

● Ballarat Event, 8 August 2019

● Mum and Dad's farewells: the story of two family-run funerals

Death: it takes all of us.

Let's create a world where we all know what to do when someone is **dying, caring** or **grieving**. Learn how at a Dying to Know Day event near you this August:
dyingtoknowday.org



#D2KDay

Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens

9:45 for 10am start until 12pm

Details and registration: www.dyingtoknowday.org

Dying To
Know day
8th August
www.dyingtoknowday.org

AN INITIATIVE OF
THE
GRIEF
SWEL
PROJECT

Based on a
presentation
from a 2019 D2K
day event

The following slides
outline the key
elements involved in
one families
experience of a DIY
funeral.

These notes are not
exhaustive or intended
to cover all that can be
done, just the learnings
we have to share.

It is not a how to
manual but we hope it
is useful.

Main Elements

- ◆ Care of the Body and Viewing
- ◆ Casket / Urn
- ◆ Transport
- ◆ Service (Venue, Program, Catering)
- ◆ Grave
- ◆ Wake

Before the funeral ...

Care of the Body

- ◆ Viewing
 - ◆ Work out what you want to do with your person's body and who can see it etc, depending on your circumstances you can ask for funeral homes to prepare the body for viewing or you can do that process yourself
 - ◆ For example there are services that enable you to keep your person's body at home eg refrigerated coffins easily found on google
- ◆ Casket and / or Urn - can be very individual eg there is a movement in decorating coffins, all sorts of coffins available now you can even get them online or you can get them through funeral homes, they can be as individual as you want to make them.
- ◆ Cemetery – have your plot organized, this can be done by yourself – legal implications are that you must bury a body in a recognized cemetery not your backyard
- ◆ Transport
 - ◆ Planning and organizing - the body must be transported on gazetted roads but there is no specific requirement for the type of vehicle.

During the funeral ...

Service

- ♦ **Venue** – you can book a hall or any function space that suits your needs – you can do the service at your own home if you have capacity.
- ♦ **Program** – like any special ceremony this is the part that creates the formality and lasting memories. Doing it yourself means you have total control over this aspect of the process. It can be as long or as short as you want it.
- ♦ **Catering** - the chance to enjoy your person's favourite foods. Friends and family can contribute foods to share! Once again it is not time limited.

Grave

- ♦ **Speakers** – another part of the formalities is the graveside service –an MC who is capable of running the entire proceedings (funeral service included) is invaluable as emotions are real and it takes strength to get through.
- ♦ **Readings** – favourite words or literature, poems or music, opportunity for people to contribute.
- ♦ **Lowering the body** – items needed – strong straps, strong people, coordination and communication.

Wake

- ♦ **Venue** – you can book a hall or any function space that suits your needs – you can do the wake at your own home if you have capacity.
- ♦ **Program** – with the formal part of the farewell ceremony the wake is the time to share stories and take time.
- ♦ **Catering** - the chance to enjoy your person's favourite foods. Friends and family can contribute foods to share! Once again it is not time limited

**Important aspects to
consider.**

Legal / Financial

- ◆ Death notice and paperwork – you can't bury a body without a death certificate or put a death notice in the newspaper this can be organised by yourself but it is something that funeral directors will do.
- ◆ You can negotiate with a funeral director about delivering some aspects of their service not all!
- ◆ A DIY funeral can be more inexpensive, the aspect of taking control of finances is important.
- ◆ Extra costs to consider / things to think about – flowers, booklets, condolence book, mementos, audio visual equipment.

Benefits and legacy

- ◆ Doing a funeral yourself can mean that your person's send off is a special part of your family history.
- ◆ A closing ceremony that you design can be respectful, authentic and a unique tribute to your person.
- ◆ Working together can be unifying and healing, it is unlike other life events.
- ◆ The legacy of your own event can live long past the ceremony itself!