

MEMORIAL MUSE

Update from the Board

In October 2020, our board met to talk about our members' needs and the changes in funeral planning because of the pandemic. Just two months earlier, I experienced the process with the passing of my mother who resided in Ontario. My brother and I did not want to jeopardize the health of my mom's friends by having a church service, so we had an intimate graveside funeral service for our immediate family. It was lovely and very personal. The next day I sent heartwarming letters to all my mom's friends and family inviting them to remember her in their own special way.

In doing the research for our October board planning session, I learned that my experience was not unlike that of some of our members. I wonder what will happen once Canada's population (fingers crossed) are fully vaccinated? Do people want to go back to big funerals? I also wonder if the funeral packages we offer our members are meeting their needs. After all, we have been offering the same packages since 1965.

Now is the time for us to rethink our business model. However, before we can start to make changes, we need direction from our members. What type of funeral service do you want? Do you value being a member-owned memorial co-op? Should we own our own funeral business? What can the Cooperative Memorial Society change to make funeral planning easier for members? I encourage you to give us your feedback in our survey below. In our next newsletter, I'll share what we learn.



Written by:

**Ms. Terry Geib,
P.H.Ec.**

Board Chair

Terry joined the board of CMS in 2009. In April 2017 she retired as a director for Calgary Co-op after serving 15 years on their board. In addition to Chairing CMS board meetings, Terry does the writing and graphic design work and leads the strategic planning for CMS. Terry works full time as a strategist for The City of Calgary.

[Visit our Website](#)

Member Stories

Darryl sadly lost his mother. After he met with the funeral home to make arrangements for her, his invoice was \$6300.00. A day later, Darryl called the Cooperative Memorial Society saying he found some paper in his mother's "stuff". Who is the CMS and what are we all about, he asked? After we chatted and learned that his mother was a CMS member and that her member benefits included substantial financial savings, Darryl was profoundly relieved. We called the funeral home to confirm to them that his mother was a member of the Cooperative Memorial Society. Darryl was then able to select the B2 member plan for her and his invoice was reduced to \$2955.00.

Tina called us. She had found a slip of paper with a sort of note in her mother's handwriting. It said something about a membership. Tina called us to see if it was the Cooperative Memorial Society that her mother was referring to. She had been calling everywhere. We chatted with Tina and let her know how our members save not only thousands of dollars but peace of mind with their funeral plans. We searched her mother's name and we were able to confirm that her mother had been a member. Unfortunately, Tina's mother had passed away the year before and nobody in Tina's family knew that her mother was a member of CMS. The family had already held a lavish funeral which cost over \$10,000.00. Had the family known at the time about the membership, they could have selected the A1 Plan and paid only \$3830.00. Unfortunately, a year had passed so it was too late to "undo" the funeral service and choose the A1 plan for her mother.

The moral of the story is to please tell your family/friends/executor if you are a MEMBER. It is not up to the funeral home to make inquiries about possible CMS membership. Let those who will be making your arrangements know about your membership and your service preferences. You can also carry your membership card in your wallet available [here](#). Keep your Membership Forms at home where others can find them when needed- do not send them to CMS. Do not keep them in a safe deposit box. You can give your loved ones so much peace of mind by telling them that you are a member of the Cooperative Memorial Society.

Ask Barb



Written by:

**Ms. Barb
Montgomery**

*Membership
Manager*

Barb became the CMS Membership Manager in January 2017 after a 30 year career in hotels and hospitality. Barb's warm and caring personality and attention to detail is appreciated by the entire Board.

Contact Barb

"Hi, Barb- I cannot become a member of CMS yet, because I cannot afford to pre-pay for the plan. What can I do?"

You do not need to pre-pay for your funeral in order to become a member! Many people think you have to pre-pay for the member-priced plan to get a membership, but this is not the case. In fact, you never have to pre-pay if you don't want to.. Of course, many members do choose to pre-pay, so they can lock in today's prices. Some people like the idea of locking in the price but think they cannot afford to pay the whole cost at one time. It may well be possible for you to make monthly payments. A pre-paid funeral plan is completely refundable should you change your mind or move away. If pre-payment is not your choice, just purchase the membership and your estate will still save a substantial amount with the plan price of the day when the time comes.

