



British Institute of Funeral Directors
Educating the Funeral Profession

JOURNAL

JANUARY 2023 | VOLUME 1



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In This Issue

- **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2023**

Application Forms & CPD Record Available Now

- **"MY LATE PARTNER'S FUNERAL WAS CARRIED OUT EXACTLY AS HE WOULD HAVE WANTED"**

Funeral Historian Dr Julian Litten Discusses His Partner's Bespoke Funeral

- **CHINESE NEW YEAR: A BRIEF HISTORY**

Deputy Editor Lucie Kibbey Explores The Origin of The Luna New Year





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Ben Whitworth is the Education and Technical Co-ordinator for the MazWell Group. A qualified dental director, engineer and laboratory operator, Ben is also an accredited tutor of the British Institute of Embroidery, recognised as a speaker in the fields of embroidery, dental service and equipment. Ben writes for a number of international dental service publications.

Ben Whitworth, CFSD, Dip.FD, MEdD, MEd, MSc, BSc

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SHAVING & MANAGEMENT OF FACIAL HAIR

By **Ben Whitworth**
Education and Technical Co-ordinator
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Jem Mead, Dip. FS, LMBIFD
National President

Happy New Year to one and all, and what a year it's going to be. Firstly, we have the Examination Weekend in March for our Diploma students, to whom we all wish the best of luck – trust me, if I can pass it anyone can and most of you are half my age!

We have a new venue this year, as we have clearly outgrown the previous one, one which is primarily setup for Education Weekends and training.

We will combine this with the first face-to-face training session for our new tutors, adding another wonderful dimension to the whole proceedings.

Secondly, we have another new venture, our CPD weekend in Chelmsford for early May. This will be a residential event with 8 hours of CPD to count towards your 2023 Licence to Practice, you will all have received an email about this by now. A lot of hard work has gone into the production of the event by David Gresty and his team and I commend the idea to you all.

Karen & I have been busy representing you all at various meetings and conferences, we will be attending the London Association of Funeral Directors conference at the end of the month in Park Lane, and the following weekend we are in Royal Tunbridge Wells for the Annual SAIF Conference – both of which we look forward to.

Enquiries for our courses are still coming in on a daily basis from the website, as a direct indication to us that members of the profession clearly want University Accredited courses to study. We have currently had over 400 requests since the site went live last April, and I see no reason to believe that we won't pass 500 by the first anniversary.

These enquiries have been a massive boost to us all within the Institute and explain why we need additional tutors; however, we do still have areas of the country where we need more help with tutoring if we are to fulfil our ambition that no prospective student should be more than 2 hours' drive from a tutor. If you are interested in becoming a tutor, please send us an email at admin@bifd.org.uk

The conference in October is shaping up well now, and I can promise you some 'interesting' entertainment – those that know me well have already booked their place!

Please put a reminder in your diaries now 20th -22nd October Alexandra Park Hotel Wroughton. We look forward to welcoming each and every one of you.

Until next month, please take care of each other and continue to look after your families loved ones.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE ADMIN TEAM

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN: MEMBERSHIP & LICENCE RENEWALS

Enclosed in this magazine are the Renewal of Membership form and CPD form, which must be completed if you require a Licence.

Please where possible, make your payment by BACS; please ensure you put your name and/or membership number as the reference. Bank details are on the renewal form.

We are more than happy to accept your cheques. However, there is a financial cost to the Institute for cashing these, and it takes time to get to the bank to pay them in!

Membership renewal is **NOT** automatic, and we require a renewal form to be completed and submitted to National Office as this enables us to check that we have the correct contact details for you.

Should you require to hold a Licence you also need to complete the CPD form detailing at least 12 hours of CPD undertaken in the year April 2022 to March 2023.

We will happily accept renewals early and process Certificates and licenses in preparation for the new subscription year.

Online CPD is now happening on a monthly basis and it would be lovely to see more of you join us. Details are sent by e-mail with a zoom link and remember it all counts towards your annual CPD allowance.

Thank you all for your continued support of the Institute.



Take care all, Karen & Jem ~ National Office



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

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Email: admin@bifd.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 032 2733

2023/24 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Please complete this form IN FULL and return it with your payment and any supporting documents, as required.

Name:		BIFD Membership No.:
Address:		
Town:	County:	Post Code:
Telephone:	Email: please print clearly	

I hereby apply to renew my membership in the British Institute of Funeral Directors, as follows:

✓	MEMBERSHIP TYPE	SUBSCRIPTION AMOUNT		
	Licenced Full Member (CPD FORM MUST BE COMPLETED)	£185.00		
	Full Member	£160.00		
	Retired Member (voting)	£ 75.00		
	Retired Member (non-voting)	£ 50.00		
	Student Member	£ 75.00		
	Associate Member	£100.00		
✓	ADDITIONAL MEMBER ITEMS	Quantity	Cost	TOTAL AMOUNT
	Additional copies of Annual Licence <i>(ONLY available to Full Members with a Licence, as above)</i>		£10.00	£
	Member's Lapel Badge		£ 5.00	£
	Member's Window Sticker		£ 2.45	£
	Member's Tie (normal straight tie or clip on)		£10.00	£
	Member's 40 th Anniversary Tie (straight tie) – all funds from tie sales donated to the National Presidents chosen Charity.		£15.00	£
Total Additional Member Items				£
Membership Subscription (as above)				£
TOTAL TO PAY				£

Member's Signature:

✓	Payment Method
	Cheque - enclosed <i>(Cheques to be made payable to the British Institute of Funeral Directors)</i>
	BACS (internet banking) Sort Code: 60-83-01 Account No.: 20336550 <i>(please quote your surname as the reference when paying by BACS / Internet Banking)</i>

To opt out of allowing your personal information to be shared, please tick the box.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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PLEASE NOTE: If you are applying for a Licence, you must complete the 2022/23 CPD Return and enclose it with your Subscription Renewal. CPD Returns will be checked and verified and you may be contacted and requested to supply additional information if we need further verification.

2022/2023

1st April 2022-31st March 2023

BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

National Office: 10 St John Road, Wroughton, Swindon SN4 9ED

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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RECORD

NAME:

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:

Date	CPD provider (Please include: name, address and contact details)	Subject matter & training activity received	Comments	Number of hours
TOTAL				

All the activities must have been undertaken between 01/04/22 - 31/03/23. No carry forwards of any description are acceptable.

National Office will require this log in support of your Licence application for 2023/2024. This information must be retained for a minimum of three years.

A continuation sheet may be used.

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Editor's Desk

Hayley Bell, Dip. FD, LMBIFD **Editor of the Journal**

Welcome to the first issue of 2023! I would like to express my appreciation to our advertisers, supporters and readers. With your help the Institute had an incredible 2022; it was our 40th Anniversary. we implemented our monthly CPD sessions, launched a new website and strengthened relationships at the National Funeral Exhibition.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my evolving role within the Institute, engaging with members, students and associates.

My partner Richard and I managed to take a few days away from the hustle of the office over Christmas and New Year, relaxing and eating well - we even managed to see some family members - a true rarity when running your own business!



We are only one month into 2023, and I have been working closely with the Education and Examination committees in association with Greenwich University for the accreditation of our Certificate and Diploma Courses that takes place every three years.

I am also a member of a working group along with David Gresty, National Office and Immediate Past President Paul Stibbards, together with Nicola Jarmaine and Judith Dandy; we are all working hard to arrange what is looking to be an incredible education weekend in May. You can find all the information and booking forms in this issue of the Journal. We hope to see you all there.

These projects have been challenging but incredibly rewarding, and we're only at the start of the year!

