

BEYOND

The Bereavement Authority of Ontario magazine

Issue 3 - March 2022

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Issue 3 – March 2022

About Beyond

Beyond is an all-digital, family-focused magazine providing useful and interesting stories about the bereavement care industry and why it matters to you.

It is the magazine of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario, a government delegated administrative authority focused on protecting and informing families.

www.thebao.ca

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BAO adapted its proactive response to ensure the sector could continue serving families during Omicron

Straight Forward Blog

By Carey Smith, CEO & Registrar, BAO

Change is the only constant in the pandemic.

The Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) has continued to be adept in providing the right actions at the right time.

As the CEO and Registrar, I've introduced a handful of measures early in the new year adapting to the Omicron variant to ensure that all bereavement sector operations stay open.

Our focus is now on ensuring we have enough staff available in the sector to provide proper death-care and serve families through this highly transmissible wave of COVID-19.



Many measures

In the first week of the new year the BAO:

Introduced measures on Jan. 4 aligned with new government restrictions

Provided new sector staffing measures, as part of the Jan. 4 directive

Authorized colleges on Jan. 6 to make their students available to work in the bereavement sector to support staffing levels during the current COVID-19 surge

Directed crematorium operators on Jan. 7 to put several measures in

place to ensure they can maintain staffing levels if/when people get Omicron

After consulting with the sector in early January, I directed funeral home licensees to:

- Use as few staff as possible to conduct services, replacing a previous minimum staffing requirement
- Have as little contact with families and guests as possible
- Segregate staff into teams, if possible, to prevent cross-transmission. (If one team is infected and off-line, then the other team remains available.)
- Upgrade personal protective equipment, specifically masks, to N95 or equivalent if available.

I also directed crematorium operators to eliminate holds of bodies, increase their hours of operation, add staff, and adjust schedules to ensure their operations maintain capacity in case their staffing levels are impacted by Omicron.

These are temporary preventive measures to support staffing. We want our licensees to have backup

when and if staff become infected.

In mid-February, I issued [a directive in alignment](#) with the provincial government's announcement at that time loosening restrictions as Omicron's effects diminished.

It's working

All of this went into place to make sure funeral homes, crematoriums, cemeteries and hydrolysis facilities could continue serving grieving families.

And it's working.

To date, no bereavement business has had to close because of staffing shortages during COVID-19.

This is very much in keeping with other preventive steps the BAO has taken such as our Expedited Death Response for hospitals and long-term care facilities in 2020 and 2021.

These proactive steps only work because our professionals across the sector implement them. And I thank them for that.

There will be more changes, as posted [on our website](#), as we adapt to what appears to be gradually diminishing death rates and infection numbers.

Fingers crossed.

News of BAO in action for families

The Bereavement Authority of Ontario's primary purpose is to protect the public interest.

So what does that mean?

It means the BAO is here to serve the public.

We are delegated by the provincial government to provide consumer protection and useful information to grieving families and the public concerning bereavement sector services.

The authority regulates and supports licensed:

- Funeral establishment operators, directors and preplanners;
- Cemetery, crematorium and alternative disposition operators;
- Transfer service operators; and
- Bereavement sector sales representatives across Ontario.

Christina Nastas, niece of Louis Tsotsos, clears the headstone at the family plot in the Headford Cemetery on Feb. 4. (Mike Smee/CBC)



The authority does this at no cost to taxpayers, as it is entirely funded by licensee fees.

Here are some examples in the news of how we inform, regulate and protect the public interest:

CBC News – Feb. 9 - **Toronto-area church barring man's burial in a plot they already own, relatives charge** - Relatives of a Toronto-area man who recently died of COVID-19 complications say a cemetery that contains the family burial plot is refusing to let them lay him to rest. The dispute, unfolding in Richmond Hill just north of the city, is pitting a local church against the family of Louis Tsotsos, 67, who died last month, and the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO), a provincial government agency that oversees cemeteries and funeral homes. "It's been very disheartening and distressing on all of us," said Tsotsos's niece, Christina Nastas...The Jan. 27 graveside confrontation was the culmination of a year of problems with the cemetery owners, according to David Brazeau, head of communications for the BAO. He says those problems include the cemetery owner ignoring repeated orders from the BAO to allow the family to bury Tsotsos in peace. "It's quite frankly shameful," said Brazeau. "The family should not be going through this... Now, the BAO has issued [a notice](#)

warning anyone who owns a plot in the Headford Cemetery that they could face problems should they attempt to bury loved ones, and to contact the authority if that happens.

