Haliburton Highlands
GREEN BURIAL SOCIETY

~ Forever Green ~

Volume 2, Number 1, Spring 2021

What's In A Name?

Welcome to the third issue of the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society (HHBGS) Newsletter and the first edition published under its new name – 'Forever Green'. Of the 24 suggested names forwarded by members and supporters by December 15th, 'Forever Green' was by far the most popular choice. Thank you to everyone who submitted suggestions and helped with the final selection.

New Website Up and Running!

While a basic HHGBS website (www.haliburtongreenburial.ca) has been up and running since the summer of 2020, we've always aspired to turning it into a comprehensive state of the art "one-stop-shopping" website, containing a full range of information on green/natural burial and end-of-life planning issues. We were successful in obtaining a $5000 grant from the Haliburton County Development Corporation (HCDC) and hired a website developer to help us turn our aspirations into reality.

We are very pleased to announce that our new and improved website is now up and running and we invite you to take it for a test drive. If you are able to check it out, we would really appreciate hearing what you like about it as well as any suggestions you might have for improvements and/or additional information to which you would like to have access. Please drop us an email at hhgreenburialsociety@gmail.com.

"How to Plan a Green Burial" Theme For April 28th "Virtual" AGM

The inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society has been called for Wednesday April 28th. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. with a presentation on "How to Plan a Green Burial" by End of Life Doula, Adriane Weller. A question and answer period will follow for participants to get clarification or more information on any topic related to green burial and end-of-life planning.

Following Adriane's presentation and the Q and A period, a short business meeting will occur, beginning at approximately 8:40pm. Everyone is welcome to attend both parts of this virtual gathering by pre-registering on the HHGBS website at www.haliburtongreenburial.ca.

Please note that we have open positions on the Board available so, if you are interested in serving as a Director, please send us an email at hhgreenburialsociety@gmail.com.

Update on Green Burial in Haliburton County

After the Environment Haliburton (EH!) Green Burial Working Group was formed in May of 2019, it quickly hit the ground running with Green/Winter Burial presentations to all four Township Councils. Due to the very encouraging reception received during the first presentation to Algonquin Highlands Council in May of 2019, a follow-up presentation was made in January of 2020.

AH Council agreed, in principle, to the creation of a green burial section within the newer northern area of its St. Stephen's Cemetery on Buckslide Road and put further sales of burial plots in that area on-hold pending a staff review of the issues associated with the introduction of both green and winter burial options.

The Covid-19 pandemic, as well as recent staff resignations have slowed down the production of the staff report on how to proceed, previously expected sometime this spring.

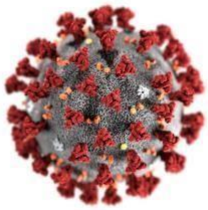
We remain cautiously optimistic that, when the hiring process is completed for a new AH Operations Manager, the breakthrough for which we have been working so hard, will soon become a reality in Haliburton County.

All four Township Councils have expressed support, in principle, for green and winter burial options and agreed to examine the possibilities for creating exclusive green/winter burial sections within their existing cemeteries. If Algonquin Highlands makes the first move, we are hopeful that the other Townships will be encouraged to follow suit. In fact, the Highlands East Environment Committee has prepared a draft resolution to Council supporting the creation of a green burial section within its Deer Lake Cemetery.

In spite of the encouraging messages we have been receiving from the Townships, we cannot assume that everything will go as smoothly and as quickly as we would like and members interested in securing a green burial plot in Algonquin Highlands or Highlands East, in particular, are encouraged to get in touch with Township Councillors to express support for both green and winter burial options.

Contact information for AH Councillors can be found here and Highlands East Councillors here.

Covid-19 Puts a Pause on Public Meetings



Soon after it was formed in January 2020, the Board of the HHGBS decided to sponsor quarterly green burial and end-of-life public educational presentations each year. In addition, we are planning to run regular introductory "Green Burial Basics" sessions at libraries across the County.

Winter Burial in The Highlands?
A Workshop for Township Councillors and Staff

Presentations By:
- Terry Moore, President, Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society
- Mark Richardson, Cemetery Manager for the City of Niagara Falls

Special Guest:
- Kevin Baker, CemeCare Cemetery Management, Zephyr, Ontario

Tuesday February 4, 2020,1pm – 4pm,
Dysart et al Township Council Chambers,
135 Maple Avenue, Haliburton

Sponsored by the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society (HHGBS)

For more information contact: Terry Moore, tmoore7001@gmail.com, 705-306-9264

Unfortunately, the on-going Covid-19 pandemic has forced us to push the pause button on both of these initiatives pending the relaxation of physical distancing rules.

As it now seems likely that face-to-face meetings will not be possible until, at the earliest, the fall of this year, we are planning to replace public meetings with virtual Zoom events and will let you know soon when these meetings will be happening. In the meantime, if you have suggestions for topics you'd like to see addressed at future HHGBS virtual public sessions, please let us know by sending us an email at hhgreenburialsociety@gmail.com.