I look forward to the Examination weekend in March, where I will work alongside the Examination Team and the Diploma Students. But I am most excited for Jem and Karen's Conference and Gala Celebration in October.

I am also looking forward to working again with my excellent Deputy Editor, Lucie, she has already written some incredible articles in this issue, and we have some new ideas for the year ahead.

I'm not making big 'New Year, New Me' resolutions any more; in previous years, I have made unrealistic resolutions, which led to disappointment. Instead, I make smaller, less stressful goals throughout the year, this means that I feel more relaxed if I'm not able to accomplish the promises I made when it comes to the middle of the year.

Life can be hectic, and resolutions can be easily put on the back burner, and that's okay - personal goals don't have an expiration date!

A New Year's Resolution does not guarantee anything, but if you have one, I hope you're successful.

As always, if you have any news or articles you would like to share with the members, please get in touch with us, and we will be happy to include them within the publications.

~Hayley x

The British Institute of Funeral Directors
Residential Education Weekend in Funeral Service
12th – 14th May 2023

'A Unique Educational Experience'

*Residence at the Southend Holiday Inn Airport Hotel and
Educational Seminars at Anglia Ruskin University*



The British Institute of Funeral Directors is offering a unique educational weekend for like minded professionals, across all of the profession & organisations, with a passion for further learning and improving their work skills.

To be held at the Anglia Ruskin University, the delegates will get to see state of the art facilities for today's medical students. An insight into body donation and how the University Mortuary uses the generosity of the donors for their studies.

The BIFD will provide a complete weekend package, with residence at the Southend Holiday Inn Airport Hotel, eight seminars at the University, equating to eight hours CPD, with a certificate of attendance produced for each delegate at the end of the weekend.

The weekend will also have a social element on the Saturday evening for networking, sharing experiences and catching up with old and new friends.

Included in the weekend:

- 2 nights Bed and Breakfast on the Friday & Saturday
- Return coach travel from the hotel to the University
- Lunch provided on both Saturday and Sunday
- A social dinner on the Saturday evening with entertainment
- 8 sessions of Educational CPD covering a wide variety of Funeral Service
- A certificate of attendance covering seminars attended, valid for CPD, provided by the BIFD a registered CPD provider, signed off by the seminar trainer
- Trade stands
- An ideal forum for learning from one another and networking in the profession
- Cover 8 hours of your yearly CPD, in one go, over 2 days
- Set in a University Environment offering an insight into body donation, body donation embalming and state of the art mortuary facilities.

Seminars – All seminars are subject to confirmation within the next two months, but we are working to provide areas covering:

Disaster Management Mortuary Advice & Tours
Body Donation Body Donation Embalming Cosmetic Demonstrations
Mental Well-Being Manual Handling Demonstrations & Equipment
Bereavement Work Of The Coroner
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* All the above subject to change and confirmation

The British Institute of Funeral Directors
Residential Education Weekend in Funeral Service
12th – 14th May 2023

'A Unique Educational Experience'

*Residence at the Southend Holiday Inn Airport Hotel and
 Educational Seminars at Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford*



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1. DELEGATE RATES – RESIDENTIAL PACKAGE

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Residential Course Per Person (BIFD MEMBER).....£350
Residential Course Per Person (NON-MEMBER).....£390

Residential Course Per Couple (BIFD MEMBERS).....£550
Residential Course Per Couple (NON-MEMBERS).....£630

A University Environment offering an insight into body donation, body donation embalming and state of the art mortuary facilities.

There is a possibility that non-residential rates may become available, but at the moment this is only available for delegates who live in the locality.

2. TRADE RATES

i. Full Residential Package

Includes everything in the above Delegate Rate plus:

*Friday & Saturday Bed & Breakfast
 Saturday & Sunday Lunch
 Saturday (Smart Casual) Dinner
 Return Coach Travel (Saturday & Sunday)
 Trade Stand In Reception Staffed During Breaks
 Networking Opportunity
 Access to the Weekend Seminars*

Cost Per Delegate (ASSOCIATE MEMBER).....£350
Cost Per Delegate (NON-MEMBER)£390

ii. Attended Trade Stand Only At Event

Trade Stand in Reception Staffed During Breaks

Cost£150

iii. Unattended Trade Stand

Send your trade stand to one of the event organisers to set up on your behalf and arrange collection from us after the event

Cost£100

iv. Sponsorship Opportunities

Sponsor a 1 hour Seminar & have your Company listed in programme

Cost£250

Sponsor Saturday Lunch

Cost£300

Sponsor Sunday Lunch

Cost£200

Please ask for other potential opportunities

The British Institute of Funeral Directors
Residential Education Weekend in Funeral Service
12th – 14th May 2023

'A Unique Educational Experience'

*Residence at the Southend Holiday Inn Airport Hotel and
Educational Seminars at Anglia Ruskin University*



BOOKING FORM

Delegate Name/s: If BIFD Member: No:.....

Address:

Post Code: Contact Telephone Number:

Email Address: Special Dietary Requirements: Yes/No
Details of Diet

Please Highlight Which Is Applicable:

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See Rates Page To Complete Form & Payment

1. Full Residential Education Weekend

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- b. Single Non-Member £ _____
- c. Double Member £ _____
- d. Double Non-Member £ _____

Please enquire about possible non-residential rates

2. Trade Weekend

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- c. Staffed Stand £ _____
- d. Unstaffed Stand £ _____
- e. Sponsorship – Please Contact Organisers

**Please return, or email, your completed
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Deputy Editor's Desk



Lucie Kibbey, Cert. FS, MBIFD

Deputy Editor of the Journal

Hello all, and a Happy New Year.

I trust we all had a bit of a rest over Christmas; though we did get a few calls to help local families, I managed some time off with the children and feel ready for the year ahead.

I have decided to do the usual “new year, new me” and am embarking on a diet and exercise regime – watch this space; I will update a little further down the line on how I am getting on. Will the call of the biscuit tin get the better of me? We shall wait and see!

But I thought it would be good to read how the “new year’s resolution” was born and evolved.

Besides that, we are back into the usual deluge of school runs and housework, trying to find all the odd socks and keeping the small folk happy.

I am excited for 2023 and what Hayley and I can bring to the Journal to keep you inspired and interested in the BIFD and what is on offer.

If you have any questions, please do get in touch with one or both of us!

All the best for the year ahead.

~Lucie x



The Evolution Of New Year Resolutions

The ancient Babylonians are said to have been the first people to make New Year’s resolutions, some 4,000 years ago.

They were also the first to hold recorded celebrations in honour of the new year—though for them the year began not in January but in mid-March, when the crops were planted.

During a huge 12-day long religious festival known as Akitu, the Babylonians crowned a new king or reaffirmed their loyalty to the reigning king. They also made promises to the gods to pay their debts and return any objects they had borrowed. These promises could be considered the forerunners of our New Year’s resolutions.



If the Babylonians kept to their word, their (pagan) gods would bestow favour on them for the coming year. If not, they would fall out of the gods' favour—a place no one wanted to be.

Left: An illustration depicting the Babylonian Akitu Festival which celebrated the Barley Harvest and the Vernal Equinox, where Heaven and Earth were in balance. A table of ceremonial offerings was likely laid out to honour and appease the God Marduk

A similar practice occurred in ancient Rome, after the reform-minded emperor Julius Caesar tinkered with the calendar and established January 1 as the beginning of the new year circa 46 B.C.

Named for Janus, the two-faced god whose spirit inhabited doorways and arches, January had special significance for the Romans. Believing that Janus symbolically looked backwards into the previous year and ahead into the future, the Romans offered sacrifices to the deity and made promises of good conduct for the coming year.

For early Christians, the first day of the new year became the traditional occasion for thinking about one's past mistakes and resolving to do and be better in the future.