CityNews – Jan. 22 – **The Bereavement Authority of Ontario outlines how its measures for funeral homes and crematoriums have helped keep them open during the Omicron surge.**

CTV News – Jan. 19 – **The Bereavement Authority of Ontario put preventive measures in place to ensure that all funeral homes, crematoriums, hydrolysis facilities and cemeteries remained open during the pandemic.** Among the measures by the BAO was a directive permitting funeral director college students to work in funeral homes before completing their studies. That measure by the BAO was similar to one it put in place in 2020 during the initial waves of COVID-19.

CTV News – Dec. 19 – **The Bereavement Authority of Ontario is speaking out about the strange practice of "obituary piracy"** — in which websites profit by posting often inaccurate information about the recently deceased. The BAO said such pirated obituaries are no tribute, just a ploy to make money. The posts, which appear to profit through online traffic as grieving families

search for information about their loved ones, caused a Toronto family a lot of grief as they tried to understand what happened when their 14-year-old girl passed away. When such a website is called out it disappears, but often something takes its place almost immediately, the BAO states. "It's a strange and sad game of whack-a-mole."

CBC News – Dec. 1 – **What could be the largest disinterment of human remains in Ontario's history is taking place at St. James Cemetery in Toronto in a bid to save hundreds of graves from erosion.** The cremated remains of 500 people — buried between the 1960s and 2010 — have been removed from their resting places and put in storage — in what

St. James' Cemetery volunteer Don Solomon calls a "respectful" manner..."They work methodically; they handle remains one by one. They didn't use heavy equipment around the remains." Solomon said most relatives of the deceased affected by the move have been notified, as is required by the **Bereavement Authority of Ontario**, the agency that regulates funeral homes and cemeteries. Finding some of those families wasn't always possible, said the BAO's David Brazeau. "A lot of the descendants of the people whose remains are being moved are actually buried here themselves, and others have simply moved away."

See our *Beyond* article on this story on [page 8](#).

BAO | Bereavement Authority of Ontario

Planning a funeral in your family?

First, read our free authoritative **BAO Guide to Death Care in Ontario** for what you need to know.

The BAO is here to protect and inform families.

Please [click here](#) to get your free Consumer Information Guide from the BAO.

The graphic features a light blue background with a stylized illustration of a park scene. In the foreground, a man walks a black dog, a child rides a blue bicycle, a family of four walks together, a man walks a golden retriever, and two elderly people sit on a bench. The background shows green trees and a bright sun.

Largest move on record of human remains in Ontario will be complete this summer at a Toronto cemetery



St. James' Cemetery, Toronto

A disinterment and reburial of 500 cremated human remains will be complete this summer at a Toronto cemetery.

"Many of the lots were located overlooking a picturesque slope at our cemetery. People prefer locations like that for their loved ones' final resting place," said John O'Brien, Director of Operations for St. James' Cemetery.

"But such locations run the risk of erosion over the course of several decades, and that was the situation here," he said.

The installation of complex erosion control measures and improved drainage are among the key pieces of work being done to strengthen the embankment before the remains are returned to their original locations.

The cremated remains were buried

between 1960 and 2010 three metres from the top of the slope.

\$2.5 million project

To start the \$2.5 million project, the cemetery moved the remains from their gravesites last summer. The remains were placed in storage at a secure location, so the land could be stabilized in preparation for their return.

“It’s the largest move of remains we’ve undertaken,” said O’Brien.

Michael D’Mello, Deputy Registrar of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO), said, “This is the largest



John O'Brien

These gravestones will be replaced once the remains have been re-interred. Each grave is marked with a red flag and its GPS location noted to ensure remains are returned to their proper positions. (Mike Smee/CBC)





The location of the slope, where the cremated remains had been located and moved, is to the left of the tree. They will return there this summer.

scale move of human remains that we know of in the province. We have been pleased to see that St. James' Cemetery has taken such professional care in this endeavour."

The disinterment application was approved by the BAO last year. Before any work started, notices were mailed to interment rights holders (surviving family of the decedents)

"This is the largest scale move of human remains that we know of in the province."

*- Michael D'Mello,
BAO Deputy Registrar*

and posted on the cemetery's website in June of 2021.

