

Blue Hill Cemetery and Crematory Provides Compassionate Care When Our Families Choose Cremation

More and more families are choosing cremation as the final disposition for a loved one. At Keohane, we are proud to work with Blue Hill Cemetery and Crematory to ensure loved ones are handled with the utmost respect and care. While the cemetery has been in Braintree for generations, Blue Hill opened a state-of-the-art crematory in 2014.

“We have known and worked with Gerry Ridge at Blue Hill for many years and knew if he ran his crematory like he does the cemetery that it would be the type of service that we could get behind. The crematory is in an attractive brand new building and his manager Joe Walker was a former funeral director with our firm in Quincy. By having licensed funeral directors operate the crematory speaks volumes for the level of care and compassion they provide,” said Co-President John Keohane.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, only cemeteries can own and operate a crematory, which must be located on cemetery property. Therefore, crematories are service providers to funeral homes, and all cremation arrangements must be made by a Licensed and Registered



Blue Hill Cemetery and Crematory in Braintree



Viewing window at Blue Hill Cemetery and Crematory in Braintree

Funeral Home, such as Keohane. Our funeral home places an identification bracelet on each deceased family member. Prior to transferring a person to the crematory, we ask each family to have a private viewing so that they are comfortable that their mom or dad is safely in our care. This lasts only a few moments but the ability to say goodbye and have a few private moments alone is a powerful ceremony. Then we attach a label to the top of the cremation container and match that to the bracelet.

Once your loved one arrives at the crematory, Blue Hill attaches a metal identification disc to the cremation container which then follows your loved one from beginning to end during the cremation process. There are eight separate identification checkpoints throughout the cremation process. “That’s not only comforting to the funeral home, it’s certainly comforting to the families,” said Joseph B. Walker, Crematory Manager.

If you choose, you can witness the actual cremation through a picture window. The final step in the cremation process is for Keohane to retrieve your loved one’s cremated remains and return them to your care.

Funeral Service Options

Most families we assist have some sort of services in conjunction with the cremation. That may involve an open casket visitation with a church or funeral home service followed by cremation. Many families have the cremation first followed by a service with the urn present. It might consist of visiting hours or a church or funeral home service. Some families choose cremation without any public services.

Many Options for Cremated Remains

After the cremated remains are returned to the family, there are many creative options, such as burying the urn in an existing or new burial plot; placing an urn in a niche; scattering the cremains; or incorporating part of the cremains into a personal object, such as jewelry.

At Blue Hill Cemetery, urns can be placed in their outdoor columbarium, a niche for urns. Names and dates can be inscribed in black granite on the front of the niche. An urn can be buried in an existing plot along with another family member or several urns can be buried in a plot dedicated just for urns.

Blue Hill is also considering future development of special sections where only urns are buried, called urn gardens. Another future spot for cremated remains at Blue Hill might be in a scattering garden, which would provide a lovely, natural setting for families to scatter cremated remains and then inscribe their loved one’s name on a common marker.

“Whether they are buried in the ground with an upright marker; go into a niche carved in the front; buried in an urn garden; or scattered in a scattering garden, there’s going to be a place for their name to be inscribed or designated to mark their presence here in some capacity,” said Walker.