



Photo credit: Maia Kennedy Photography

The Boston Police Gaelic Column of Pipe and Drums leads the St. Patrick's Day parade in South Boston.

## Boston Police Pipe Band Provide Music and Inspiration at Various Events Around Boston.

If you hear the distinctive sound of a bagpipe band at the Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade or at a funeral for a first responder, it might be the Boston Police Gaelic Column of Pipe and Drums. The traditional bagpipe band and drum corps plays at a variety of events each year, including parades, weddings, fundraisers, award ceremonies, graduations, sporting events, festivals, and funerals.

Last year the Boston Police Gaelic Column played at two funerals for Massachusetts police officers killed in the line of duty. "The band's primary duty is to play for Fallen Officers. There is nothing more sacred and important to our existence," said Band President, Patrick Morrison.

This year, Mayor Walsh also asked the band to play at his State of the City address on January 15. They will also be playing at the Boston Police Foundation Gala at the Park Plaza and at a fundraiser at the Cape Cod Irish Village. And, of course, the St. Patrick's Day parade.

"The St. Patrick's Day parade is a staple in our schedule each year. Our band is comprised of mostly Irish Americans, so we are honored to lead the South Boston parade for the last twenty-five years. The only time we do not participate is when the band travels to Ireland to participate in their St. Patrick's Day festivities," said Morrison.

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Keohane

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Quincy, MA

McDonald Keohane

FUNERAL HOME  
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# Careers in the Funeral Industry Have a Bright Future

There is no more rewarding career than being of service to others. The United States funeral industry is experiencing growth as the American population ages, and the future of the funeral service profession in Massachusetts is growing, too. According to morticianschool.net, the industry is expected to see an 18% growth rate over the next decade, and aspiring funeral service professionals can expect to see even more job opportunities and possibly higher salaries in areas with high demand, such as Boston, Cambridge, and Quincy.

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that employment opportunities for funeral directors in Massachusetts are fairly high. In fact, Massachusetts is in the upper-mid

range for employment of funeral directors, and the BLS ranks the Boston area as being the fifth highest in the nation. Funeral directors in Massachusetts can also receive exceptional salaries. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that funeral directors in Massachusetts earn average salaries of between \$50,380 and \$56,740 a year, which is above the national average.

## How to Become a Funeral Service Professional

If you have an interest in funeral service or feel a calling to the profession, there are several steps you must follow in the process of becoming a licensed funeral professional. In Massachusetts, funeral directors must have a high school diploma, complete a mortuary science program, and complete at least two years of an apprenticeship. Once candidates pass the board examinations, they must complete several hours of continuing education each year. Career opportunities in mortuary services may include, funeral director, embalmer, pathology technician, Life Celebrant, or crematory technician.

Fine Mortuary College in Norwood is a private two-year college solely dedicated to funeral service education. FMC provides excellent academic and practical experience that leads to an Associate of Applied Science in Funeral Service degree. With the sudden closure of Mount Ida College in Newton last spring, FMC is the only institution accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education in Massachusetts. Students take twenty classes and two clinicals in order to graduate which takes approximately 28 to 32 months. Most students at FMC are adult learners with an average age of 29 and a student body that is 67% female. When the program started twenty-three years ago, the classes were about 50% female and 50% male,

but the number of female students has continued to rise over the years.

Many FMC students are also employed at funeral homes in the Greater Boston area as they earn their Associate Degree. They can hold full-time jobs because they only need to come to Fine Mortuary College one or two times per week to attend classes. Each class meets only once per week for ten weeks. Courses are offered year-round, and students can take courses in the morning, afternoon, or evening, which offers enormous flexibility.

The required two-year apprenticeship can be accomplished either during or after completing the associate degree. Because of the flexible class schedule, many students begin their apprenticeship while finishing school.

**"Usually, students will be done with their apprenticeship a few months after graduation and then they can apply to take the state board," said Kevin Koch, President & CEO of Fine Mortuary College. "We help everyone get into a funeral home as early as possible for a few reasons — one, to start their apprenticeship if they can; two, we want to make sure that this is what they want to do. I don't want them to spend two or two and a half years and \$50,000 to find out it's not a good fit."**

Following graduation, students must pass the National Board Exam (NBE), needed for licensure in most states, including Massachusetts.

**The funeral service profession is regulated by the Massachusetts Board of Embalming and Funeral Service, which offers complete information on its website. For more information, visit [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov)**



Photo credit: Nancy J. Parisi

Fine Mortuary College in Norwood offers an Associate of Applied Science in Funeral Service degree.