O'Brien said, "Crews identified and mapped each of the 500 plots and identified which ones needed to be moved. Each was disinterred by hand, put into separate containers, which were then placed in a larger secure container until the reinforcement of the land is complete."

All memorial marker locations have been flagged and removed to avoid any damage. The cremated remains will be reinterred to the same part of the cemetery with memorial markers reset in place after the embankment work is done.

St. James' Cemetery is the oldest operating cemetery in the City of Toronto having opened in 1844. It is located on Parliament Street just south of Bloor Street East. It is owned by the Anglican Cathedral Church of St. James, which is covering the entire cost of the project.

Did you know? Federal funding is available for Indigenous families planning funerals

*By Jessica Nadjiwon-Smith
Executive Director
Ontario Native Welfare
Administrators' Association*

*This column recently appeared
in LifeLine, the BAO's newsletter
to its licensed professionals. It
is reproduced here for public
information.*



Jessica Nadjiwon-Smith

Indigenous Services Canada provides a funeral and burial benefit for First Nations residents on-reserve.

I want to share this message with you so that you, as funeral professionals, have the information you need to serve Indigenous families members, of lower incomes, when they come to you for services.

Financial assistance for funerals and burials may be made available to Indigenous people of a lower income, who resided

The assistance would come from Indigenous Services Canada, either through the deceased's local band office or local First Nations Ontario Works office.

on-reserve. The assistance would come from Indigenous Services Canada, either through the deceased's local band office or local First Nations Ontario Works office.

Application

To apply and qualify for this assistance, the estate executor must:

- Complete an application for service for the deceased; and,
- Provide comprehensive information on assets and banking information.

Total costs of the funeral must not to exceed the maximum of \$8,000:

- \$5,000 from the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada contribution;
- Plus, up to \$3,000 in additional expenses that family/friends/First Nations can contribute.

Note: If the family or executor contribute more than \$3,000, the application will be denied. Transportation costs must not exceed \$10,000.

For more information, you may reach out to the [Ontario Native Welfare Administrators' Association](#) at 705-942-3157, or Indigenous Services Canada Regional Senior Programs Officer Timothy.Forte@sac-isc.gc.ca.

Here are some helpful Indigenous Services Canada documents you may share and review with Indigenous families when they inquire about funeral services with you:

[Funeral and Burial Application and Estate Determination Form -For a Non-Social Assistance Recipient \(Non-SAR\)](#) – in Microsoft Word

[Ontario Region Policy \(information\) -For Non-Social Assistance Recipients \(Non-SAR\) Funeral and Burial](#) – PDF

Dying With Dignity

PART ONE: Introducing the GTA chapter of Dying With Dignity Canada

*By Rita Scagnetti
Vice Chair Communications,
GTA Chapter, DWDC*



Mary Anne Cecutti, Chapter Chair

Until 2021, the national human rights charity Dying With Dignity Canada (DWDC) did not have a Toronto chapter. National office staff fulfilled that role while simultaneously delivering national goals of improving quality of dying, protecting end-of-life rights and helping Canadians avoid unwanted suffering.

In 2020, retired health-care consultant Mary Anne Cecutti was volunteering for DWDC as an independent witness for people who requested medical assistance in dying (MAiD). When she realized there was no active Greater Toronto Area (GTA) chapter, she was motivated to change that. She coordinated a steering committee of other witnesses and together they strategized, planned, interviewed and engaged more volunteers. In January 2021, with the blessing of DWDC, the GTA Chapter was born.

With what Cecutti calls a “smart, motivated core team”, the group

had a busy first year. Besides using their extensive business experience to create the organization's infrastructure, the Chapter developed presentations on MAiD and Advance Care Planning (ACP), trained volunteers and resource people to deliver them and conducted outreach to book the presentations. Then they took their shows on the road, virtually speaking.

"Our audiences ranged from churches and synagogues to social workers," Cecutti said, "and the feedback we received was consistently positive, encouraging and grateful."

Upon retirement from her 40-year private practice, psychologist Dr. Bresver followed her interest in bereavement and grief by volunteering with DWDC, first as an independent witness for MAiD. Currently, as director at large for the Chapter, she works with small groups of people who are exploring Advance Care Planning.

"Over the course of 2021, I have had the privilege of working with a number of individuals on their ACP, helping them determine their priorities and wishes for the rest of their life and the end of their life. I have found it to be a hugely rewarding experience and look forward to engaging more people in 2022."