In 1740, the English clergyman John Wesley, founder of Methodism, created the Covenant Renewal Service, most held on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day.

Also known as watch night services, they included readings from Scriptures and hymn singing, and served as a spiritual alternative to the raucous celebrations normally held to celebrate the coming of the new year.

Now popular within evangelical Protestant churches, especially African American denominations, and congregations, watch night services held on New Year's Eve are often spent praying and making resolutions for the coming year.



Above: 18th Century Methodist Leader who, in 1740, created the 'Covenant Renewal' service - more commonly known as the 'Watch Night' service.

Portrait by William Hamilton



Despite the tradition's religious roots, New Year's resolutions today are a mostly secular practice. Instead of making promises to the gods, most people make resolutions only to themselves and focus purely on self-improvement (which may explain why such resolutions seem so hard to keep).

According to recent research, while as many as 45% of Americans say they usually make New Year's resolutions, only 8% successfully achieve their goals. But that dismal record probably won't stop people from making resolutions anytime soon—after all, we've had about 4,000 years of practice!

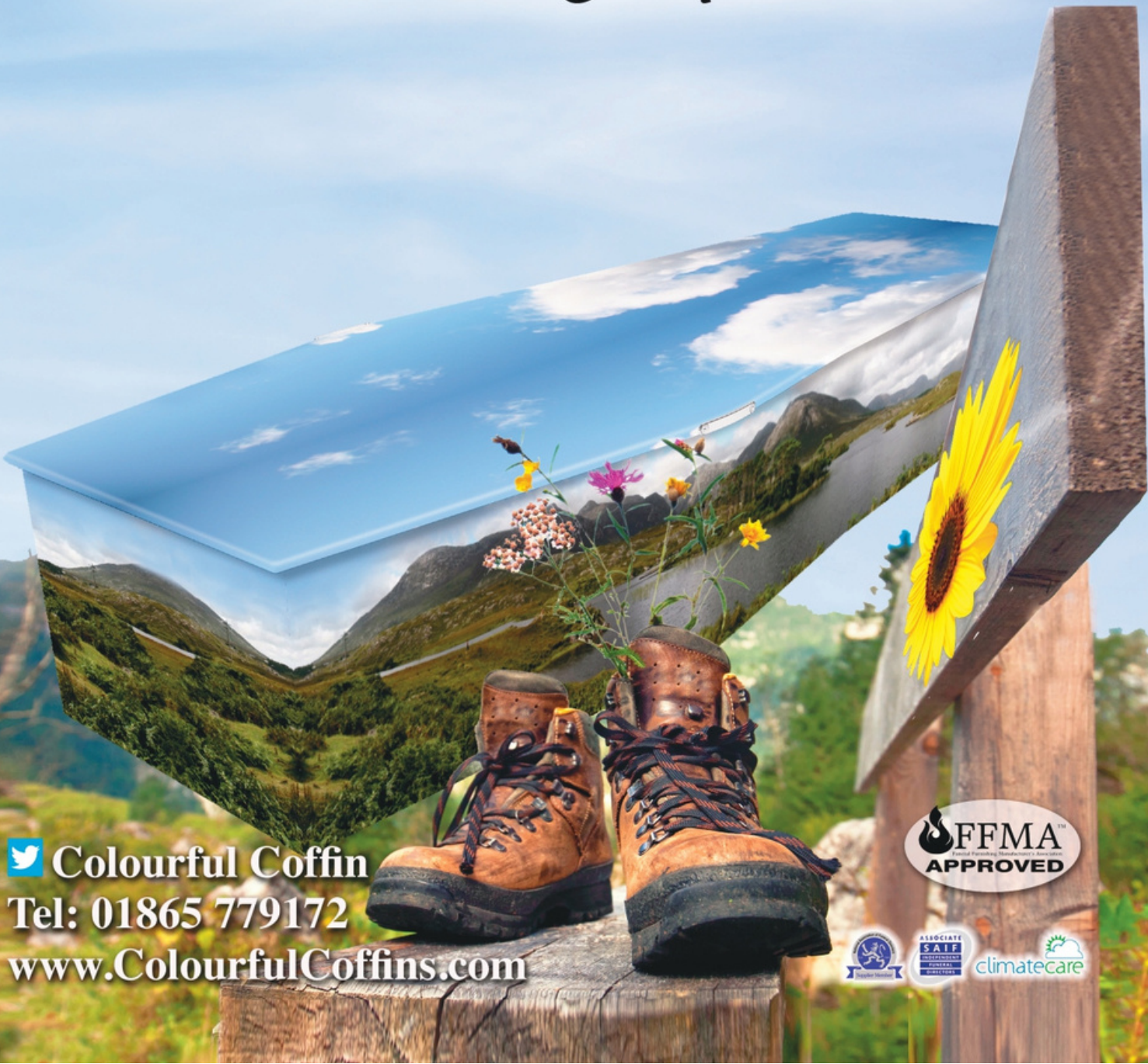




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The Death & Funeral of His Holiness Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Hayley Bell, Dip. FD, LMBIFD - Editor of The Journal



Born Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger on 16 April 1927 in Bavaria, Germany, Pope Benedict XVI was the head of the Catholic Church and Sovereign of the Vatican City from 19 April 2005 until his resignation on 28 February 2013.

Benedict XVI's election as Pope occurred in the 2005 Papal Conclave that followed the death of Pope John Paul II. He chose his Papal name, Benedict (Latin: 'The Blessed'), in honour of both Benedict XV and Benedict of Nursia, and his motto was 'Cooperatores Veritatis' (Latin: 'Cooperators of the Truth'). He was the fourth-oldest person to hold the office as Pope.



During his time as Pope, he strengthened the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Arts, promoted the use of Latin and re-introduced several Papal garments, earning him the name 'The Pope of Aesthetics'.

Benedict XVI resumed using the traditional red Papal shoes, which had been used historically by each Pope since Roman times but had fallen into disuse during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. Despite initial press speculation that Italian Fashion House Prada had made the shoes, The Vatican announced that the Pope's Shoemaker provided the shoes.



On 11 February 2013, Benedict XVI announced his resignation, citing a "lack of strength of mind and body" due to his advanced age. Addressing his Cardinals, he declared that he would live "hidden to the world" and continue to serve the Church "through a life dedicated to prayer". He chose to be known as 'Pope Emeritus' (Latin: 'Retired Pope').

His resignation was the first by a Pope since Gregory XII in 1415 and the first on a Pope's initiative since Celestine V in 1294. He was succeeded by Francis on 13 March 2013 and moved into the newly-renovated Mater Ecclesiae Monastery in Vatican City for his retirement.

On 31 December 2022 at 9.34 am, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI died at Mater Ecclesiae Monastery aged 95. His long-time Secretary, Georg Gänswein, said his last words were 'Signore ti amo' (Italian: 'Lord, I Love You').

On 2 January 2023, Benedict XVI's body was laid in state in St Peter's Basilica; an estimated 200,000 Catholics paid Homage during the three-day event.



The Funeral Mass was held at St Peter's Square on 5 January 2023 at 9.30 am - while there would be similarities to the funerals of his predecessors, it was expected to be a smaller affair, with an anticipated attendance of 65,000 mourners. The simple coffin was constructed of Cypress and placed on a low platform in front of the altar.

The recital of the Rosary in Latin took place as cardinals, dignitaries, and the faithful filed into an unusually foggy St Peter's Square. Among the front row of mourners were Georg Gänswein, Benedict's personal secretary, and the four women who cared for Pope Emeritus during the past decade. One hundred twenty-five cardinals are celebrating the Mass, including five at the altar, out of the 224 that make up the College of Cardinals.



