

NEWSLETTER

MEMORIAL SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND
119 Kenyon Avenue
East Greenwich, RI 02818

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AUTUMN

1981

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS Rev. Frederick Gillis, President; Anne Wise, Vice President; Carolin Goldman,*
Corr. Secretary; Winnifred Bennis, Rec. Secretary; Muriel Flood, Treasurer; Rev. Harry Hubbling*,
Dr. Nelson Marshall*, Emily McAllister, Rev. Bruce Kennedy.
(*Terms end in June.)

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Since the Annual Meeting in June, I have spoken about the Memorial Society to three organizations - the Woonsocket Clergy Association on September 16, the Washington County Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons on October 16, and the Women's group of the First Baptist Church in East Greenwich on October 27. Board Member Bruce Kennedy spoke to a Death and Dying class at URI Providence on October 6. In all cases the message was well received and brochures were distributed.

One of the most frequent questions that are asked at such meetings is what advantage is it to actually be a member of the Society, since much of the information work has already been done and people can make their own arrangements with funeral directors. The answers are these:

1. Being a member gives you leverage in making arrangements with certain funeral directors. As we get larger, this influence is bound to grow. In some areas of the country prices have been strongly affected by the presence of an active memorial society. Unless people actually join we cannot say that we represent a certain percentage of the population.
2. You will know the prices quoted by cooperating funeral directors. When you negotiate with these or with other funeral directors this information can be valuable. (We realize that we do not have such a list for our members yet. It has been very difficult to secure commitments, but Board members are continuing to work at it.)
3. Members' wishes will be recorded on a form kept by the Memorial Society and made available to those who need to know. Copies of this form may be Xeroxed for your next of kin and a funeral director of your choice.
4. Members are supporting an important consumer cause. They are making available information such as the newsletter and information sheets. They are making possible speakers to various groups, and they are making possible the continued monitoring of laws and practices in the funeral industry. Members also support the work of the Continental Assoc. of Funeral and Memorial Societies which through its office in Washington keeps tabs on relevant legislation and shares information gained from other memorial societies. (see article on CAFMS)

We should also make clear to people what the Memorial Society of Rhode Island does not do. We do not make funeral arrangements for you, nor can we guarantee (at least at this time) prices quoted by funeral directors. We do not arrange for prepaid funeral director's services. We are, however, working hard to make sure that our members get services they want and pay for. We are a voluntary association whose work is done entirely by its members. We do not have sufficient resources for staff. If you feel we owe you more services for your membership fee, please be patient. Our Board is working as hard as it can.

Frederick E. Gillis
President

CLERGY, PROVIDERS, LAWYERS KITS

Kits of information material for clergy, lawyers, health care workers, and social workers, who might be involved in helping people pre-plan for funeral arrangements have been developed by the Continental Association. Those who would like to have such material may get it by writing to the Memorial Society of RI.

NEED A SPEAKER?

The Memorial Society of Rhode Island has speakers available for groups and organizations. Write to the office at 119 Kenyon Avenue, East Greenwich, Rhode Island 02818.