The GTA Chapter is one of more than a dozen active chapters in Canada, where more than 200 volunteers support the needs of their communities. You can reach the GTA Chapter at toronto@dyingwithdignity.ca.

An overwhelming majority of Canadians continue to support access to medical assistance in dying, according to a national survey conducted by Ipsos in February 2021, on behalf of DWDC: 83% believe that people diagnosed with a grievous and irremediable medical condition, including those with dementia, should be allowed to make advance requests for MAiD.

DWDC began as a grassroots organization in 1980, although MAiD became legalized in 2016.

PART TWO:

What is medical assistance in dying (MAiD)?

MAiD has a short but complex history in Canada. You could argue that it started with Sue Rodriguez in 1993 – a BC woman living with ALS

– when the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed an appeal in which she challenged the validity of the Criminal Code prohibition on assisted suicide under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

More recently, in 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in *Carter v Canada* that the existing Criminal Code had to change to satisfy the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Responding to direction from the Supreme Court, in June 2016, the Parliament of Canada passed federal legislation making it legal for eligible Canadian adults to request MAiD.

In March 2021, Parliament revised the legislation, making changes long advocated by Dying With Dignity Canada:

- Canadians no longer must have a reasonably foreseeable death in order to be eligible for MAiD;
- Two sets of safeguards exist: One for those whose death is reasonably foreseeable (Track 1), and one for those whose death is not reasonably foreseeable (Track 2);
- Canadians who have been assessed and approved for MAiD in Track 1, but risk losing capacity to consent prior to the procedure, will be able to sign a waiver of final



Helen Long

consent, also known as Audrey's Amendment; and

- During a two-year mental illness exclusion, the Government of Canada will hear from experts and develop safeguards and protocols for people who seek access to MAiD, but whose sole underlying medical condition is a mental illness.

Dying With Dignity Canada CEO Helen Long called the changes to the legislation “a triumph of compassion and choice, and a testament to the power of raising our collective voices.”

The new session of Parliament reconvened in early 2022 and DWDC and its chapters have turned their attention to the mandated Parliamentary Review.

“Our hope is that the review of MAiD by the Special Joint Committee will lead to legislation and safeguards that will allow for advance requests and for people with a mental illness to safely access MAiD. It will also provide a forum for addressing the protection of Canadians living with disabilities and for Parliament to gain a better understanding of the state of palliative care in Canada,” said Mary Anne Cecutti, Chair of the GTA Chapter of DWDC.

Federal law requires a person's assisted dying request to be signed by one independent witness. DWDC may be able to connect you with a trained volunteer who can fulfill this requirement. Reach out to witness@dying-withdignity.ca or call 1-800-495-6156 ext. 40. Virtual and tele-witnessing are available in Ontario.

Besides Canada, medical assistance in dying is legal in Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, parts of the United States and parts of Australia. The Constitutional Courts of Colombia, Germany and Italy legalized

assisted suicide, but their governments have not legislated or regulated the practice yet. Legislation is currently under the debate in the UK.

PART THREE: What is advance care planning?

Who will speak for you when you cannot speak for yourself?

“That is a difficult question for all ages, not just the elderly and infirm among us,” says Dr. Barbara Bresver, director at large with the GTA Chapter of Dying With Dignity Canada (DWDC).

The answer to that question is at the heart of the Advance Care Planning (ACP) sessions which the retired psychologist leads in her volunteer capacity with the Chapter. In one-on-one and small group sessions, Bresver gently probes and encourages thinking, conversation and planning.

“My objective is to pose questions people may not have considered before. I try to stimulate communication



Dr. Barbara Bresver

between participants, their loved ones, and in conversations with their health care providers.”

Using a [kit developed by DWDC](#), Bresver organizes three consecutive weekly sessions of 90 minutes each and a fourth follow up session a month later.

“There is considerable information to take in, and it requires serious consideration, introspection and even often intimate discussions of past experiences and memories,” said Bresver. Time between sessions allows thoughts and ideas from other group members to percolate.

The choosing of a well-informed

Substitute Decision-Maker (SDM) is integral to the discussion and typically takes the most time to consider.

“We complete questionnaires about values, beliefs, and preferences for future health care,” said Bresver, “and only then can we talk about who we want to take on the roles and responsibilities of the SDM. That role should be filled by someone who knows you well, who will respect your beliefs and values, who is calm in a crisis and whom you trust to voice your wishes in potentially difficult situations.”