Wearing red funeral vestments and a white mitre, Pope Francis was seated on a throne just above the wooden coffin of his predecessor. In an unusual precedent, the funeral Mass of Benedict XVI on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica is the first that an incumbent Pope presides over the funeral of a predecessor who resigned.

In his Homily, Pope Francis recalled how Jesus' last words — "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" — summed up the "ceaseless self-entrustment" to God that had defined Benedict XVI's life.

The image on the cover of the official funeral Mass booklet is that of Caravaggio's 'Deposition of Christ', which he painted between 1602 to 1604 for an altar in the Church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, Rome. It was taken to Paris in 1797 by Napoleon but later returned and is now housed in the Vatican Museums.

Dozens of priests moved through the crowd in St. Peter's Square to give communion. Some more conservative mourners did not like receiving communion in hand rather than on the tongue, according to the old traditions that Benedict XVI strived so hard to restore.

In the final part of the Mass, Pope Francis offered "our final farewell to Pope Emeritus Benedict". He commended him to "God, our merciful and loving Father." as incense was lit.





Mourners applauded as the pallbearers raised the coffin to bring him into St Peter's Basilica as the bells began to toll. Pope Francis, standing, put his hand on the coffin, closed his eyes, and offered a blessing and prayer.



Benedict XVI was buried in the so-called 'Vatican Grottoes', joining nearly 150 of his predecessors underneath St. Peter's Basilica. The tombs in the Vatican crypt are close to the remains of the Catholic Church's first pope, St. Peter the Apostle.

According to his wishes, Benedict was laid to rest in a floor-level tomb where two other recent occupants: John XXIII, who led the church for nearly five years before his death in 1963, and John Paul II, Benedict's immediate predecessor, laid following their funeral Masses. Both pontiffs were moved upstairs to St. Peter's Basilica when they were beatified, the penultimate step before sainthood. It is unlikely that Benedict will become a saint immediately.



In his final spiritual testament, released by the Vatican on Saturday after his death, Benedict XVI urged resistance to secularism. He reflected upon his life, saying he had many reasons to be thankful for God's guidance through moments of confusion.

"Retrospectively, I see and understand that even the dark and tiresome traits of this journey were for my salvation and, right in those, He led me well," Benedict XVI wrote, referring to God.

Hayley Bell, Editor of The Journal

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MY LATE PARTNER'S FUNERAL WAS CARRIED OUT EXACTLY AS HE WOULD HAVE WANTED

DR JULIAN LITTEN, FSA, HON. BIFD
Funeral Historian



After three years of coping with Alzheimer's disease, my partner of forty-six years had an enormous stroke and coronary arrest and died on 10 August 2022. We had made plans for our funerals in 1985, purchasing a brick grave in one of London's most prestigious private cemeteries, erecting in 2008 a large monument on the landing stone, suitably inscribed and just waiting for the addition of our dates of death. We had even gone as far as purchasing from Miss Green of Newman Bros of Birmingham our solid cast brass gothic coffin furniture before that company closed in 2001. Imagine, then, my surprise on reading his Will that he expressed a desire to be buried in a churchyard in rural Essex.



To be fair, my partner had always considered the purchase of the brick grave as "Julian's folly". So, here I was, with a useless grave on my hands and a monument whose shape, style and size contradicted the rules and regulations of the diocese in whose churchyard my partner expressed a desire to be buried. Of course, it would have been a gross discourtesy on my part to have ignored his wishes, so the funeral was planned in accordance with his desires.

Left: The church in whose churchyard Dr Litten's late partner is buried

My partner was an Anglican priest; thus, several considerations came into play. We had already discussed the eucharistic vestments he would be buried in, selected which pair of buckled shoes he would wear, and which silver chalice and paten were to be placed in his hands. Furthermore, he had chosen a churchyard far away from the parish where he worshipped.

As there was little possibility of the congregation of his adopted church making the long trek to the churchyard he had nominated as his place of burial, it meant that two services would be required, the first being a High Mass of Requiem at the church he attended in Norfolk, to allow everyone to make their farewell of him, and then a Funeral Mass two months later at the church in whose churchyard he was to be buried.

Two months between the date of his death and the burial was necessary as his relatives and friends were scattered all over the globe – in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Florida, Chicago and Palm Springs – all of whom wished to attend the burial itself.

That decided, my partner's remains were taken from Norfolk to London where they were to remain until 10 October when the burial was to take place.

The High Mass of Requiem at his parish church was well attended; a booklet had been produced and a local funeral director had provided an empty coffin for the catafalque, covered by an elegant purple velvet pall from my late partner's collection. Gasps went up when, during the sermon, the incumbent said, "Of course, Father's body is not here, for that is currently in London, and all we have today is a symbolic coffin to remind us of his death and the fact that he will not be with us here again."

But everything went as planned and there was even a reception afterwards at which memories were shared and kind words expressed on Father's long ministry and all that he had achieved.

With Part One of the arrangements over I was left with planning the main obsequies, but in between there was another High Mass of Requiem, this time at the church in London of which he had been incumbent for thirty-three years. Again, a pallied empty coffin, and some 400 people present.



The coffin of Dr Litten's late partner.

Meanwhile, the London funeral furnishers had already set the wheels in motion. My partner was to be buried in two coffins, both of which were specially made for him by a company in Suffolk, something which had been planned many years beforehand, the outer case to take the Newman Bros coffin furniture, the lid secured by eight square brass bolts, with twelve additional brass bolts at the corners and a tapered brass coffin plate with enamelled lettering.

Because of the delay between the time of death and the funeral, he was fully embalmed and expertly dressed in his eucharistic vestments. The reason for this was to fulfil the words of the Psalm, “do not let my beloved see decay”. Meanwhile, I was busy having a black moire silk altar frontal made, as the church where the Funeral Mass was to take place did not have a black altar frontal – have you ever tried getting an ecclesiastical tailor pulling out all of the stops to get a twelve foot wide frontal made in four weeks? Well, we did.

Then there was the hiring of an organist, a cantor, priests to serve as celebrant, deacon and sub-deacon, a full serving team and to select the readers for the lessons. It was my partner’s wish that his funeral should be free of four things: first, there was to be no eulogy, rather a brief resume of his life would appear printed in the Mass Booklet (another task for me, as it had to be different to the booklet printed for the two Requiems), second, that no member of the laity would take any part in the service apart from the readers of the two lessons. Thirdly, no members of his immediate family were to trapse in or out of the church behind the coffin, rather it was their place to sit in the midst of the congregation amongst the main body of the people – not at the front as if on display – and fourth, that the funeral director paging the event should be dressed in black jacket and striped trousers, he considering top hats, frock coats and walking canes as “a Victorian affectation unsuitable to a twenty-first century funeral.”

In short, the event was magnificent. The Sung Mass was elegant and dignified in the extreme, with lots of incense and bells, a sermon based on the text “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech” and hymns which reflected priesthood and an individual’s commitment to God. It was, in fact, everything my partner desired: the full theatre and ritual appropriate to a priest of the catholic wing of the Church of England. The three hundred or so present, used to the Anglican funeral rites, sang lustily and loudly, aided and abetted by the twenty or so robed priests.

He was shouldered out of the church to the strains of the cantor singing Ernest Sands’ Song of Farewell, and there was no dry eye in the house. As the procession wended its way to the graveside, the church bells rang a quarter peal in his memory. The Morris men of the village danced ahead to Princess Royal, his favourite Morris tune, the robed priests and the congregation following on behind. I must confess that I found the committal somewhat stressful – but I retained my composure – for I was not saying my “farewell” to the person whom I have loved for almost half a century but, rather, to the person who had loved me, and that was the pain that only I could bear.