## Boston Police Pipe Band Provide Music and Inspiration at Various Events Around Boston.

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The band is comprised of both active and retired Police Officers from Boston and surrounding areas. They currently have about thirty members, all police officers or retired police officers, who play bagpipes, snare drums, tenor drums and bass drums. The band wears traditional Scottish garb, including kilts, spats and Balmoral caps.

### Fitting Tribute for a Fallen Hero

When Weymouth Police Sargent Michael Chesna was killed in the line of duty last summer, Keohane arranged the funeral and called upon the Boston Police Gaelic Column of Pipe and Drums to honor him. The funeral services at St. Mary's Church in Hanover were preceded by a large procession of law enforcement, including the Boston Police Gaelic Column and a presentation of arms and colors in tribute to Sgt. Chesna.

**"Having the Boston Police Gaelic Column present creates a true sense of dignity and respect. When the pipes and drums are playing you can feel the intensity and importance of such a difficult event," said Co-President Dennis Keohane.**

"Keohane has been a long and loyal supporter of the Gaelic Column, we are always happy to work with the staff to ensure a proper and fitting service for the grieving family," said Morrison. "To be able to give a family a special goodbye, via bagpipes and drums, we are very happy and proud to do so. The bagpipes have a unique way of touching the heartstrings, and we enjoy helping families make their loved one's funeral a memorable one."

### Getting the Band Together

The band was founded twenty-six years ago in response to the need for a pipe band when a Boston police officer was tragically killed in a bomb explosion.

In 1992, Boston Police Officer Jeremiah Hurley, a member of the department's bomb squad, was killed in the line of duty while defusing an explosive device. At the time, there were no police bagpipe bands in New England.

"For Officer Hurley's funeral, a police bagpipe band was brought up from New York because there were no police pipe bands in New England. With all our Irish and Gaelic heritage here in Boston it was almost absurd that none existed. A meeting was called, and our band was born in April of 1992," said Morrison.

Vice President and Pipe Major Joe Cheever said it was rocky at first because they were all beginners. "We hired our own instructor and took lessons. It would build week to week. It wasn't overly difficult if you kept up with your lessons," said Cheever.

The name was derived from the band's Irish roots. The first part, "Gaelic," to reflect the Celtic language. The second part, "Column," is a tribute to the "Flying Columns" which were units of Irish soldiers in the fight for Irish independence from England during the years of 1916-1922.

**If you would like the Boston Police Gaelic Column to play at an event, contact them through their website at [www.bostonpolicegaeliccolumn.com](http://www.bostonpolicegaeliccolumn.com)**

## Wreaths Across America Comes to Quincy

On December 15, local officials and volunteers gathered to lay a wreath at every one of the 3,200 veterans' graves at Mount Wollaston Cemetery during Wreaths Across America Day. The annual event is held nation-wide to remember the fallen, honor those that serve, and teach the next generation about the value of freedom. But this was the first year that the event was held in Quincy.

In a coordinated effort, volunteers lay remembrance wreaths across graves at Arlington National Cemetery and over 1,400 additional locations across the United States. It is a free event and open to everyone. According to the Wreaths Across America website, nearly 1.8 million veteran wreaths were placed on headstones at 1,640 participating cemeteries around the country in 2018 with each name said

out loud in honor of the service and sacrifices made for our freedoms.

Keohane Funeral Home helped with fundraising efforts and proudly donated \$2,000 on behalf of all the veteran families served this past year.

"We received a personal letter from Christine Cugini, who spearheaded the event in Quincy. After reading her letter, I called and asked if we could sit down to discuss our partnership," said Co-President John Keohane. "We were proud to share Christine's vision with our families through social media and e-mails in order to increase the donations and help recruit volunteers."

Cugini said that sixteen pallets of wreaths were delivered on the day before the event. "We hit our goal just after Veteran's Day," said Christine. "We have 3,505 wreaths and our goal was 3,200."



Volunteers, Eric Fay and his son Ronald, John Keohane, Edward, Keohane and John's son Matthew Keohane, laid remembrance wreaths on veterans' graves at Mount Wollaston Cemetery in Quincy during Wreaths Across America Day on December 15.

Several members of the Keohane team and their families volunteered at the event, laying wreaths on veteran's graves. Cugini will start planning for next year's event at Mount Wollaston Cemetery, and adding Pine Hill Cemetery as well.



# Hingham Centre Playground Project On Track



Latest design for the Powers Field Playground in Hingham, awaiting Town approval.

After serving the community for nearly a century, the Powers Playground in Hingham Centre was closed indefinitely by the Town for safety reasons in 2017. The Town had no available budget to replace the deteriorated equipment, but a committee of concerned citizens quickly began fundraising to renovate the playground and preserve it as a town asset. They have been working with town officials and gathering input from residents; playground manufacturers and installers; and local landscape architect Sean Papich.