Bresver structures the sessions in such a way that the participants are able to ultimately document their decisions by the end of the four conversations so everyone involved has a clear understanding of the choices that have been made.

Like so much of the business that concerns our final days, Bresver said, “Many are ambivalent/avoidant, yet have a strong need to address the issues. Once into it, it’s not as hard as they expect. It is not 1-2-3, but rather thought-provoking. Participants have described it as worthwhile and a relief to have it done. Many have said it feels like a gift to themselves and their family members”.

An interview with Tekla Hendrickson, Executive Director, MAiDHouse

Want to know more about MAiD and what families should know about it?

Watch our interview video with Tekla Hendrickson, Executive Director of MAiDHouse.

MAiDHouse is a non-profit organization providing a supportive, inclusive

and home-like setting for medical assistance in dying. MAiDHouse is comprised of doctors, nurse practitioners, ethicists, advocates and volunteers who believe in choice, tranquillity and dignity at the end of life for patients and their families.

Click on the image and video link below to watch the short interview.

What is MAiD?

Click here to watch the video interview.



Licensed professionals can and do transfer MAiD deceased loved ones to funeral homes

Funeral establishments and transfer service operators can accept appointments to transfer the deceased after medically assisted deaths.

Medically assisted deaths have been legal in Canada since 2016, but it is still relatively new to families. Many may not know what services can be done following a Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) procedure.

“Licensed funeral home and transfer service operators can accept and schedule appointments to pick up decedents following a medical assistance in dying procedure at a home or other appropriate location,” says Michael D’Mello, BAO Deputy Registrar.

“The *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act (2002)* requires that funeral establishments and transfer

services provide this transfer service. I note that family members can, for no consideration (payment), also provide this service respectfully,” he adds.

The Government of Canada provides more information on medical assistance in dying on its website, saying: “MAiD became legal in Canada in June 2016. Canada’s Criminal Code exempts doctors and nurse practitioners who pro-

MAiD became legal in Canada in June 2016. Canada’s Criminal Code exempts doctors and nurse practitioners who provide, or help to provide, MAiD

vide, or help to provide, MAiD. Medical assistance in dying includes: the use of medication by a physician or nurse practitioner to directly cause a person’s death at their request.”

For more information, you may visit the federal government [MAiD website](#).

Good Grief

Grieving well in residential care settings

By Jane Kuepfer



That was the BEST day!" she said, as she pushed her walker toward her retirement suite.

Paula's son had just brought her home after her husband's funeral. She was concerned I would misunderstand. "I mean, I'm sad he's gone, but it has all been so wonderful."

Ron had lived in the long-term care home next door, and Paula had visited for a couple of hours each day since the pandemic restrictions had lifted.

Early Monday morning she received the call that he had died during the night. She called her sons and they went to his room together. There, they had time to say goodbye, to be

with his body and their emotions as they waited for the funeral professionals to arrive.

The family walked with Ron's body, on a gurney covered by a beautiful quilt reserved by the home for this purpose, toward the elevator. Staff and fellow residents gathered around. The chaplain shared some words of faith, from Ron and Paula's tradition, and others shared memories, smiles, tears and said their goodbyes. A few short minutes that meant the world in this time of transition.

Down the elevator, past more staff pausing to pay their respects, and out to the waiting vehicle. The funeral was a few days later, a small gathering, due to the pandemic,

but rich in stories, music, care. And throughout, Paula felt the embrace of her retirement community: mealtime companions, hallway neighbours, PSWs, housekeepers. She feels held in her grief, carried forward to live the rest of her life.

In long-term care and retirement, loss is an ongoing reality. When we honour the grief, we carry it together, and even in our sadness, we are blessed.

“The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.” Kahlil Gibran

Jane Kuepfer is the Schlegel Specialist in Spirituality & Aging with the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging and Conrad Grebel University College (University of Waterloo). To learn more about the RIA’s work to enhance quality of life and care for older adults: www.the-ria.ca.

Allow yourself comfort and consolation in grief

By Serena Lewis



Serena Lewis, MSW, RSW has more than 20 years experience working in the fields of health and long-term care, education, corrections, and non-profit sectors.

Deep in the throes of Ontario’s winter, we are experiencing the blanketing of snow, along with the raw cold edges of this Canadian season. Many of us have a love/distaste relationship with these calendar months. Imagine for

a moment attempting to navigate the winter months without recognition of the cold, the snow, and the weather patterns that constantly change; some days breathtaking beauty, and some that require solace, retreat, and comfort.