For years I had wondered how I, one of the two best-known historians in the UK on the English Funeral, would have coped with the situation. In truth, I didn’t “cope”; rather, my late partner had taken the responsibility off my shoulders by carefully planning what he wanted during his lifetime; my role was to see that through. Above all, we were fortunate because the funeral furnisher had been our personal friend for over forty years. He knew his clients – the deceased and the chief mourner – and was well aware of what was required. That in itself is proof that arranging a funeral before one’s death is perhaps the kindest thing one can do to lessen the anguish of organising a funeral during the primary stages of grief. I take my hat off to that gentleman for the dignity of his service, for pulling out more stops and calling in more favours than ever before and, in short, for making my partner’s last appearance on this earth such a dignified and memorable event.

It was a large church building, sufficiently large for the whole congregation to be entertained with champagne and cakes after the burial. There was much laughter and mirth in recalling the various aspects of my late partner’s character and style, but no eulogies, no speeches, no hideous doggerel poems – just kind memories exchanged and countless expressions of “My, what a magnificent funeral!”

So I wish my partner God’s speed on his final journey. For my part, I am eternally grateful to the priests and the funeral furnisher who made it such a beautiful occasion, leaving me with a lasting memory of an occasion of great dignity and elegance, which only a village church and a village burial could accommodate. In short, I’m pleased that he abandoned “Julian’s folly” and opted for an English country churchyard. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.



Fab moment for charity fundraiser Jamie, as he gets call from World Cup winner Cesc Fabregas and secures £10k donation for GOSH

A fundraiser was stunned after receiving a call from a World Cup winner to announce that his charity football initiative had won a worldwide competition – and a £10,000 donation.

Jamie Groves, Regional Development Director at Funeral Partners, has co-organised two star-studded football matches in the last 18 months called Goals 4 GOSH, raising more than £60,000 for the Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity.

And his work – alongside fellow volunteer and co-organiser Charlotte Styles – was recognised in a contest run by Italian football club Como, who were looking for heroes in the community in their Cheers 4 Christmas campaign.

They have pledged to donate £10,000 to the charity and gifted Jamie an iPad and a replica Como shirt.

Unbeknown to Jamie, his wife Roxanne had nominated him and Goals 4 GOSH for the award and taken part in secret meetings to share information about his work.

Jamie, who lives in Croydon, only found out when he received a video call from current Como player, and former Arsenal, Barcelona and Chelsea star, Cesc Fabregas announcing the good news.

“My wife had set it all up – I had absolutely no idea,” Jamie said.

“I got a video call from an Italian number and didn't have a clue what was happening, but Roxanne knew and was filming me so they could put it on their Instagram.

“He was a really good guy, so humble, and seemed to know so much about what we had achieved.”



Cesc Fabregas and Jamie Groves on their FaceTime call

There was one awkward moment for Jamie, as he revealed that he supports Tottenham Hotspur – huge rivals to both the English clubs Fabregas has represented.

“He asked me which team I followed, and we had a good laugh about it,” Jamie said.

“The recognition is great, but the donation of £10,000 is what it is all about and will make a big difference.”

Goals 4 GOSH was one of eight different winners from across the globe who had done notable things for charities or good causes.



Jamie Groves with Harry Cain and Lianne Sanderson at the last Goals 4 GOSH game

Over the last two summers, Goals 4 GOSH has been held at Crystal Palace's Selhurst Park stadium and featured football legends including Anton Ferdinand, Lianne Sanderson, Hollywood actor Tamer Hassan and Youtuber Young Filly.

The games have been put on with the support of Pinks Funeral Directors, A Yeatman & Sons Funeral Directors, Gillman Funeral Service and other Funeral Partners funeral homes in South London.

A third Goals 4 GOSH match is being planned for this summer, with details to be released soon. For regular updates, visit:

www.instagram.com/goals4gosh or <https://www.facebook.com/goals4gosh/>

A Goals 4 GOSH squad has recently taken part in charity match at Worthing Football Club on 15 January, where funds were raised for Martlets Hospice in Sussex and Great Ormond Street Hospital children's charity.

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ELECTRIC HEARSEES MAKE FUNERAL PARTNERS DEBUT AS PART OF ECO DRIVE

Funeral Partners has taken further steps to offer mourners alternative vehicle options which have a reduced impact on the environment with the introduction of three new electric-powered zero-emission hearses. The elegant Nissan Leaf vehicles have made their debuts at Torbay & District Funeral Services in Torquay, W H Painter Funeral Directors in Yardley in Birmingham and across Funeral Partners branches in the Greater Belfast area of Northern Ireland.



Senior Funeral Director Terry Weir, Funeral Service Operatives Nicola Mckee, Deborah McConnell and Tom Maguire from James Brown & Sons Funeral Directors with the new electric hearse

Mark Potts, Head of Operational Support at Funeral Partners, has been overseeing the exciting addition of electric hearses.

He said: “We’re always looking at ways to reduce our carbon footprint while giving families more choices. The introduction of electric hearses achieves both and lays the foundations for a wider transition to electric vehicles as part of a five-year fleet plan.”

In the future, Funeral Partners aims to have an electric vehicle based in every region of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland to be able to offer clients choice.

Electric hearses will give funeral homes the opportunity to install charging stations and benefit from the various government grants available.

Mark said: “I’ve already spoken to some funeral homes that are interested in the government’s Workplace Charging Scheme, which supports up-front costs associated with purchasing and installing electric vehicle charge points.”



Funeral Partners Area Development Manager Sandra Murphy with Malcolm Brooks from Wilcox Limousines

Sandra Murphy, Area Development Manager for Funeral Partners in the South West, said the reaction from clients and the teams to the new Nissan Leaf had been very positive since it launched in Torquay.

“It’s all about offering our clients choice,” she said.

“More and more, you will find many of the deceased may have had an electric car themselves or lived a life where they were passionate about the environment or conscious about climate change, so being able to offer that opportunity can only be a positive thing.

“It looks almost identical to a regular hearse, just a little smaller with no middle seat, so you do not lose anything with the look and feel.”

David Salsbury, Funeral Service Operative at Torbay & District Funeral Services, said: “It’s nice to drive – very mobile and nimble, which helps with the sharp corners and tight bends which are quite common around here.

“It’s very quiet. When you pull up to a crematorium, it feels very dignified, and there is a genuine sense of serenity because of the lack of noise.

“We’re seeing more and more interest in funeral choices that may have a reduced impact on the planet – and I am sure the Leaf will be very popular here.”

Funeral Partners have also continued updating their fleets at branches across the country to help increase fuel efficiency and reduce carbon emissions across the fleet as part of their ongoing Environmental Social Governance (ESG) strategy. Older vehicles are being decommissioned and being replaced with more modern fuel-efficient models. New Mercedes vehicles have already been welcomed in Henry Ison & Sons in Coventry and in Turners Funeral Service in Doncaster.



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Prospect Hospice is a local adult hospice and delivers with no charge to patients and their families, care, comfort and confidence, around the clock, every day of the year, to a community of 300,000 people across Swindon, Marlborough and north east Wiltshire. The services costs £7.5million to deliver and being funded only 25% from statutory sources Prospect Hospice relies on fundraising events & activities, the generous donations of the community and local business support, to help raise the income to deliver their care.

Sheryl Crouch, head of income at the hospice said: "We are thrilled to have been nominated by Mead Family Funerals as their chosen charity to support throughout the term that Jem Mead will be President for the British Institute of Funeral Directors. What an honour for us to be the beneficiary of any fundraising while Jem is serving, we are so very proud and humbled to have been chosen."

