WHEN YOU FINISH READING YOUR AFRO PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND

Wesleyan Service Guilds marking 25th anniversary

January is Guild Month. In addition, the Guild organization is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

In recognition of this; the Wesleyan Service Guilds of the North Baltimore District held their first "Little Guild Weekend" under the direction of Mrs. Esther Jackson, district Guild secretary.

A Fun Nite on Friday was held at Mt. Zion Methodist Church. Mrs. Henrietta Holliman served as chairman and the O. St. Clair Franklin Builders were hosts for the occasion. Mrs. Ardella Grant is president of this guild.

On Saturday, the regular district meeting was held at 8th Mrs. Esther Jackson, presiding.

Hosts for this meeting were the members of the Hannah J. Moore Guild, Mrs. Henrietta Holliman, president.

GUILDERS ATTENDING were: Mesdames Blanche Powell and Deellear Wing of the Sarah O. Collins Guild of St. Winans Methodist Church; Mesdames Gladys Baird, Blanche Davis, Louise Green, Eleanor Jones, Frances Kaufman, Martha Vaughn, Henrietta Holliman, Yvonne Wayne and Anita Foster of the Hannah B. Moore Guild of Christ Methodist Church; Miss H. Lota Howard from the Iradelle B. Williams Guild of Christ Methodist Church; Mesdames Bernice Dutton and Esther Jackson of the Hester R. Floyd Guild of Sharp Street Methodist Church; Mesdames Marie Brown, Gwendolyn Walker, Dorothy Mooney, Sophronia Wright, of the E. S. Williams Guild of Metropolitan Methodist Church:

Mrs. Minnie Thrower from the O. St. Clair Franklin Guild of Mt. Zion Methodist Church; Mesdames Edna Redmond, Marie Lassiter, Agnes Fossett, Irene Carter and Genevieve Fields from the Rachel Taylor Guild of Metropolitan Methodist Church;

Miss Lola Mills, and Mrs. Gwendolyn Atkinson from the Beryl Williams Guild of Milton Avenue Methodist Church; Mesdames Evelyn Hudgins, Genevieve Stevens and Naomi Dorsey from the Naomi Guild of Orchard Street Methodist Church.

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THE CLIMAX of the weekend occurred on Sunday when Guilders of the North Baltimore District went to the Mt. Winans Methodist Church for morning worship and Holy Communion.

They were guests of the Sarah O. Collins Guild, Mrs. Evelyn Levi, president. The sermon for the occasion was delivered by the host pastor, the Rev. David E. Sloan.

Following the service the Guilders and their friends were invited to share in a Coffee Hour in the social hall of the church.

Local Guild units are also in district meeting activities in recognition of Guild Month. On Sunday, Jan. 12 at 8 p.m. the Naomi Guild of Orchard Street Methodist Church is presenting a playlet titled "Missions Around the World." The program will be presented in the church.

Mrs. Evelyn Hudgins is the guild president.

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ON FRIDAY, Jan. 17, at 8 p.m. the E. S. Williams Guild of Metropolitan Methodist Church is presenting "Hobby Time."

This will be an exhibit of arts and crafts as done by members of the guild. The public is cordially invited to come and view the items of interest which will be on display in the Social Hall of the Church.

Mrs. Vivian Sellman is chairman of the activity. Mrs. Gwendolyn Walker is Guild president.

On Sunday, Feb. 9 from 4 to 7 p.m. the Hester R. Floyd Guild of Sharp Street Methodist Church is holding a Missionary Tea.

The highlight of this affair will be the presentation of Mrs. Kaz Kawata, Missionary to India. The tea will be held in the Social Hall of the church. Mrs. Bernice Dutton is Guild president.

Bishop Love's wife surprised on birthday

Some 150 persons joined in surprising Mrs. Virginia R. Love with a birthday party Friday evening in the Morgan Christian Center.

Mrs. Love is the wife of Bishop Edgar A. Love, head of the Baltimore Area of the Methodist Church.