Previously part of the former Centre Elementary School, the playground sits on a parcel of land between School Street and the Hingham Centre Cemetery. In June 2018, the Town of Hingham approved the construction of

a new playground design and will begin construction once the required funds are raised through private donations.

**Keohane Funeral Home was proud to donate to the renovation. "We initially heard about the project in the Hingham Journal. We donated at the Gold level of \$5000," said Co-President Dennis Keohane.**

Recently, the Town asked the playground committee to consider replacing the proposed meteor climber with something smaller due to aesthetic concerns. "In this latest version, we have replaced the meteor climber with a see-saw and shifted the rotating climber that looks like an inverted cone to the left where the meteor climber once stood," said Michael Monteiro, one of three playground committee members and

the project lead. The Town has not yet approved the changes.

"Once we finalize any changes, we can then resume our fundraising. At present, we have raised and/or received commitments of \$60,000. The original budget was \$90,000, but if we replace the meteor climber with a see-saw, that will reduce the cost to approximately \$80,000," said Monteiro. "Assuming we're able to close the gap by the end of February, the Town should be in a position to break ground in April."

**For further updates,  
follow the Hingham  
Centre Playground blog at  
[savehinghamcentreplayground.  
weebly.com](http://savehinghamcentreplayground.weebly.com)**



## 7th Annual Coat Drive Successful Thanks to Our Generous Community

Special thanks go out to all who participated in our seventh annual coat drive this fall. Unfortunately, not everyone on the South Shore can afford the expensive outerwear needed to keep themselves and their families warm during the cold New England winter. Because of the generosity of our community, we were able to donate well over 750 gently worn coats donated to our neighbors in need this year. So many people came through our doors this fall with coats from their own closets that were either outgrown or no longer needed. We know those warm coats were appreciated by those less fortunate, especially at this time of year.

**"We have all been very fortunate in our lives and been given much. Our team at Keohane's feels a deep**

**responsibility to give back and support those in our community that need extra help at this time of year," said Co-president John Keohane.**

The donated coats were professionally cleaned and then distributed to those in need through three amazing organizations — Wellspring Multi-Service Center in Hull, Interfaith Social Services in Quincy, and Weymouth Youth and Family Services in Weymouth.

"Our clients continue to be grateful for Keohane Funeral Home's annual coat drive. When we asked them if they needed a coat, they were so delighted by the question and excited when they'd find a coat in the just the right size either for their children or for themselves," said Rick Doane the Executive Director of Interfaith Social Services.

Interfaith Social Services operates one of the largest emergency food programs in Greater Boston, serving thousands of South Shore residents in need every year. In addition to hunger alleviation, their programs include mental health counselling and homelessness prevention.

The first coat drive began back in 2012. When we exceeded our initial goal of collecting 250 coats that first year, we wanted to keep the effort going. We established an annual drive each fall, and we continue to be amazed and grateful by the outpouring of support from our community. "As always, the community responded in such a generous way," said John. "We look forward to keeping the tradition of the annual coat drive going next year."

## Second Annual Candlelight Memorial Service Brings Peace During the Holidays



*The Second Annual Candlelight Memorial Service was officiated by Funeral Celebrant Mary Gallagher.*

The Second Annual Candlelight Memorial Service was a beautiful, comforting, and peaceful ceremony that allowed people to escape from the hustle and bustle of the holidays to join others on their grief journey. At Keohane Funeral Home, we know that the holidays can be a difficult time for those who have lost someone they love. To help our families remember their loved ones in a safe, supportive

setting, we hosted our annual holiday memorial service on December 5. The non-denominational service was attended by over one hundred people and was officiated by Funeral Celebrant Mary Gallagher.

"After the first memorial service, we received many comments and letters from families that personally thanked us for the opportunity to remember their loved ones," said Co-President John Keohane. "So, in our second

year we invited families from all of our funeral homes rather than just from Weymouth, which is what we did the first year. We also changed the venue to the Neighborhood Club of Quincy in order to accommodate more people."

Those who attended the service experienced a variety of emotions. Many were grateful to meet other families that had recently experienced a loss and have the opportunity to share stories. Most were emotional when we called out their loved ones' names and lit a candle in remembrance, and they were all thankful for the experience which gave them peace and hope. "It was truly a transformative evening for all those in attendance," said John.

