Haliburton Highlands
GREEN BURIAL SOCIETY

~ Forever Green ~

Volume 3, Number 1, Spring 2022

2022 AGM Features "Why Green Burial?" Presentation

Elizabeth Fournier, the author of "The Guidebook to Green Burial: Everything You Need to Plan an Affordable and Environmentally-Friendly Burial", will deliver the opening public presentation at the 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on **April 27th at 7:30pm**.

In addition to operating Cornerstone Funeral Services in Boring, Oregon, Ms Fournier is a member of the Green Burial Council and a strong advocate for green/natural burial as a more ecologically-sustainable end-of-life practice.

All HHGBS members, supporters and members of the public are encouraged to attend. Registration is required for the event and can be easily and quickly accomplished by visiting the HHGBS website at www.haliburtongreenburial.ca or clicking on the zoom registration link **HERE.** For those interested in "The Green Burial Guidebook", a review of it can be found at this LINK.

2021 in the Rear View Mirror

Being the second year of a pandemic that continues to morph from one variant to the next, the 12 months since our last AGM have continued to create difficult emotional challenges for families and friends suffering the loss of loved ones. Necessary restrictions on funerals and celebrations-of-life have isolated us from each other forcing cancellations or delays in traditional ways of grieving and supporting each other.

And, with succeeding waves of the virus continuing to wash over us, it is not clear if the current relaxation of public health rules reflects more than a temporary return to the social interactions we all crave so badly.

One of the most immediate impacts of pandemic restrictions on end-of-life practices has been an increase in the rate of cremations. This trend was well underway prior to any of us knowing anything about covid-19 but, by all indications, has accelerated since March of 2020. Encouraging people to consider green burial in this context will require redoubled efforts on our part to increase the opportunities for people to have green burial conversations.

There have been some small positive improvements in the prospects for green burial areas to be added to already established cemeteries in the County.

Algonquin Highlands Township Council has reaffirmed its commitment to creating a green burial section within its St. Stephen's Cemetery on Buckslide Road in Stanhope. Meanwhile, Highlands East Township Council has decided to create a green burial section at its Deer Lake Cemetery.

Both Townships are prepared to study the prospects for winter burials to be offered as an option but have a number of practical issues that need to be resolved to make that a reality.

Algonquin Highlands has agreed to create a Joint Ad Hoc AH/HHGBS Committee as a forum for sharing ideas about winter burial and moving forward on the green burial front. The HHGBS is working with Highlands East to put together a repeat of the 2020 Winter Burial Workshop we sponsored in an effort to address the potential barriers to winter burial being included in its Deer Lake plans.

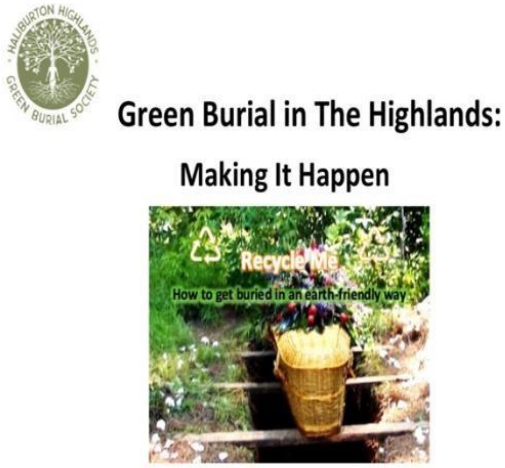
In spite of the encouraging response from the four Townships, and recent moves by Algonquin Highlands and Highlands East, we cannot assume that everything will go as smoothly or as quickly as we would like. Members and supporters interested in securing a green burial plot are encouraged to get in touch 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.

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.



Since at least 70% of pre-pandemic deaths in the County resulted in cremation and the pandemic has accelerated that trend, 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.

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 (and former) members to renew their memberships for 2022, as soon as possible.

The website provides an option for membership fees and donations to be paid via etransfer or you can send a cheque made out to the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society (HHGBS) to the HHGBS Membership Secretary/Treasurer, 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 **HERE**.