Thinking that she was probably going to a party arranged for students remaining on campus for the holiday period, Mrs. Love was astonished to be met by friends from Washington and Philadelphia, as well as from Baltimore and vicinity, singing "Happy Birthday to You" on her arrival.

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR the party were made by the Rev. and Mrs. Edward G. Carroll of Washington. Mr. Carroll, formerly pastor of Sharp Street Church, Baltimore, is now superintendent of the Washington District of the Methodist Church.

A feature of the evening was an original piano piece played by Nansi, daughter of the Carrolls, entitled "She Walks in Beauty," and dedicated to Mrs. Love.

Northwest Church 25th anniversary

The Northwest Congregational United Church of Christ will celebrate its first anniversary Sunday Jan. 12, with a special service at which the guest speaker will be the Rev. Hugo Bourdeau, professor of sociology at the University of Maryland.

In observing its first anniversary, the church which meets in the Community Room at Mondawmin Mall, sponsoring a month-long campaign of rededication in which each Sunday will find the congregation engaged in special programs of worship and reflection.

Midweek services at the parsonage, 3604 Edgewood Road, led by the pastor, deal with the covenants by which the church has governed itself since its inception.

Student Day at Sharp St.

The Rev. Kelly L. Jackson at Sharp Street Methodist Church was surrounded by young collegians on Sunday as the church observed Student Recognition Day.

In the pulpit were Trazan Edith Dennis, Patsey Dennis, Virginia State and a current debutante David Allen, senior at Howard University, Michael Mitchell, freshman Morgan State College; and Albert Roberts, freshman at Coppin State.

* * *

ON THE YOUTH CHOIR was Burnetta Johnson serious freshman at Morgan State and front row in sanctuary were Dana Brewington, stately freshman, Howard University Beverly Brown popular Morgan freshman Wayne Anderson, psychology major at Morgan, and Howard Hackett, Virginia State freshman.

Each student made a contribution to the morning worship or to the fellowship breakfast that preceded it. The college students were joined at breakfast by 25 senior high students.

* * *

AMONG THEM were: Peter Allen, Tamara Brown, Edith Dennis, Patsey Dennis, Gloria Harmon, Clyde Evans, Cheryl Harper, Bernice McLeod, Irma Taylor, Janice Tillman, Lester Wallace Jr., Thomas Wallace, Charles Williams, Charles Wilson, Carol Wright.

Lewis Bond and Bro. Evans were student guests from other churches.

William Lovejoy

Eighty - year - old William Lovejoy, 1819 Ellamont St., died in Provident Hospital, Monday. He had heart and kidney ailments.

Funeral services will be held today (Friday) at 1 p.m. from the George G. Kelson Funeral Home, 1348 N. Calhoun St.

Burial will be in Sparks, Md.

Mr. Lovejoy was born in Atlanta, Ga., and moved to Baltimore some 35 years ago.

A chef cook, he retired some 15 years ago.

Surviving are seven sons; Albert and Robert Lovejoy, of Newark, N.J.; Leroy and Adolph Lovejoy, of New York City; and Edward, Fred and Clarence Lovejoy; two daughters, Mrs. Mae Harvill and Mrs. Anna Bell, of Los Angeles, Cal.

Also 14 grandchildren, 30 great-grandchildren and one nephew.

NEWSMAN IS KNIFED

LOS ANGELES (ANP) — Lawrence F. LaMar, owner of a news service, was stabbed in the right shoulder last week when attacked by three men in what was believed to be a robbery attempt.

LaMar was enroute to his office when he was accosted in a parking lot. LaMar was clubbed when he fought his attackers. He was treated at Central Receiving Hospital and released.

Move to block new church on Whitmore Ave.

Residents of the area will attempt Tuesday to block erection of a church at 920 Whitmore Ave., in a hearing before the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals.

Also scheduled, beginning at 1 p.m. in Room 231, City Hall, are appeals seeking:

The operations of a beauty shop at 3435 Liberty Heights Ave.; a day nursery at 3911 Groveland Ave., and the continued housing of two families at 2018 N. Payson St.