CHINESE NEW YEAR: A BRIEF HISTORY

Lucie Kibbey, Cert. FS, MBIFD - Deputy Editor of The Journal

Chinese New Year, also known as the Lunar New Year or the Spring Festival, is the most important among the traditional Chinese festivals.

The origin of the Chinese New Year Festival can be traced back to about 3,500 years ago. Chinese New Year has evolved over a long period of time and its customs have undergone a long development process.



Like all traditional festivals in China, Chinese New Year is steeped with stories and myths. One of the most popular is about the mythical beast Nian (Nyen), who ate livestock, crops, and even people on the eve of a new year. (It's interesting that Nian, the 'yearly beast', sounds the same as 'year' in Chinese.) To prevent Nian from attacking people and causing destruction, people put food at their doors for Nian.

It's said that a wise old man figured out that Nian feared loud noises (firecrackers) and the colour red. Then, people put red lanterns and red scrolls on their windows and doors to stop Nian from coming inside, and crackled bamboo (later replaced by firecrackers) to scare Nian away. The monster Nian never showed up again.

The term Nian ('year') first appeared in the Zhou Dynasty (1046–256 BC). It had become a custom to offer sacrifices to ancestors or gods, and to worship nature to bless harvests at the turn of the year.

The date of the festival, the first day of the first month in the Chinese lunar calendar, was fixed in the Han Dynasty (202 BC – 220 AD). Certain celebration activities became popular, such as burning bamboo to make a loud cracking sound. See when Chinese New Year is and how the date is determined.



In the Wei and Jin dynasties (220–420), apart from worshipping gods and ancestors, people began to entertain themselves. The customs of a family getting together to clean their house, having dinner, and staying up late on New Year's Eve originated among common people.

The prosperity of economies and cultures during the Tang, Song, and Qing dynasties accelerated the development of the Spring Festival. The customs during the festival became similar to those of modern times.

Setting off firecrackers, visiting relatives and friends, and eating dumplings became important parts of the celebration.

In 1912, the government decided to abolish Chinese New Year and the lunar calendar but adopted the Gregorian calendar instead and made January 1 the official start of the new year.

After 1949, Chinese New Year was renamed to the Spring Festival. It was listed as a nationwide public holiday.



Nowadays, many traditional activities are disappearing, but new trends have been generated. CCTV (China Central Television) Spring Festival Gala, shopping online, WeChat red envelopes, firework shows, and overseas travel make Chinese New Year more interesting and colourful.

WHY IS CRAFTING THE PERFECT SOCIAL MEDIA POST IMPORTANT FOR YOU AND YOUR FUNERAL HOME?

Eimer Duffy, Social Media/Digital Marketing Consultant & Trainer for the Funeral Industry



Why creating the perfect social media post is important to you and your funeral home. Even if you post to Facebook or Instagram, this is a very good question. There is no such thing as a perfect social media post, but here are some key elements that can help you create a social media post as a Funeral Director or on behalf of a Funeral Home.

Be Relevant



Finding and developing content that resonates with your audience requires having a clear idea of what to post and understanding your audience. By knowing your audience, you can determine what content they are most likely to be interested in and create posts specifically tailored to their interests. If you know this, it will be easier for you to be consistent and create materials related to the funeral home. By researching posts and finding out what types of content appeal to your audience, you can write posts that are more likely to interest your audience. Recognising the types can help you come up with content ideas that will differentiate your Funeral business.

Content Is King

If you want your posts to stop scrolling, it matters what you use to engage and engage your audience. GIFs, videos, and images are all effective techniques to attract followers and non-followers. Carefully select and use high-quality images to distinguish your content from others. Videos can be short or long, depending on the message you want to convey. GIFs can be used to reinforce a message and are a great way to add interest and a sense of belonging to your content. Whatever medium you choose, it's important to make sure it's relevant and engaging to your audience.

Capture With Captions

Captions should be short and to the point. If it's relevant or needs to be long, that's fine too. You can connect with your audience by writing interesting captions. Cut out unnecessary words and focus on what you want to say. Crafting a compelling call to action can also help improve engagement. Use positive language to tell your audience what you expect. Make sure your actions are easy to understand and clear.

Here are a few examples:

- Visit our website to learn more about our services
- Follow us on social media for tips on coping with loss
- Ask us questions about funeral planning and our services
- Take part in our grief support groups
- Sign up for our newsletter for comforting thoughts and helpful resources

Having the right website link is super important and once you paste that into your post, an image from the website article, YouTube video, podcast interview etc... will appear. And yes then delete the long link as it will make your post look more clean and professional.

If you have a photo or video that you want to post and a separate link then my advice is to use a free link shortener such as BITLY and you can set up a free account at: <https://app.bitly.com/>. From there you can input the long website link and BITLY will shorten it for you and you can paste that into your social media post instead of a long website link.



Hashtags

Using the right hashtags is a great technique to boost the exposure of your social media postings and expand the audience for your content. Make it easy for users to find posts that are relevant to them by enabling them to quickly search for content they are interested in.

Additionally, hashtags help you find conversations about specific topics and connect with more people in your community and beyond. Hashtags can also be used to increase engagement on your posts as they allow you to connect with a wider audience, not just your followers. It can also be used to join conversations already in progress, allowing you to contribute to conversations and interact with other people.

If you need further guidance on this topic, please visit my website (details below) and my hashtag guide with many hashtag ideas specifically for use in the funeral industry. You can get a free copy of my Hashtag Handbook For The Funeral Industry if you head over to my website at www.fitsocialmedia.ie

Tone Of Voice

Emoji are useful as tone of voice in social media posts because they can be used to convey emotions that text alone cannot. Emojis are small digital images or symbols used to express emotions, thoughts, or moods. Commonly used in digital news. Over 3000 emojis are currently available, with more being created and released all the time.

Emojis add a layer of expression and make your message more specific, making it more engaging and engaging for your audience. Emojis can also be used to underline keywords or periods in your message, or to break up text to make it easier to read and understand. Research shows that adding one to his Facebook posts can increase engagement by 57%. Emojis are therefore a useful tool and a way to increase engagement with your social media posts. Use it only if you think it's relevant.

In Conclusion

To use social media effectively, create the ideal social media post combination. You can expand your audience and increase engagement with your funeral home by crafting engaging posts with clear messages, compelling images, and engaging language.

Hashtags, emojis, and more. By adding elements to your post can also help increase your audience's awareness and engagement. By crafting the ideal social media post, you can build your social media presence as a funeral director and funeral home. This allows you to better engage with your online community, your future pursuits, and even your future employees.

Need More Ideas Or Help?

I hope you find this interesting. If you would like any questions answered on this or would like more information on improving your online presence, social media use, digital marketing for your funeral home, request a copy of my hashtag guide or have a chat with me. Visit my website www.fitsocialmedia.ie.



I'm Eimer Duffy, Digital Marketing and Social Media Consultant and Trainer. I specialise in helping Funeral Directors and Homes grow their online presence, build community, and trust online. I provide interactive live one to one and/or group online sessions for all skill levels - delivered over Zoom to fit your busy schedule. And you can find me on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn- so let's connect. Thank you for reading.



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Introduction to LifeLedger

The Easy Way to Inform Companies of a Death

Life Ledger is a service that aims to streamline the process of informing companies of a death, helping bereaved individuals navigate the often-difficult task of closing or switching accounts of someone who has passed away.

Life Ledger is a service that aims to streamline the process of informing companies of a death, helping bereaved individuals navigate the often-difficult task of closing or switching accounts of someone who has passed away.

Launched at the beginning of 2021, the service is free to use and allows users to choose and notify nearly 1000 companies in the UK, including utility providers, banks, credit cards, insurance companies, and pension providers.