Funerals During a Pandemic



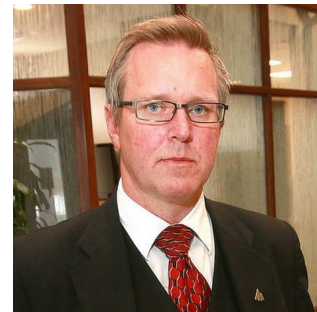
McInnis & Holloway (CMS' contracted service provider for Calgary & area) is grateful that the Alberta Government

recognized the importance of funerals throughout COVID as funerals at some capacity have always been permitted with proper social distancing and additional safeguards in place.

McInnis & Holloway holds the safety of our families, our team and our community at the forefront. Our Calgary, Airdrie and Cochrane facilities can accommodate funerals while ensuring we have the proper physical distancing in place.

Funerals have always and will continue to be possible for multiple friends and family to attend. Through technology and creative approaches, McInnis & Holloway will provide families multiple options to include not only those locally that are unable to attend but also friends and family separated by distance to tune in from across the globe.

"A life lived, is a life to honour,"



Written by:

Mr. Jeff Hagel

President of McInnis & Holloway

Jeff graduated from Bishop Carroll High School in Calgary. He then graduated with his applied degree in small business and entrepreneurship and his diploma in international business from Mount Royal College. He worked outside of the funeral profession until 2004 when he made a career change, went back to Mount Royal College and took

Approach at McInnis & Holloway

We wish for your family to be assured we have implemented these important safeguards at all of our locations to continue to serve our community:



We have adjusted our seating to have proper physical distancing between seats. Our large and spacious facilities can safely accommodate 20 people.

Funeral home staff will monitor physical distancing behaviors and remind attendees (not from the same household) to follow physical distancing rules.



Masks are required as per the City of Calgary bylaw.



The use of Electrostatic Disinfectors that utilizes electrostatic technology to evenly coat surfaces and provide complete disinfection of all surfaces.



Hand sanitizer stations will continue to be available for all guests.



Healthy individuals are welcome and encouraged to attend funerals. Those that are feeling unwell (including Presiders, funeral staff and musicians) are asked to avoid entering the funeral home.



Dedicated continuous disinfecting of all high-touch surfaces within the funeral home will continue to take place with constant monitoring and signs denoting this.



Hand washing is required by all staff every 30 minutes and proper hand washing practices are implemented.



The use of IqAir filters with hyperHEPA filters designed for virus and bacterial removal efficiency greater than 99.5%.

Additional Services Available:

- All memorial books will include disinfected pens
- Online streaming will continue to be made available at no charge to families
- Soloists may perform along with an organist. Due to the increased risks associated with group singing all hymnals have been removed. Hymns should be limited to a soloist.
- Service folders are available and may be printed on plastic paper
- Limousine (family transportation) continues to be available for up to 10 family members (cohorts) to travel together with a partition between the driver and passenger area.
- FM broadcasting services to parking lot remains available

If you do have any questions or would like to discuss services options any further, please reply to this email address or you may speak directly with one of our funeral directors at 403-243-8200.

their distance learning funeral directors certificate program while obtaining his funeral director and embalmers licenses in Edmonton, AB. Jeff joined McInnis & Holloway in June of 2007 and became a partner in October 2011.

We Want to Hear From You

Co-operative Memorial Society is dedicated to continued improvement to best serve the community. The following survey is intended to achieve this. All responses collected are private and non-identifying. The data collected through these responses will be used to best improve our services over the

following fiscal year



[Complete the survey now](#)

Edited by:

Mr. Michael Cacace, Dip.SW, BSW, RSW

Director

Micheal was appointed by the Board in 2020 to fill the vacant position. Michael is a social worker with a strong background in working with the LGBTQ2S+ community, and broadly with with diversity, inclusion and safety. Michael has held numerous leadership positions in Calgary and Vancouver's non-profit sector. In addition, Michael has experience managing and leading strategic planning and program development, marketing and graphic design for non-profits organizations.