The past Tuesday, the board approved the following appeals allowing:

The housing of five families at 716 Park Ave.; the establishment of a confectionery and grocery store at 2301 Windsor Ave.; the housing of three families at 1310 Edmondson Ave., and the operation of a barber shop at 1800 W. Saratoga St.

NEWLYWEDS LEAVE ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CHURCH AFTER FASHIONABLE WEDDING — The bride, formerly Miss Marilyn Elizabeth Lloyds daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Sterling M. Lloyd and the bride groom,Mr. Hugh Bernard Price — son of Dr. and Mrs. Kline A. Price, pictured as they left St. Francis de Sales Church in Washington, D.C. upon becoming man and wife, in one of the most fashionable weddings of the Christmas Season.

BISHOP D. WARD NICHOLS

Group to honor Bishop Nichols

NEW YORK — Plans have been announced by Volunteer's Integration Committee to give a testimonial banquet in honor of Bishop D. Ward Nichols of the AME Church at the Hotel Plaza, Jan. 24 at 8 p.m.

Proceeds of the banquet will benefit the Charleston S.C. Movement for Desegregation. Robert Louis Green is chairman of the sponsoring committee.

Phi Beta Sigma honors banker

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (ANP) —M. G. Ferguson, president of Citizens Savings Bank and Trust Co., last week was presented Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity's national "Bigger and Better Business Award."

The presentation was made at the fraternity's 49th anniversary convention at Fisk University, and cited the bank president's outstanding contributions in the field of business.

Presented to the country's oldest colored banking firm, the citation is awarded as Citizens Bank begins preparations for celebrating 60 years in business next year. The bank was founded by J. C. Napier, R. H. Boyd and Preston Taylor.

Roosevelt's assets up to $2 million

MIAMI — (ANP) — Roosevelt Savings and Loan Association announced that its assets had soared above the two million dollar mark last week.

Roosevelt, which opened July 4, is unique in that it is the only savings and loan association with a racially integrated board of directors and staff to have received its charter from a southern state.

Chairman of the Board John B. Orr, Jr., and President Elmer A. Ward issued the statement.

Rev. McGowan hurt in fall at home

WASHINGTON

The Rev. Edward D. McGowan, pastor of the Mount Zion Methodist Church, fell down his basement steps on Dec. 28 and broke two ribs. He has been unable to conduct services since the accident.

Mr. McGowan, who lives at 2902 O St., NW, told the Washington AFRO - AMERICAN that he was having difficulty with his breathing and wasn't sure when he would return to his pulpit.

The minister is being treated at Georgetown University Hospital every other day. He says he is able to move around but is in much discomfort.

He will be able to attend services, but will not preach until advised by his doctor.

NASA EXHIBIT

Currently on display at the Pratt Library is an exhibition of 100 of the best color and black and white prints made by and for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Bishop, Mrs. Love honored at party

Bishop and Mrs. Edgar A. Love, resident Bishop of the Baltimore area of the Methodist Church and his charming wife were honored guests at the annual holiday party of the South Baltimore District Ministers and Ministers Wives Fellowships at Wilson Memorial Methodist Church, Gambrills, Md.

The host pastor and his wife were the Rev. and Mrs. Julius Ford.

The party was opened with spiritual blessings led by the Rev. S. R. Bennett.

Recipients of special gifts were the honored guests, Bishop and Mrs. Love; the district superintendent and his wife, the Rev. and Mrs. Hilton A. Parker, and a former pastor and his wife of the host church, the Rev. and Mrs. William H. Davis.