The team at Keohane Funeral Home recognizes that grief is a journey that takes much more time than the few days in which a funeral takes place. **"We want the families to know that they are in our hearts long after leaving our immediate care," said John. "The ceremony was our attempt to let them know that we continue to think of them, pray for them, and offer them support as the days and months pass by."**

# Fairing Way Offers Luxury Living on the South Shore for Adults Over 55



Residents enjoy the outdoor spaces at Fairing Way in South Weymouth, an over 55 independent living community.

Fairing Way at Union Point is a new community offering modern apartment-style homes, flexible services and an active lifestyle for adults fifty-five and over. Now, they are breaking ground to expand their community. Opening in 2020, the Final Phase will introduce 107 brand-new apartment-style homes — and only 40 units remain.

The Union Point location offers intergenerational living, and Fairing Way residents enjoy being part of a larger neighborhood where children play and neighbors walk their dogs. “Our slogan is ‘How You Live Starts with Where You Live,’ and living in Union Point offers so much to our residents — groomed walking trails, sidewalks for walking and biking, neighbors of all ages, farmers’ markets, food truck rodeos, and other summertime events, as well as the beauty of all of the conservation land and wildlife living here,” said Joan Reid, Marketing Coordinator.

Fairing Way is sponsored and developed by two local non-profit experts in senior living: Rice Eventide

and Rogerson Communities. Rice Eventide operated the William B. Rice Eventide Home in Quincy for ninety years. In 2010, Rice Eventide announced it would be moving to a new development in South Weymouth and expanding the services offered to include independent living and skilled nursing. They broke ground in 2014 with independent living on one side of the property and short-term rehabilitation plus long-term care on the other side which are connected by a central campus. In 2016, Fairing Way opened 104 award-winning apartment style homes as a “buy-in” community with an upfront cash payment and a monthly maintenance fee that covers all repairs and replacements.

“We call it maintenance-free living,” said Reid. “Our goal is to have everyone age in place and stay in their home as long as possible.”

The campus also features a two-story clubhouse with a fitness center; game room; library; art center and pub. The bistro offers lunch and dinner specials daily, but there are no enforced meal plans. Outdoor spaces include patios, decks and gardens in which residents may plant their own plots.

Dwyer Home is a level two nursing facility and provides state of the art skilled nursing with 50 beds; plenty of parking for visitors; and a high staff to patient ratio. Residents can receive physical therapy or speech therapy right on site and are offered first priority if a bed is needed.

As a resident-driven community, residents living at Fairing Way have a voice in the activities and amenities of their community. A favorite activity is “Singo” — a cross between singing and bingo with a professional entertainer. On Sundays, students from the Notre Dame Academy in Hingham provide free concerts.

In the fall, several residents went on a river trip down the Danube. “A cruise line came in for a presentation and a small group decided to go,” said Reid.

The Final Phase has forty units still available but will most likely be full by the time it opens. For more information, visit the Fairing Way website at [www.fairingway.org](http://www.fairingway.org) or call Project Manager Phyllis Delarichelieri at 781-660-5032.



Fairing Way in South Weymouth has been awarded best Retirement Living Residence for 2016 and 2017 in the Wicked Local Reader's Choice Awards.



## OUR TEAM

### Sharon Stacy



Sharon Stacy, a full-time funeral director apprentice at Keohane, completed her degree in Funeral Science in October and is on her way to becoming a compassionate and professional funeral director. She continues to work with our funeral directors and families in need while studying for her board exams to receive her Funeral Director/Embalmers license.

**"Sharon has a great ability to look at the big picture and prioritize what needs to be accomplished during the day. She enjoys meeting new people and learning about their lives and then offering them kindness during the time they are in our care," said Co-president John Keohane.**

Massachusetts licensing requirements include two years of apprenticeship, and Sharon has been fulfilling her apprenticeship at Keohane while finishing her Associates Degree in Funeral Science at Fine Mortuary College, a private two-year college in Norwood. Sharon completed her Review Class in the fall, the final class which summarizes the entire mortuary program, but has not had her graduation ceremony as of yet.

"The Review class was a challenge but studying hard with my fellow classmates we all made it through! I think the most important memory I can take from school is you can reach any goal you set your mind to. No matter how long it takes; YOU completed your goal and that's a proud moment," said Sharon.

Her next steps include taking both national and state board exams in order to become a licensed funeral director in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. "I'm currently in the process of getting my Funeral Director/Embalmers license. I review all my notes weekly in hopes of passing my state exam and national exam the first time," said Sharon.

When Sharon's great grandmother passed, she was inspired to follow the path to funeral service in order to make the experience better for those who must say goodbye to a loved one. "When my Great Nona passed away, I went to my first set of calling hours ever. I went up to the casket to pay my respects and knew she didn't look right. Since then funeral service peaked my interest," said Sharon.

