cost of funeral services with misleading advertisements. They are not investigated unless a complaint is made.

The next meeting is this May and we expect major changes to be on the agenda.

Reno DeHaan  
renodehaan@yahoo.com

Sally Galsworthy (Treasurer)  
sara.galsworthy@schulich.  
uwo.ca

Joyce Orchard  
tomjoyorchard@gmail.com

Marianne Nyhof  
mnyhof@primus.ca

Len Weston  
lenweston@rogers.com

Shannon Calvert  
shancalv@gmail.com



### Privacy Policy

The personal information collected by the FCALW will not be sold to nor shared with any other organisation.

We will treat personal information in ways that will protect it from theft.

The information will be used solely to conduct business within the society.

### Funeral Consumers Advocacy of London & Windsor Annual Financial Report 2017

Balance from April 2016 \$11,011.39

#### Income

New Memberships	\$20.00
Donation	\$200.00
PayPal	\$0.51
Foundation London (DAYA)	\$2,380.00

**Total income \$2,600.53**

#### Expenditures

P.O. Box rental	\$254.25
Newsletter mailing	\$361.46
Mailing	\$79.10
Mailing	\$27.00

Bank Fees	\$1.50
Cheques	\$172.27

Bell \$502.70

Web setup	\$312.73
Professional Assistance	\$450.00
Postings	\$174.24

Stationary	\$96.06
Stationary	\$23.74

FOOMS meeting	\$240.00
FOOMS dues	\$50.00

Room at Masonville \$67.80

**Total Expenditures \$2,812.85**

**Balance \$10,799.05**

Sara B. Galsworthy, Treasurer

## Death Café by Shannon Calvert

Death Café. These are two words that we don't necessarily expect to see together. However, since 2011, when Jon Underwood used the work of Swiss sociologist, Bernard Crettaz to put together the first Death Café in England, there have been 4163 Death Cafés in 42 countries.

Death Cafés are places where people gather, either in homes, public spaces, or actual cafés, to discuss all matters related to death. Participants speak about their experiences, ideas, beliefs, hopes and fears. They have an opportunity to listen deeply to themselves and to others. They quite likely will be introduced to perspectives that they haven't considered, and they may learn new information that they can use to support themselves and others. As well, in the safety of strangers who are willing to listen and to dialogue, they may discover thoughts and ideas that they haven't been able to speak out loud before.

The stated objective for Death Cafés "is to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives". This all sounds very serious but be prepared for a lot of laughter. Participants often express surprise at the end of the café at how uplifted and energized they feel.

The structure of Death Cafés are quite simple. They never have a preplanned agenda. It is always the participants who direct the discussion. The facilitator is there to guide the group to create a safe container for the conversations. Death Cafés are always not-for-profit, although there may be a donation or fee to cover costs. Finally, there are always sweet treats and beverages available.

If you are interested in more information about Death Cafés go to [www.deathcafe.com](http://www.deathcafe.com). For London area Death Cafés contact Shannon Calvert at [shancalv@gmail.com](mailto:shancalv@gmail.com).



### Contact Us

Via email at  
**[funeralconsumersadvocacy@gmail.com](mailto:funeralconsumersadvocacy@gmail.com)**

Or  
Visit our web site at  
**[www.fcalw.org](http://www.fcalw.org)**

Or  
Check the posts on our Facebook page at  
**Funeral Consumers Advocacy  
of London and Windsor**

Here you will find much information about  
the organization including aims, services,  
and people.

## **TRANSFER SERVICES AND WHAT THEY CAN PROVIDE**

Traditionally when a death occurred, you had no choice but to call a local funeral home to provide their services to look after your loved one. Fortunately, nowadays we have options including some less expensive options. Unfortunately, many people do not know the differences and the limitations. Below I will attempt to assist you in understanding when to call a funeral home and when you have the option of calling either a transfer service or a funeral home.

A transfer service can transfer the deceased from the place of death. They can place the body into a casket or cremation container and can deliver it to the cemetery or crematorium for burial or cremation. They can register the death and obtain a coroner's certificate and can arrange to transfer the body of a deceased out of Ontario. They are permitted to sell caskets, vaults, urns, stationary and other items. Depending upon their class of license, if the transfer service is managed by a licensed funeral director, they may wash and dress the body and transport the deceased to or from a place of worship.

The things which a funeral home can do but a transfer service cannot do are embalming and arranging funeral services.

Transfer services have definitely filled a niche for people who do not wish traditional funeral services or do not wish to use the facilities of a traditional funeral home.

Carolyn Nixon  
Affordable Funeral Options Inc.  
[www.affordablefuneraloptions.ca](http://www.affordablefuneraloptions.ca)