MEMBERS present were Bishop and Mrs. E. A. Love, Rev. and Mrs. H. A. Parker, the Rev. and Mrs. N. P. Perry, the Rev. and Mrs. C. A. Green, the Rev. and Mrs. S. R. Bennett, the Rev. and Mrs. W. H. Davis, the Rev. and Mrs. W. Sewell, the Rev. and Mrs. J. F. Ford, the Rev. and Mrs. R. S. Abernethy, Mrs. C. A. Scott, the Rev. and Mrs. W. E. Brown, the Rev. and Mrs. S. Mason, the Rev. wu. d. chambers, the Rev. and Mrs. D. C. Bowman,

The Rev. and Mrs. W. C. L. Scarborough, the Rev. and Mrs. W. H. Peters, the Rev. and Mrs. C. V. Smith, the Rev. W. A. Kelly, the Rev. S. T. Collins, the Rev. and Mrs. J. E. Adams, the Rev. and Mrs. J. A. Arter and Mrs. Mamie Sharperson.

A GOOD CITIZEN is registered to VOTE. Do so today. Next primary election is May 1964. Register at Supervisor of Elections Office, Fayette and Gay Sts.

STONY RUN FRIENDS MEETING
5116 N. CHARLES ST.
Meeting for Worship 11 A.M.
EVERYONE WELCOME

BAHA'I FAITH
12:00 Noon
Subject: "RELIGION FOR 1964"
Speaker: GLENFORD MITCHELL Journalist for "Africa Reports," Kingston, Jamaica.
Children invited to Sunday Classes 12 Noon
BALTIMORE BAHA'I CENTER
5301 Gwynn Oak Ave.

THE SUSANNA WESLEY CIRCLE
OF THE
WOMAN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE
PRESENTS
THE GREAT HYMNS CHOIR
Under the Direction of DR. DANIEL L. RIDOUT
SUNDAY, JAN. 12, 1964 5 P.M.
AT
METROPOLITAN METHODIST CHURCH
CARROLLTON AVENUE & LANVALE STREET
The Public Is Cordially Invited
No Admission — Free-Will Offering for Missions
MRS. ROSETTA B. WILLIAMS, Chairman
MRS. LILLIAN LAWRENCE JACKSON, Pres., W.S.C.S.
REV. FRANK L. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
"The Church Of The Burning Heart"
1114 - 24 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1964
9:30 A.M.—CHURCH SCHOOL
11:00 A.M.—WORSHIP. First of a Sermon Series on: "THE CONCEPT OF A PERSONAL GOD" by the pastor. Baptizing and Fellowship. Music by the Sanctuary Choir and Chorus No. 2.
3:30 P.M.—ANNIVERSARY — South Carolina Club. Program of Gospel Music by Chorus No. 2.
6:00 P.M.—CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR HOUR.
—A FRIENDLY WELCOME TO ALL—
CLINTON R. COLEMAN, Minister

NEW ST. JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH
1106 W. FRANKLIN STREET
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12 ,1964
9:30 A.M.—Sunday School
11:00 A.M.—Morning Worship. Sermon by the Pastor
8:00 P.M.—Evening Worship Preaching
MRS. F. JOHNSON HARVEY, Church Clerk
REV. ANDREW C. BROWN, Pastor

BROWN MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH
2000 N. FULTON AVENUE
SUNDAY, JAN. 12, 1964
9:30 A.M.—Sunday School
11:00 A.M.—Morning Devotion. and Baptizing.
8:00 P.M.—Sermon by the Pastor
Old-Fashioned Prayer Meeting Each Friday at 8 P.M.
ALL ARE WELCOME
REVEREND PAUL J. HARRIS B.Th. MINISTER

ENON BAPTIST CHURCH
Edmondson Ave. and Schroeder St.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1964
11:00 A.M.—Sermon by the Pastor - Blessing of Babies
7:30 A.M.—Evangelistic Service
A CORDIAL WELCOME TO ALL
REV. ARTHUR J. PAYNE, Pastor

Ames Memorial Methodist Church
CAREY AND BAKER STREETS
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1964
GUILD DAY
9:30 A.M.—Church School—Mr. Warner Brown, Supt.
11:00 A.M.—Guild Day—Speaker Mrs. Velva Purvis
6:00 P.M.—Membership Study Course
A CORDIAL WELCOME TO ALL
ERNEST P. CLARK, Minister