As Canadians, I have noticed an interesting thing about us: we are more apt to discuss the weather than how we are doing. We fumble with awkwardness and the standard “fine” response even though our lives get punctured with loss, some of which can be profound. We have become a society challenged to acknowledge our vulnerabilities, thoughts, and emotions, and equally, how love and loss impact us. I recently read an excerpt from Joanna Macy, who challenges that we treat grief ‘as an enemy of cheerfulness.’ Like any skills we attempt to master, grief becomes the universal one we share.

Denial of grief

Our denial of grief as a skill that is required in our lives, families, and workplaces also denies the true and rich impacts of our personal and collective experiences. When we understand that when we care or love- (a person, place, experience, a job, relationship) and we see the transition of their ending, we are meant to grieve.

Like the erratic winter weather patterns, it is also evident that we are seeing the compilation and complexity of grieving through the storms of the past few years. Engaging with people and professionals along my path, I constantly remind them that “when it’s mentionable, it will become manageable.”

As we increase our awareness and courage to share our losses, we begin to see our common, shared humanity; that we are surrounded by suffering. Through this process of creative sharing (expressions of grief are everywhere when we take a closer look) we are building the skills of bringing grief to the forefront of our view and then our narratives. This offers us a map through this territory that is true to the rugged path that has left many weary and exhausted.

Intertwined

Consider the expressions and contemplative practices that slow us down to let ourselves be present with our grief. Think about favourite songs, movies, paintings, books, quilts, photography and even our walks through the knee-deep snow on our trails. Loss and grief are always part of the theme - and often that which inspires us. When we omit aspects of our life experiences and stories, we deny revealing the core part of our shared humanity, which is to grieve. It reveals that we care, empathize, and love.

As I embrace the rhythm of this season, with all its raging blizzards, glistening sparkles on wide-open fields and my breath that I can see in front of me on the coldest days; I am reminded that this is life, this is grief and the two will be forever intertwined.

A photograph of a columbarium, a structure used for storing human ashes. It is a large, octagonal building with a dark, multi-tiered roof and several tall, grey columns. The structure is situated in a cemetery, with a paved walkway leading to it and various plants and flowers in the foreground. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Columbarium: An above-ground solution to preserve ashes in cemeteries



Columbariums are often nestled in picturesque settings, such as this one at Mount Pleasant Crematorium in London, Ontario.

You might not know the term, but families oftentimes choose a *columbarium* to store the re-

Columbarium: A structure designed for the purpose of interring cremated human remains in niches or compartments.

Niche: A space in a columbarium or mausoleum wall to hold an urn.

Urn: A container for the reduced and processed human remains resulting from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis.

mains of their dearly departed.

Defined in the BAO's [Consumer Information Guide](#), as "a structure designed for the purpose of interring cremated human remains in niches or compartments," the columbarium can be found in cemeteries and sometimes make up burial grounds' perimeters.

Why do people choose a niche in a columbarium?

Despite COVID-19 troubles making year-round visitations challenging, retired property manager Douglas Hunsberger, and retired senior

director Micheline Riopelle, both said that choosing a niche in a Gazebo-Columbarium was fulfilling, to honour the life of the former's late daughter.

After consulting different cemeteries, Roberta MacNeil, the Funeral Director at Mount Pleasant Cemetery and Crematorium in London, Ontario, made their experience very personable.

"It was so serene and peaceful, and it really opened our eyes to what was out there," Riopelle said. "The presentation, and everything about the niches was great, and Roberta couldn't have been a better person for helping us get through what we were going through," Hunsberger said.

John Belfry, the manager of Sudbury Park Lawn Cremation Service, says the structure he oversees has 84 units where remains are kept.

A columbarium has some advantages when looking for ways to respect the past. "You're not finding an ash burial in the winter months, for example," Belfry said. "It is in a visible spot in the cemetery, so that families can visit them year-round."

Consumer demand is not slowing down anytime soon for the columbarium, Belfry says.

Depending on the season, people



Families commemorate their loved ones at a columbarium at Sudbury Park Lawn Cremation Service.

will hold on to their respective loved one's ashes until the environment becomes hospitable for displaying, Belfry says.

"I think one of the most important things is that we keep these areas clean, so that visitation can always take place," Belfry said.



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