

OFSA ANNUAL
AGM &
Convention



John McQueen



Françoise Mathieu



Brian Parent



Ashley Montroy

The New Frontier

OFSA gears up for 2012 convention

The Ontario Funeral Service Association (OFSA) will be hosting its annual convention, September 17-20, 2012 at the Four Points by Sheraton in Kingston, Ont.

Appropriately named The New Frontier, the convention promises to take delegates into the changing world of funeral service – one that has evolved recently with the new Ontario legislation effective July 1, 2012.

“We thought it would be fun to go with the theme ‘The New Frontier’ which brings us into our western theme for Tuesday night,” says Kerri Douglas, executive director of the OFSA. “The theme is in conjunction with the new legislation and also reflects many of the development sessions. Our keynote speaker discusses surviving the new world, and of course Brian Parent will take another look at the legislation in his development session. Even the Tuesday afternoon workshop on Twitter, Facebook and social media brings us into the new frontier.”

OFSA president Ernie Morgan adds that there has never been a better – or more important – time to attend the annual convention.

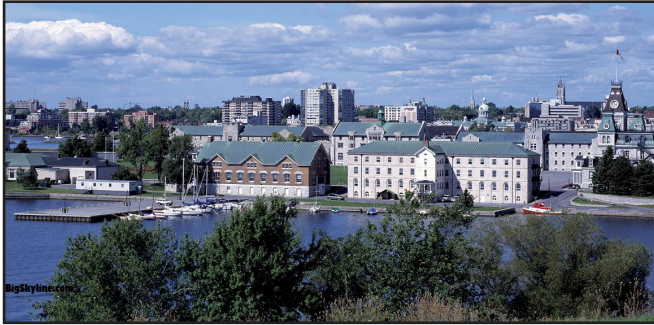
“I would say it’s in their best interest to come and to be

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~ Ernie Morgan, OFSA president

educated on how compliance issues are doing and how well everyone is doing,” explains Morgan, who is also president of Morse and Son Funeral Home in Niagara Falls. “Between reports that we expect from a representative from the Board of Funeral Services, who has been invited to attend, our own legislation committee and perhaps even our legal representative, Anne-Marie McLaughlan, we should have lots of information to share with them.”

According to Morgan, Ontario funeral homes worked very hard to be ready and compliant for the July 1 date. However, he says the OFSA has received a number of emails from funeral directors who are frustrated in the dealings with cemeteries and crematoriums.



Kingston, Ontario



Sheraton's Four Points hotel, where the convention will be held.

“That seems to be the biggest challenge,” adds Morgan. “Not all of them, but a great many cemeterians and crematory operators are under the impression that there is a grace period – that they can take a few months to get used to the new legislation.... This is frustrating for the directors who are trying to be compliant and don't want to be operating non-compliantly just because the cemeteries and crematories have been lax about this.”

Morgan adds, “In my own area, there are a number of churches and small private cemeteries that have no knowledge of the new legislation.”

The OFSA is combating this by distributing information via email on a regular basis to their members. They are also developing sample price lists and contracts that funeral directors can distribute to their local cemeteries to help them along. As many of the smaller cemeteries are run by volunteers, they simply do not have the manpower to undertake the new legislation. As funeral homes previously had such things as price lists from the past round of legislation, they were more prepared for the July 1 deadline, whereas licences and contracts are a new ballpark for most Ontario cemeteries.

In addition to dealing with all the legislation issues, the convention features a charity golf tournament in support of Camp Trillium (a camp for children with cancer) at Loyalist

Country Club in Bath, Ont. Co-hosted with the Bay of Quinte Funeral Service Association, the day will include a barbecue lunch and prizes followed by dinner back at the hotel.

The educational component will include roundtable discussions and numerous development sessions: How to Create a Facebook and/or Twitter Page for Dummies with Ashley Montroy; The Cost of Caring: Understanding compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma in funeral home staff with Françoise Mathieu; FBCSA Transcending Life in the New World with Brian Parent; and Creating Raving Fans and Raging Profits through Effective Packaging with John McQueen. McQueen will also take centre stage as the closing keynote with the topic Survivor: Canada – It's a battleground and only the strong survive.

“I'm pretty excited about our keynote speaker, John McQueen, from Anderson-McQueen,” says Morgan. “He's a cutting-edge funeral director and I'm hoping that he can bring information that will be useful to the membership. I was fortunate to tour John's Cremation Tribute Center this past April when I was in the St. Petersburg area, and they are indeed a cut above the average funeral home. It's fantastic to have someone of that quality coming and speaking colleague to colleague. So I look forward to John's contribution to our convention along with the other professional development sessions that Kerri and the team have put together.”

Delegates will be given plenty of time to mingle with colleagues from across the death-care profession in conjunction with the trade show. The convention will also include the president's banquet and awards (business attire) as well as a western-themed fun night. Entertainment will be provided D. R. Kennedy and Dark Horse Country.

“The networking and what you learn from each other is invaluable,” adds Morgan, who will be passing the president's hat to Scott Miller during the convention. “There's an old expression, ‘You learn 50 per cent in the class and you learn 50 per cent in the bar,’ and that is never truer than the information that is shared amongst fellow members. You definitely get ideas and you get inspired. When I come back from a convention, I am all revved up, I'm inspired and I have a list of must-dos.”

For delegates looking for accommodations, the host hotel – Four Points by Sheraton – is located just steps from many historic sites and scenic wonders. For those wishing to explore the Kingston area, the hotel provides easy access to the world-famous 1000 Islands, Confederation Trolley Tours, live theatre and more.

For more information about this year's convention, please visit www.ofsa.org. ❄️

Schedule of Events:

Monday, September 17

- 11:30 am Bus leaves for Charity Golf Tournament co-hosted with the Bay of Quinte Funeral Service Association at Loyalist Country Club, Bath, Ont.
- 6:30 - 10:00 pm Cocktails and Dinner

Tuesday, September 18

- 9:30 - 11:00 am Three Roundtables
- 12 pm Opening Lunch with greetings from Kingston's Mayor Mark Gerretsen and Trade Show
- 3:00 - 3:30 pm Break-Out Session
- 3:30 - 5:00 pm Two Professional Development Sessions (choose one):
- How to Create a Facebook and/or Twitter Page for Dummies – Ashley Montroy
 - The Cost of Caring: Understanding compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma in funeral home staff – Françoise Mathieu
- 6:00 - 11:00 pm Fun Night – Western Theme (western dress)
- Entertainment provided D. R. Kennedy & Dark Horse Country
 - A mechanical bull will be present for people to ride

Wednesday, September 19

- 7:00 am Hot Buffet Breakfast
- 8:00 am OFSA AGM (members only)
- 12:00 pm Lunch in conjunction with the Trade Show
- 2:15 - 3:45 pm Two Concurrent Professional Development Sessions:
- FBCSA Transcending Life in the New World – Brian Parent
 - Creating Raving Fans and Raging Profits through Effective Packaging – John McQueen
- 3:45 - 4:00 pm Break-Out Session
- 4:00 - 5:30 pm Two Concurrent Professional Development Sessions:
- FBCSA Transcending Life in the New World – Brian Parent
 - Creating Raving Fans and Raging Profits through Effective Packaging – John McQueen
- 6:00 - 10:00 pm President's Banquet & Awards (business attire)

Thursday, September 20

- 8:00 - 9:00 am Past President's Breakfast Meeting
- 8:00 - 9:00 am Continental Breakfast
- 9:30 - 11:30 am Closing Keynote Speaker
- Survivor: Canada – It's a battleground and only the strong survive – John McQueen