MT. CALVARY HOLY TEMPLE
2116 EDMONDSON AVE.
FRIDAY, JAN. 10, 1964 8 P.M.
SPEAKER:
REV. ANNIE BELL HAGLER
Plus her 50 voice youth choir and The Amanda Specials
BISHOP HAROLD I. WILLIAMS, Pastor

THIRD ANNIVERSARY
CHURCH and PASTOR
GREATER NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
2318 N. MONROE STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1964 TO FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 1964
Jan. 12—3:00 P.M. First Christian Community—Rev. E. Hunnihre
Jan. 13—8:30 P.M. Broadcasting Presented by Rev. Mrs. Agnes Allen
Jan. 13—8:00 P.M. Liberty Baptist Church—Rev. C. H. Hodge, United Echo Gospel Singers
Jan. 14—8:00 P.M. Greater St. John Baptist Church, Turner Station Rev. Daniel Banks
Jan. 15—8:00 P.M. Emmanuel Christian Community, Rev. Sydnie Dunion
Jan. 16—8:00 P.M. Pentecostal Baptist Church, Rev. J. F. Harlee
Jan. 17—8:00 P.M. Second Baptist Church, Rev. Julius Price
SUNDAY, JANUARY 19 — 11:00 A.M.
3:00 P.M. First Christian Community, Waterloo, Rev. I. J. Flemming
8:30 P.M. Kaiser Gospel Singers, Rev. Joseph Kane, Preacher
REV. DAVID ROBINSON, Presiding Minister
REV. LEONARD EDWARD HICKS, Pastor
DEACON LESSER DODD, Chairman, Deacon Board
MRS. JULIA MANGUM, Clerk

PERKINS SQUARE BAPTIST CHURCH
2500 EDMONDSON AVENUE
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1964
REVIVAL DAY
8:00 A.M.—Early Morning Worship Sermon by the Pastor—Holy Communion
9:15 A.M.—Sunday School
10:30 A.M.—Open Heart Service
11:00 A.M.—Morning Worship— Sermon by the pastor. Holy Communion
6:00 P.M.—B.T.U.
SENIOR CHOIR WEEK
Mon., Jan. 13th thru Sun., Jan. 19th
REV. WARD D. TERRY, Pastor

LEADENHALL BAPTIST CHURCH
1021 LEADENHALL STREET
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1964
9:30 A.M.—Sunday School
11:00 A.M.—Morning Worship. Music by the Senior Choir and the Gospel Chorus.
6:00-7:00 P.M.—Baptist Training Union
REV. H. HUDSON BOBBITT, Minister
M. L. ALCOR, Minister of Music

ST. JUDE BAPTIST CHURCH
1306 EDMONDSON AVENUE
REVIVAL DAYS
BEGINNING SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 1964
THRU SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 1964
CONDUCTED BY REV. LOUIS E. WOODSON
REV. ANNIE CLARK, Pastor

DOUGLAS MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CHURCH
"The People of the Way"
LAFAYETTE and MADISON Aves.
MARION CURTIS BASCOM, MINISTER
JAMES S. HAMMOND, MINISTER OF MUSIC
SUNDAY, JAN. 12, 1964
8:00 and 11:00 A.M.
Subject:
"THE CUP AND THE SEAT"
MR. BASCOM Preaching
MUSIC
8:30 A.M. SANCTUARY CHOIR
"O BLESS THE LORD" — Ippolitov-Ivanov
"THERE IS A BALM IN GILEAD" —Arr. Dawson
11:00 A.M. CHANCEL CHOIR
"BUILD THEE MORE STATELY MANSIONS" — Young
"MY SHEPHERD WILL SUPPLY MY NEED" — Arr. Thompson
Church School—9:30 A.M.