This complements the free “Tell Us Once” service that families will usually be informed of when they go to the registrar office and only covers government departments (council tax, passport, benefits, etc).



By using Life Ledger, families are able to save many hours on the phone with service providers repeating the same information. Instead they can register once on the website, upload a death certificate, and choose and inform companies at their own pace.

In addition to offering a user-friendly platform, Life Ledger also provides support to the bereaved through livechat and messaging technology, offering a personal touch during a difficult time.

Life Ledger attended the 2022 BIFD AGM and will be at the annual meeting again in 2023.

To receive free materials to give to families please call or email
 Dan Blackett, Partnership Manager:
 07702 639919
 dan@lifeledger.com





CHINESE FUNERAL TRADITIONS

Lucie Kibbey, Cert. FS, MBIFD - Deputy Editor of The Journal

Chinese funeral rituals comprise a set of traditions broadly associated with Chinese folk religion, with different rites depending on the age of the deceased, the cause of death, and the deceased's marital and social statuses. Different rituals are carried out in different parts of China, and many contemporary Chinese people carry out funerals according to various religious faiths such as Buddhism or Christianity. However, in general, the funeral ceremony itself is carried out over seven days, and mourners wear funerary dress according to their relationship to the deceased.

Traditionally, white clothing is symbolic of the dead, while red is not usually worn, as it is traditionally the symbolic colour of happiness worn at Chinese weddings. The number three is significant, with many customary gestures being carried out three times.

While traditionally inhumation was favoured, in the present day the dead are often cremated rather than buried, particularly in large cities in China. According to the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA), of the 9.77 million deaths in 2014, 4.46 million, or 45.6%, were cremated.

Throughout history, Chinese people have carried out complex funeral rites, with tombs of early rulers rivalling ancient Egyptian tombs in their funerary art and provision for the dead in the afterlife. The late 3rd century BCE Terracotta Army contains approximately 9,000 terracotta figures that were buried to protect Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China.

Traditional burial customs show a strong belief in life after death and the need for ancestor veneration among the living; Confucian philosophy calls for paying respect to one's ancestors as an act of filial piety. These ideals still inform funeral rites for many Chinese people today.

It is customary for relatives to hold vigils over the dying, in order to accompany them until the very last moment before entering the afterlife. This process, called *shǒu líng*, is a way for loved ones to show filial piety and loyalty to the deceased. Family members thus take shifts to watch over a relative on their deathbed.



It is common to place a white banner over the door of the household to signify that a death has occurred. Families will usually gather to carry out funeral rituals, in order both to show respect for the dead and to strengthen the bonds of the kin group.

Those with closer relationships to the dead (i.e., sons and daughters) wear white garments, while more distant relatives wear garments in different colours of white, black, blue and green. The colours red, yellow, and brown are traditionally not worn during the mourning period, which may last up to three years. Before a funeral, an obituary notice, *fùwén*, is commonly sent to relatives and friends announcing the date and time of the funeral procession. The date is usually selected as an auspicious one according to the Chinese fortune calendar.

The deceased is dressed in clean funeral dress in preparation for their departure from the world and journey into the afterlife (*lái shì*). *Dà liàn* is the ritual of transferring the body of deceased into the coffin (*rù mù*), which will rest in the funeral hall decorated with four-character idioms (*cheng yu*) prior to the burial or cremation. Before the funeral procession, the *jiā jì* is held. According to the closeness and status of the family members, they will pay respects to the deceased.

According to Chinese custom, an elder should never show respect to someone younger. So, if the deceased is a young bachelor, his body cannot be brought home and must remain at the funeral parlour. His parents cannot offer prayers to their son either. Since he was unmarried, he did not have any children who could perform these same rites for him. (This is why the body cannot come into the family home.) If an infant No funeral rites are performed if an infant or child dies respect cannot be shown to a younger person. The child is thus buried in silence.

The funeral procession (fā yǐn) is the process of bringing the hearse to the burial site or site of cremation. During the funeral, offerings of food items, incense, and joss paper are commonly presented. The offering of food and joss paper signifies the continuing interdependence between the deceased and their living descendants. Monks sometimes carry out Taoist or Buddhist prayers to help the deceased's soul to find peace and escape the fate of becoming a "restless ghost".

Every year at the Qing Ming Festival, people respect their ancestors by visiting their graves and tidying up their tombstones. Later generations are invited to participate in this process of ancestor veneration.

CHINESE BURIAL MONEY

Dark coins are Chinese imitations of currency placed in the grave of a person to be buried. The practice dates to the Shang dynasty when cowrie shells were used, in the belief that the money would be used in the afterlife as a bribe to Yan Wang (also known as Yama) for a more favourable spiritual destination. The practice changed to replica currency to deter grave robbers, and these coins and other imitation currencies were referred to as clay money or earthenware money.

Chinese burial money has been discovered dating as far back as 1300 BCE and remained popular throughout Chinese history until the advent of joss paper and hell money during the late 19th century CE.



Burial money was modelled after the many different ancient Chinese coinages, and earlier burial money tended to be actual money. Graves that were dated to the Shang dynasty period have been discovered that contain thousands of cowrie shells; for example, the Fu Hao-mu, dating to about the year 1200 BCE, was discovered containing 6,900 cowry shells. Chinese graves dating to the Warring States period are found containing contemporary coinages buried as funerary objects such as spade money, knife money, ring-shaped coins, ant-nose coins, and Ban Liang cash coins. But as the presence of real money and other objects of value would attract the attention of potential grave robbers, the Chinese started to manufacture clay imitations of real money. This was done as the contemporary Chinese believed that if the grave was robbed then the spirit of the deceased person who laid inside of the tomb was disturbed by these robbers and the money that was formerly located in the grave that was meant to ensure his or her comfort in the afterlife was now gone, making their afterlife less comfortable.



Chinese burial money has been discovered made from stones and bones (along with cowrie shells) in the earliest forms, later forms include thin metallic imitations of circulation currency during the Spring and Autumn period. The imitation metal money found in these ancient tombs ended to be thin and fragile, and were typically made of lead and bronze. Initially archaeologists believed that imitations of currencies were only used by the poor, but the discovery of imitation money in the tombs of the wealthy had changed this view.

The Chinese custom of burying the deceased with coins can be compared to the ancient Greek and Roman customs of burying people with a coin to pay with a passage to the underworld. In the Chinese afterlife burial coins could be used to purchase either less or no punishment for bad karma, or even for the purchase of luxury items.

LAID TO REST BURIAL CHARMS

Chinese "Laid to Rest" burial charms are bronze funerary charms or coins usually found in graves. They measure from 2.4 to 2.45 centimetres (0.94 to 0.96 in) in diameter with a thickness of 1.3 to 1.4 millimetres (0.051 to 0.055 in), and they contain the obverse inscription *rù tǔ wéi ān* which means "to be laid to rest", while the reverse is blank. These coins were mostly found in graves dating from the late Qing dynasty period, though one was found in a coin hoard of Northern Song dynasty coins. These coins are often excluded from numismatic reference books on Chinese coinage or talismans due to many taboos, as they were placed in the mouths of dead people, are considered unlucky and disturbing, and are undesired by most collectors.





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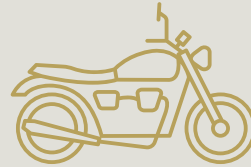


Managing Director, Marian Sinclair: Serving families since 2002



Marian Sinclair with her late Husband Rev Paul Sinclair

THE JOURNEY SO FAR



Paul & Marian moved to Leicestershire. Not for any other reason other than Paul looked at the map, decided it was pretty much in the middle of the country and that he could travel in any direction on the motorway network to get to any funeral director who required his services.