Green Burial Actions We Can All Take Right Now

While we continue to press the Townships to establish green burial sections within their existing cemeteries, it is important to remember that, outside of the winter months when no burial of any kind is allowed in the County, cemeteries can already accommodate a number of green burial related requests. Embalming is not mandatory nor is the use of concrete vaults or non-biodegradable caskets.

So, if you or a loved one wish to be buried as green as possible, make that fact very clear to your family as well as funeral home and cemetery administrators. Putting your wishes in writing will eliminate any confusion down the road.

To help communicate the fact that there's a growing demand for green/winter burial options to Township Councillors and Administrative staff, consider asking Township Cemetery Clerks to put you on a **waiting list for plots within green burial sections** that you'd like to see established.

Since at least 70% of pre-pandemic deaths in the County resulted in cremation, policy makers are more inclined to support the purchase of columbaria to house cremated remains than creating green/winter burial sections. The covid-19 emergency measures have, if anything, resulted in an increase in the proportion of cremations. So, if we're going to see movement toward more environmentally sustainable end-of-life dispositions, we're going to have to make that desire very clear to decision-makers.

By demonstrating to Councillors and senior township staff that there is a demand for green burial sections, we can encourage them to support green/winter burial initiatives. Please keep us in the loop with regard to any conversations you have with Councillors or staff about green/winter burial options and waiting lists.

Why Become a HHGBS Member?

By becoming a Burial Society member you are helping to green after-death practices in Haliburton County while, at the same time, passing on your commitment to environmental stewardship to future generations. Membership in the HHGBS helps extend your support for more ecologically sustainable after-death practices while you are alive into a legacy that will keep on living after you have passed on.

By pooling our resources, the members, volunteers and Board members of the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society can encourage the adoption of greener options to conventional high carbon burial and cremation practices, thereby reducing our individual and collective ecological footprints.

Who Should Join? All those desiring increased green and winter burial options in Haliburton, anyone interested in the cultural and environmental future of their communities, as well as those wanting access to green end-of-life planning, educational and resource material.

The cost of individual membership is $20 per year while a couple's membership is $35/yr. You can join or renew your membership by going to the Membership Tab on the website www.Haliburtongreenburial.ca. The membership year runs from January 1st – December 31st and we're encouraging all current members to renew their memberships for 2021, as soon as possible.

The new website provides an option for membership fees and donations to be paid via e-transfer or you can send a cheque made out to the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society (HHGBS) to the HHGBS Secretary, Shirley Moore, 1193 Braeloch Rd., Algonquin Highlands, On K0M1J2.

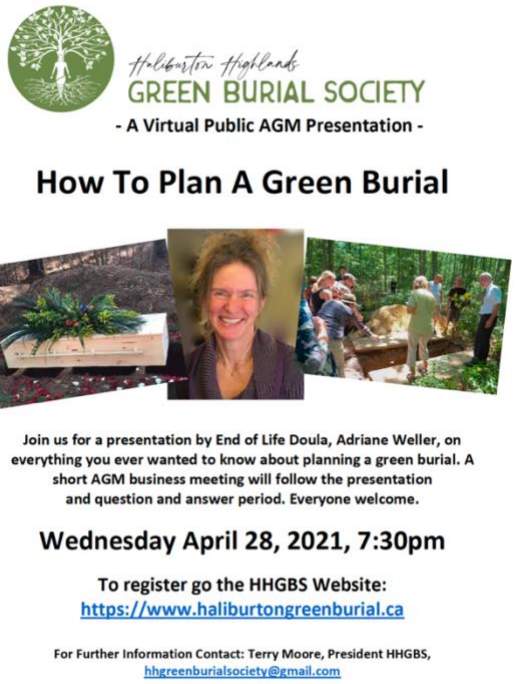
Donations Are Really Helpful!

The HHGBS operates largely on the basis of people volunteering their time and energy. However, there are some things, like a great website, that require outside professional services.

If you have the means and the inclination, donations can really help us get to where we are going faster and can be made to the **Kyle Moore Memorial "Green Burial Initiative".** Information on how to make a donation via e-transfer or cheque can be found on the "Donation" Tab on the website at www.haliburtongreenburial.ca.

Your HHGBS Board Members

On January 17, 2020, the first Board of the HHGBS was appointed from among the members of the EH! Green Burial Working Group and tasked with filing for incorporation as a not-for-profit organization. The Board applied for and received articles of incorporation and an initial by-law has been drafted for presentation to the membership at the April 28, 2021 AGM. Please note that we have open positions on the Board available so, if you are interested in serving as a Director, please send us an email at hhgreenburialsociety@gmail.com.

The members of the HHGBS Board are as follows:

Terry Moore, President
Jenny Rieger, Vice-President
Beth Johns, Treasurer
Shirley Moore, Secretary
Carolyn Langdon
Margaret Milne
Adele Espina