THE JOSEPH KNIGHT FUNERAL HOME
DIGNIFIED FUNERAL SERVICES WITH SYMPATHETIC SERVICES
EA. 7-0316 OR. 5-8048
1639 N. BROADWAY

NUTTER Funeral Home
Our reputation for conducting dignified funeral services is a guarantee of sympathetic attention and thorough-going service.
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WI. 7-6655 WI. 7-7618

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CHARLES H. POWELL, FUNERAL DIRECTOR and EMBALMER
319-23 N. SCHROEDER ST.
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DAY — WI. 7-8778 NIGHT — CI. 2-4409
Expedient Service 24 Hours
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Prompt, Efficient, Considerate Service
GEORGE G. KELSON FUNERAL HOME
1348-50 N. Calhoun St. — NO. 9-7585 - LA. 3-1520
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OFFERS BURIAL ESTATES WITH PERPETUAL CARE
Invites Everyone to Visit Its New Offices located at the Park, Sulphur Spring Road, Arbutus 27.
BRONZE MEMORIALS ON DISPLAY
Hundreds of Years for Future Development
A.C.A. Members — Telephone 242-2700 — N.A.A.C.P. Life Members
EASY PAYMENT PLAN

WHEN YOU FINISH READING YOUR AFRO PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND

THE BALTIMORE AFRO-AMERICAN, JANUARY 11, 1964

FACTS ABOUT FUNERAL SERVICE EVERY FAMILY SHOULD KNOW

EVERYONE should know about funerals. It is true that this is a service which no one wants to buy, and one with which few people will be concerned except at infrequent intervals in a lifetime. Consequently, there is much ignorance about funeral service which tends to serve as a basis for much ill-formed criticism. This advertisement is, therefore, being published to gain better public understanding of funeral service and its religious significance.

The Modern American Funeral

Comparisons are odious but this does not stop the critics from trying to compare American funeral customs with those in other lands. They suggest Americans adopt the funeral customs practiced in other countries which have little or no regard for the feelings of the bereaved or the religious rites attached to the funeral.

American funeral service is not a perfect institution. No such claim has ever been made that it is. But there is much to be said for it that is not even hinted at, much less mentioned by the critics. Instead, they prefer to make fun of the funeral rites practiced in this country and give big play to isolated, and not always completely founded instances in order to make their points.

They go beyond the limits of good taste to caricaturize the funeral as "profiteers of death," as "ghouls," suggesting that as a group they should be banished. They overlook the fact that there are thousands of funeral directors throughout the country who are leaders in their communities and highly respected by their fellow citizens. Such an admission would be too damaging to their case for it to be mentioned!

Thousands of letters are received every year by funeral directors from bereaved families they have served expressing their gratitude for the services rendered them in the time of their grief. Fewer than 1% of those received, are critical of the services rendered, or the costs of the funerals concerned.

An ostentatious funeral—a simple funeral—an open casket for viewing by the bereaved and their friends — the closed casket — all these are decisions for the family, often in consultation with their clergyman, to make—not the funeral director. A funeral director has an obligation to serve the public as they wish to be served as to the type of funeral, and the price they wish to pay.

Meaning of Funeral Service

Death in all its forms has been viewed with fear by man since time immemorial. Therefore, anything connected with death is avoided by most people until circumstances force them to face its realities. Some, but only a few, among close relatives and friends are able to weather the emotional crisis it creates. For most it takes time to face up to the finality of death, the acceptance of the fact that the loved one will no longer be part of familiar environment.

This is not a new concept. Pioneer work in this field was done by Freud in his "Mourning and Melancholia." Even more recently, Dr. Erich Lindemann, a noted psychiatrist, made further contributions to the subject as a result of his work with bereaved survivors of the tragic Cocoanut Grove fire in Boston some years ago.

The major role in easing the grief of survivors is played by their spiritual advisers. But the funeral director, no less than the clergyman or rabbi, has his role to play, too. The wisely-selected funeral director assumes the myriad of responsibilities in setting up the necessary arrangements on behalf of the family. His counsel can be depended upon to assist from the hour of passing to the final disposition. Everything he does is planned to ease the suffering and sorrow of the bereaved and to help them pass through the difficult period during the immediate days after death strikes.