While Sharon was in mortuary school, she saw a job posting for a full-time apprentice position at Keohane. After interviewing with senior staff, she started her two-year apprenticeship. "I



*Apprentice Sharon Stacy is on her way to becoming a compassionate and detail-oriented funeral director.*

like working for a family run business, and I like my coworkers. I appreciate being able to help families during the most difficult time of their lives. If you enjoy what you do, you'll never work a day in your life," said Sharon.

As an apprentice, Sharon's responsibilities include caring for the deceased, filing paperwork, creating stationary, sitting with families as they make arrangements, assisting at funerals and wakes, helping the office manager, and supporting the funeral directors. "I like knowing that I can help make a difficult time a little easier," said Sharon. "I love being able to provide a piece of a service that not many people can provide."

She is excited to continue her journey toward becoming a professional

funeral director in Massachusetts. "I am very much looking forward to 2019 — growing as in individual, getting my license and growing into a new position, and reaching the goals I have set for the New Year," said Sharon. "I'm hoping to try new hobbies like yoga and taking a photography course, too!"

**"Sharon has the ability to work with grieving family members while at the same time taking care of the details that create a beautiful ceremony for a family. Both skills are needed in an exceptional funeral director," said John.**

Because Sharon's dad was in the Army, her siblings were born in Colorado and she was born in Kansas. But Sharon lived the majority of her life in Leominster and graduated from Leominster High School Center for Technical Education in the HVAC program. She currently lives in Braintree with her boyfriend Tim and his dog Bruschi. Adjusting to the move was difficult, but the South Shore is slowly starting to feel like home. She enjoys getting to know her community; meeting all the local people in and out of work; and trying new restaurants and breweries.

Sharon loves spending time outdoors hiking, running, camping and playing with Bruschi, especially on the paths at Pond Meadow Park and Bare Cove Park where she and Tim go for long walks. Sharon has been planning HER participation in the next Run to Home Base for Veterans. "Last year team Keohane had five members, and I can't wait to run and help fundraise again this year," said Sharon. "This cause is so important — just because you can't see wounds doesn't mean they aren't there! Those invisible wounds really impact our veterans, and I just want to help bring awareness to mental health and PTSD."

Sharon provides a caring and guiding presence as a funeral director. "When I work with grieving families, I always try to provide a listening ear. I love being of service at a time when each individual family needs to be shown what steps are needed and necessary as they prepare to say their final goodbyes."



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION



Photo credit: Blue Hill Cemetery and Crematory

Ceremonial caskets are available for visitation and funeral services prior to cremation.

## *What Are My Service Options When Choosing Cremation?*

Cremation is one method of final disposition for you or a loved one's remains. And just like burial, funeral services are part of memorializing the person who has passed. In fact, there are many ways to create meaningful services either before or after cremation takes place.

### **You Have Options**

Most families choose to have funeral services before cremation, including visitation with an open or closed casket. Ceremonial caskets are available for visitation and funeral services to allow the body to be present prior to cremation. The difference between a funeral followed by burial is that your loved one is taken to the crematory after the service instead of a processional to the cemetery. The body is then cremated in the casket or in a special cremation container. The cremated remains are returned to the family.

Many families chose to have the cremation followed by visitation and a funeral service. In that case, families may have the cremated remains in a lovely urn or other container as a way of having the body present at the visitation and services.

Some families choose cremation without an immediate service. Whether they need time to finalize decisions or for out of town family members gather, funeral services

can be held at a later date to accommodate those circumstances.

There are many ways to personalize the funeral service, regardless of when cremation occurs. Families may provide a framed photo or collage of photos; create a video; use a loved one's favorite flower or favorite color and other personalized touches to honor their loved one at the funeral.

Whether cremation occurs before or after funeral services, families have options to arrange either a public or private ceremony for the final placement of the cremated remains. You may choose to have the cremated remains buried in an urn in a burial plot; placed in a niche in a columbarium; or scattered in a scattering garden or other location special to the family. We provide the option to divide the remains for burial and scattering, and even help to arrange scattering services on land or sea. We also offer a full line of cremation jewelry to hold a small amount of the cremated remains and a full line of reasonably priced urns and keepsakes.

Whether you choose cremation before or after a visitation and funeral service, your funeral director will guide you through the entire process. He or she will discuss the various choices based on your family needs, your loved one's wishes, and any financial concerns.

**If you have further questions about service options for cremation or would like to make an appointment to meet with one of our experienced funeral directors, please contact us [<https://keohane.com/locations/>] at any of our locations or call our main office at 800-536-4263.**