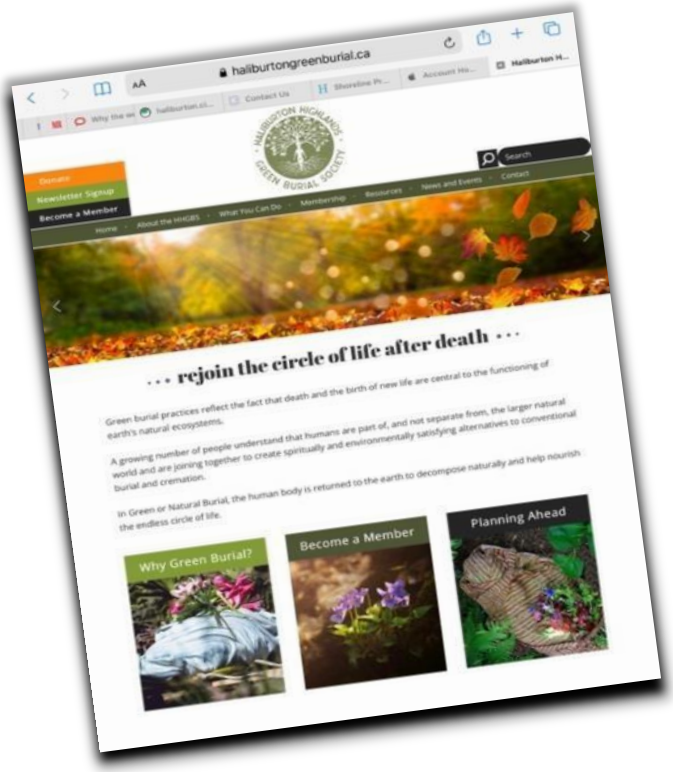
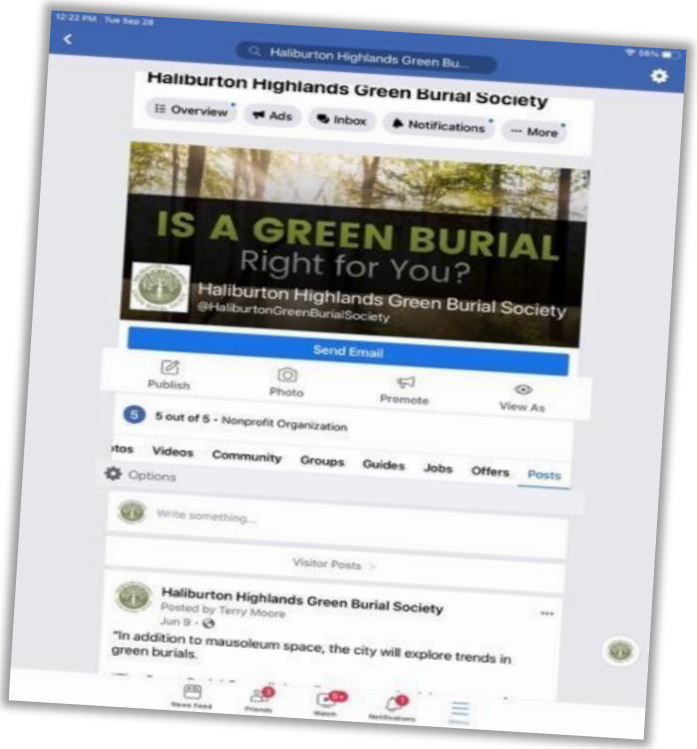
Your HHGBS Board Members

We currently have six (6) members on the HHGBS Board but have spaces for nine ((9). Four (4) of the current six (6) directors will be staying on and two, Margaret Milne and Adele Espina, will be retiring after the AGM. So, we will have five (5) open positions on the Board.

If you're interested in serving as a Director, please send us an email at hhgreenburialsociety@gmail.com.

Current Members of the HHGBS Board of Directors

Officers: Terry Moore, President, Jennifer Rieger, Vice-President, Shirley Moore, Membership Secretary/Treasurer, Adele Espina, Recording Secretary
Board Members: Margaret Milne, Carolyn Langdon

For More Info go to the HHGBS Website or Facebook Page

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