Serving Families

Professional critics of funeral directors like to bolster their case with this charge that the bereaved are subjected to high pressure sales tactics when the time comes for them to arrange a funeral. Most families who have been served by established and reputable funeral firms know from experience that such is not the case. Instead, they have a free choice as to the kind of service they wish to select—earth burial, cremation or giving the body for medical research—at the price they wish to pay. Many firms offer a wide range of prices beginning as low as $200, from which families can select a complete funeral service.

The fact is that in common with many other professions and businesses, funeral directors must adhere to strict codes of ethics in the conduct of their operations. They must obey the laws of the various states under which they operate. They must respect all creeds, religions and customs of those they serve. They must adhere to the highest standards of moral responsibility, character and business integrity in maintaining the goodwill of the families they serve, and the respect of the communities in which they live and perform their duties.

Funeral Establishments

It would be possible for a funeral director to operate his mortuary out of a tent. BUT, no family would wish to patronize such a firm.

The American public demands that facilities available to them should be properly housed in appropriate surroundings such as the churches or synagogues they attend. They want convenience, comfort and dignity. In these days when living space is less spacious than it was 50 years ago, the bereaved looks to the funeral director to provide family rooms where they can greet relatives and friends who come to pay last respects. Private chapels maintained by funeral firms have also been developed in response to many persons who are not related to churches, or to meet the needs of those who do not choose to schedule their services in church. However, should the family wish to receive their friends at home or have the religious services conducted in the church or synagogue of their choice, this is a matter for their decision.

Funeral Prices

No one denies that more money is being spent on funerals today. But this is because the public wants to spend more. This is the case in almost every line of service or merchandise being offered to the American public today. The individual determines what he is going to spend. No one else makes this decision for him.

U.S. Department of Commerce figures show that funeral sales lag behind income increases, and behind the price increases of retail and service trades. They show further that operating costs of funeral establishments have risen substantially at the same rate as the rise in costs of other businesses.

In a national survey covering 358,489 adult funerals held last year which was conducted among members of National Selected Morticians, it was revealed that the national average cost was:

$0 — $374	18.2%
$375 — $749	39.2%
$750 — $999	30.3%
$1,000 — over	12.3%

These prices do not include cemetery charges, or shipping charges for funerals in distant cities.

Unpublicized, and completely ignored by the critics, are the many funerals conducted by firms without charge each year because the families have no funds.

Funeral Service

This is another myth being foisted upon the public by the professional critics who are advocating quick disposal of the dead without benefit of religious services. Surveys show that far from making big profits, as alleged, most firms make less than 10% before taxes, and their average net profit is in the area of 4%. Few other business enterprises enjoy such a low profit margin compared with the total amount of investment required to equip, maintain and operate a modern funeral firm.

Capital investment comes high today compared with a few years ago. The funeral coach which cost $5,000 a comparatively short while ago, today costs $13,000. Taxes, supplies, wages, repairs and all other costs of doing business have steadily increased, yet families may still buy a funeral for about the same price they could in 1943.

Profits have not increased in that period, but the cost of doing business has multiplied many times over.

Clergy Relations

Critics try to drive a cleavage between the funeral director and the clergyman, priest or rabbi by suggesting that the former is usurping their role as counselors in time of grief and need, and distorting the solemn religious rite. Religious leaders who accept this thesis put forward by the critic are in the minority. Experience shows there is a deep and close relationship which exists between clergy of all faiths and the funeral director. The latter recognizes his contribution is chiefly in the realm of material services for the deceased and in serving the living.

Many families arranging funeral services are found to have no church affiliation. Sometimes they ask, and sometimes it is the funeral director who makes the suggestion to put them in touch with a clergyman of their own faith.