Now, those who knew Paul will completely understand when we say, he was a master of promotion and certainly not a shy or retiring character! Within weeks of launching Motorcycle Funerals, he was featured in pretty much every national newspaper and was on countless TV programmes.

While he only had one hearse at that point, soon he began to design another one which would become our original Harley Davidson. It was around this time that Ann came on board in the office and her husband Simo was our bike expert.

Once the Harley was built, it was then time to think about what would come next. We had the classic British bike, the iconic American bike so what needed to happen next? Well, according to Paul, the choice was obvious.



It had to be the fastest production road bike in the world at the time.....the Suzuki Hayabusa.



Years later, Paul took the Hayabusa hearse down Elvington Race Track and has the Guinness World Record for Fastest Motorcycle Hearse in the world!

With three hearses and with the help of friends who rode outfits, Paul realised it was time to hire a full-time rider, and this is when Lucy joined the team.

Between them both, they took this tiny company and put it on track for what it has become today.

Lucy left to start her own funeral directors and the company grew and grew to what it is today.



Paul with actor Richard Wilson
in 'Two Feet in The Grave'



We would take calls all the time to appear in different articles and TV shows, and it wasn't always possible to do them all.

A few Paul said yes to that we loved. Two Feet in the Grave with Richard Wilson and Robbie Coltrane's B-Road Britain were real highlights for him.

We think it was because Richard and Robbie are both Scottish so they could understand what Paul was saying in his heavy Glaswegian accent.

Motorcycle Funerals was going from strength to strength with a wealth of hearses to choose from and fantastic staff. Paul didn't have a clue what it meant to slow down. Although he did make some time for the occasional holiday, this was extremely rare.

A few years ago Paul was diagnosed with a brain tumor. At the time, he didn't really tell anyone. Determined that it wasn't too much to worry about initially. Pop into hospital, have it whipped out and then go to work the next day was pretty much the thinking.

After the hospital visit came other therapy and the founder of Motorcycle Funerals sadly died in March 2019 aged just 53 years old.



Now Paul's big personality, his absolute dedication for everything to be perfect and just because if anyone deserved it, he did, then his funeral had to match the man. So, the only thing we knew was a decade ago, Paul had said to Lucy that "When I die, make sure I go on the Hayabusa." Well that was easy enough but we knew we could do more.

Friday night, the amazing people at Donnington Race Track let us take Paul around it. He always moaned that he never got to go around it for a funeral service so we needed to make it happen for him.

He was accompanied there by the hearses and riders that had returned from working for funeral directors that day.

On the way back to the Unit which is the home of Motorcycle Funerals, Paul had a "last blast." If you know, then you know! He spent the night in the Unit surrounded by the hearses he had built and with a member of his old staff keeping him company overnight.

The next morning, his staff started arriving at 7am to make sure everything was perfect.

There was a production line of wash bays and polishing happening for a couple of hours and was a real hive of activity. With the help of past and present riders along with some of Paul's friends, every single one of his hearses accompanied him to his funeral.

In the end, Paul was taken in his beloved Suzuki Hayabusa, the very first hearse he ever built, the Triumph Speed Triple and then he was taken to the cemetery in the very newest Triumph Bonneville.

Paul built this company because he wanted bikers to be able to travel to their funeral on a bike. He built the company so that elderly people who brought up their children using a motorbike and sidecar could feel that bit of nostalgia travelling to a funeral service.

Paul built something really special and we are going to continue to keep it and look after it how he wanted us to.

- **He built the company so that children could travel in a cool bike rather than a huge, imposing car.**
- **He built the company for the men and women who were never 'allowed' to have a motorbike or had to give them up once children came along.**
- **He built the company because ultimately, it was the way he wanted to go.**

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ANTICIPATORY GRIEF

by Rebecca Noble & Ella Roche

We expect to feel grief after a bereavement, grief goes hand in glove with loss. But, less talked about is when you start to grieve before someone has died.

What is anticipatory grief?

Anticipatory grief is common when a loved one has received a terminal diagnosis, although it is often not talked about. Grief can begin from the moment of diagnosis, and it is just as painful, complicated, and overwhelming as grief after a bereavement. It can in some ways be more upsetting, as we mourn the loss of someone still alive and here with us.



How can anticipatory grief affect me?

Everyone grieves differently, and there is no right or wrong way to feel. Some people may not experience anticipatory grief, as they may not wish to acknowledge what is happening. This can be an effective coping mechanism for their impending loss.

On the other hand, some people will experience the full gamut of grief in advance. It can be extremely stressful, as we rarely know exactly when our loved one will die. You may constantly be worrying about what is about to happen, and this can have a huge impact on your physical and mental health.

Should I be feeling this way?

It is very common to experience lots of different emotions, that can creep up when you aren't expecting them, and they can be triggered by the smallest of things. You are not alone, and it is entirely natural and normal to feel this way.

Grieving before death doesn't mean you will not grieve after death. However, it may provide opportunities for closure that people who lose loved ones suddenly never have. You have a chance to say goodbye, and look back on the wonderful times you had together. If you watched your loved one suffer, you may find comfort in the fact they are no longer in pain.

It can also be common to wish it would all be over, because you want your loved one to be free from pain or suffering, which can in turn lead to intense feelings of guilt, and even survivor's guilt. This too is entirely normal.

How can I support myself through my grief?

1. Ask for help

First and foremost, ask for help if you need it. It's perfectly okay not to be okay, and sharing your feelings can bring relief and support. If you know someone else in the same situation, try talking to them, as they may be experiencing similar emotions.

Seek expert help if you need it. At MuchLoved, we work in partnership with expert bereavement counsellors, GriefChat, to offer free online counselling as often as you need. Just visit our website www.muchloved.com to learn more and connect with a counsellor.

2. Connect with your loved one

This time can be extremely stressful and difficult, but you may also have the opportunity to spend time with and connect with your loved one. It might be a chance to make some memories together and even have any difficult conversations you may have been putting off. Difficult as this time is, it can also afford you some opportunities.

3. Acknowledge your feelings

As hard as it may be to acknowledge, and cope with, the way you are feeling is normal. Some days may be harder than others, so give yourself the time and space to feel whatever emotions you need.

4. Take care of yourself

Grief can be all-consuming, and it can be all too easy to focus only on the needs of the person that's dying, but self-care is so important, especially when you're grieving. Try and find time for a little bit of relaxation, even if it's something as simple as reading a book or going for a short walk.

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The FSA strives to represent the widest possible range of companies who provide services and products to Funeral Directors from across the UK. One of our latest members is the Greener Globe Funeral Awards (GGFA), a Welsh company which formed in 2020 to offer funeral directors their own unique evidence backed sustainability audit. As society increasingly recognises the importance of protecting the planet, more and more funeral directors' clients are taking into account the environment when purchasing services and products. Holding a standard by GGFA will demonstrate to clients that the funeral director is addressing the challenge of the climate emergency.

In addition to enhancing the funeral directors reputation among today's eco savvy clients, who expect businesses to care for the environment, completing the online sustainability audit will reduce the operating costs associated with water, energy, administration and fuel usage.

The FSA are pleased to see that our member has designed their scheme to provide guidance, support and recognition to all funeral directors, whilst acknowledging the unique challenges of the sector.

As an increasing number of funeral directors adopt the environmental culture, facilitated by the Greener Globe Funeral Awards, it will encourage fellow FSA members to provide additional green products and services within their own offering. This development will benefit the bereaved, funeral directors and those FSA members who recognise that to gain market advantage they need to grasp the opportunity the green £ brings.

Find out more at www.ggfa.co.uk or email carolyn@ggfa.co.uk

Alun Tucker

Chief Executive
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