But, no responsible funeral director would wish to assume the responsibilities of the clergyman in this important religious rite. Instead, he works with the clergyman to help and counsel the family in all possible ways. Together, they cooperate in many different ways in making the funeral A MEANINGFUL AND SIGNIFICANT RELIGIOUS RITE for the bereaved.

Thus the roles played by the clergyman and the funeral director is a blending of the practical aspects of the service, as rendered by the latter, and the religious rituals performed by the church or synagogue.

Embalming

Much has been made of the fact that embalming is a universal practice in the United States, and as such it is not necessary. The discrediting procedure followed by the critics is simply to undermine the claims of embalming, allegedly based upon considerations of hygiene and mental health. Embalming is important, particularly if there is to be a delay between the time of death and actual interment. Medical experts will testify that embalming is a sanitary precaution not inconsistent with the rules of good health. Further, on the part of many survivors, there is a natural desire to look upon the deceased for the last time. This is not morbid curiosity. Rather, there is psychological support for the idea that it helps survivors to face the reality of their loss. In presenting the embalmed body for viewing—sometimes only in private or a family situation—the mortician must employ his skill in cosmetology. This is particularly true in instances where the deceased has suffered a violent death.

The practice of embalming is spreading and many countries, led by England, are adopting it.

Funeral Directors

In a few short years, there will not be enough funeral directors to serve in this country. Each community, big or small, needs a mortuary. Mortuaries have to be accessible to citizens — within reasonable reach. Whether a mortuary handles a large number or just a few cases each year, the differential in cost in running operations is not so great as some might think. While the average cost per case will decline with volume—there is a point below which they will not go.

Only in some major metropolitan centers will there be found what is apparently an oversupply of mortuaries. But, it should not be forgotten that many of these are established to serve special religious or nationality groups.

More Facts

Expensive clothing is sold to survivors to dress the person to be buried, is another of the charges made by critics of American funeral customs. The truth is that more than 80% of the dead are buried in their own clothing. It is rare, indeed, that it is necessary to purchase special clothing to bury the deceased.

* * * *

Eary American settlers buried their dead in a simple pine box attended by a small group of family and friends, so it has been written, in an attempt to destroy the idea of a traditional funeral service. The truth is that this may have been a frontier tradition when sometimes the dead were buried without even benefit of a pine box. But this was not true of settled sections of earlier American society. Early Americans observed some rather elaborate and expensive funeral customs, as careful research will show.

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Funerals represent a new status symbol in America, it has been claimed. True — in some instances. Some people view the funeral as a means to gain new status among their neighbors and friends. Status conscious Americans also find expression in other symbols as well as in funerals. Such situations may be to a funeral director's advantage, but they are not of his making. He is obligated to provide the type of funeral service demanded. On the other hand, there are many times when funeral directors counsel families against making unnecessary expenditures.

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"Funeral directors provide and charge for all that the traffic will bear," is a criticism which has been repeated so often that few people heed it. Actually, most funeral firms have been in existence for several generations. Many are family owned and operated. They could not continue on a "one time" basis—and they could not attract families, time and time again to use their services if they charged on an "all that the traffic will bear" basis.

Freedom of Choice

It is the inalienable right of every American to have freedom of choice whether it involves the election of a candidate for political office, the kind of clothes he wants to wear, the kind of schools to which he wants to send his children, the kind of a wedding he wants his daughter to have. So it is when it comes to the selection of a funeral. The right remains that of the individual or family to purchase a funeral service of THEIR OWN CHOICE, at the price THEY WISH TO PAY, from the funeral director of THEIR CHOICE. No reputable funeral director would presume it should be otherwise.

Reputable firms urge you to select in advance of any emergency, the funeral director in whom you can have confidence. Contact him, tell him about the kind of service you desire for yourself or your family, and the price you want to pay. He will respect your wishes and those of your loved ones. This is the wise way to handle such matters without committing yourself to paying membership fees in an organization over which you have no control or in which you are denied discretion or decision.

Funeral Directors' & Morticians Association of Maryland, Inc.