



BRITISH COLUMBIA
FUNERAL ASSOCIATION

COMFORTING LOSS. CELEBRATING LIFE.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE & AGM

May 8-9, 2025

Pan Pacific Hotel, Vancouver, B.C.



Thank you to our Platinum Sponsor, SCI Canada

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<https://www.bcfunerals.com/>



WELCOME

It's a true pleasure to welcome you to the 2025 BCFA AGM, Conference and trade show—this year hosted in the heart of downtown Vancouver at the beautiful Pan Pacific Hotel. We're thrilled to be back in this vibrant setting, surrounded by ocean views and city energy, and even more excited to introduce our new two-day format. This refreshed schedule is designed to give you more opportunities to learn, connect, and engage with one another in a focused, meaningful way.

We're confident you'll enjoy our lineup of guest speakers, who bring a wealth of knowledge and insight, along with our breakout sessions that promise to spark discussion and inspiration. We also encourage you to take time to connect with our valued vendors at the trade show—these industry partners bring innovation, support, and fresh ideas that are an essential part of our professional community. Whether you're here to deepen your expertise, reconnect with colleagues, or simply enjoy the atmosphere, we're so glad you've joined us. Here's to an energizing and memorable conference experience!



Shane Dickson, *President*
BC Funeral Association





Arbor Memorial

DINNER MENU & PROGRAMME

5:00pm - Cocktail Reception

5:45pm - Call to Dinner

6:00pm - Opening Remarks

6:15pm - Dinner & Entertainment

7:45pm - Service Awards Begin

8:45pm - Closing Remarks

9:00pm - After Party

PRESIDENT'S BANQUET MENU

FRASER VALLEY GREENS

black pepper goat cheese, pickled strawberries, balsamic vinaigrette
(GF, NF)



ROASTED CHICKEN BREAST

vegetables, tarragon polenta, crispy onions
& caramelized garlic jus



ULTIMATE CHOCOLATE LAYER CAKE

soft chocolate cake with chocolate mousse &
apricot coulis
(GF, NF, V)

Freshly Brewed Coffee, Teas and Herbal Infusions

WINE SELECTIONS

See Ya Later Pinot Gris, B.C.
Sumac Ridge Merlot, B.C.

President's Banquet Dinner Wine Sponsored by
SCI Canada



KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Friday, May 9, 9:00AM - 10:15AM | OPENING KEYNOTE

THE PERCEPTION CHOICE

Speaker: Warren Macdonald



Warren Macdonald's life's boundaries were redefined in April 1997 with his accident on North Queensland's Hichinbrook Island. Climbing to the Island's tallest peak, he became trapped beneath a one-ton slab boulder in a freak rock fall. Two days later he was rescued, only to undergo the amputation of both legs at mid thigh.

Just ten months later, he climbed Tasmania's Cradle Mountain using a modified wheelchair and the seat of his pants. In February 2003, he became the first double above-knee amputee to reach the summit of Africa's tallest peak, Mt. Kilimanjaro. Warren authored a best selling book, *A Test of Will*, and has appeared on *Larry King Live*, *Oprah*, and *The Hour*.

If we can't see where it is we need to go, what are our chances of getting there? If your team or your members can't see where you're going, what are the chances they will get on board? In navigating change, and overcoming the challenges that come with it, we need to address the foundation; the root cause of why we often get stuck or disengaged, and that is, how we perceive change in the first place. This keynote is designed to hit "reset" on how your team sees their role in your organization. Expect to come away empowered, engaged, inspired, and ready to take action. Prepare to see challenges and opportunities with fresh perspectives and renewed vision.



KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Friday, May 9, 3:15PM - 4:15PM | CLOSING KEYNOTE

THE POWER OF LOOKING STUPID

Speaker: Cliff Prang

Cliff Prang is a former pastor, turned professional actor, comedian, writer & producer. Cliff is an improv instructor, MC, and professional motivational speaker.

He has been in love with making people laugh since birth and has a full menu of comedy options including stand up, improv, speaking, emceeing, auctioneering and delivers those services to a broad spectrum of audiences at Bars, Clubs, Schools, Churches, Fundraisers, Corporate Events, Zoom & even once at a Funeral.



Cliff's commercials can be seen on pretty much every network. He has also played roles on SuperGirl, Supernatural, Girlfriend's Guide to Divorce, the INBETWEEN and ALASKA DAILY alongside 2 time Oscar Winner, Hilary Swank.





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We are a team of experts dedicated to the responsible recycling of scrap metals. We work with a variety of industries and specialize in serving the death care industry.

Our reputation as an industry leader has been formed through partnerships with over 500 crematories in North America, making us the preferred choice across many prominent corporations. Our organizational mission is to be at the forefront of refining technology while providing a world-class service for our clients. We leverage over a decade's worth of data and research to provide tailored solutions for each scenario we encounter.

Through the implementation of our STEP Program, we help clients maximize metal recycling returns, increase operator efficiency, and provide cleaner remains back to the families they serve.

<https://core-cremationrecycling.com/>



SPEAKERS

SE HEALTH: INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY

Speaker: Victoria McKay

An Ojibway woman from Rolling River First Nation, Manitoba, brings extensive experience in supporting Indigenous children and families. She holds a Master of Education in Guidance and Counselling from Brandon University and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Sociology. She is currently an Education Liaison with the SE Health First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Program, where she contributes to fostering meaningful change within Indigenous communities.



SE HEALTH: INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY

Speaker: Tyler Geisler



Tyler Geisler serves as an Education Liaison with the SE Health First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Program and maintains a private practice providing mental health counseling. He holds a Master of Social Work from Dalhousie University and certifications in play therapy and nature and forest therapy. Tyler's professional background includes extensive experience as a Social Worker in diverse healthcare settings, including five years in tribal health as a Mental Health Therapist and, more recently, as a Director of Health.

SPEAKERS

GROUNDING IN NATURE: SUSTAINABILITY IN CEMETERIES

Speaker: Catherine Berris, RLA, RPP, FCSLA, FASLA, Urban Systems



Catherine Berris is a Landscape Architect and a Registered Professional Planner. She led her own consulting firm for 28 years and has spent 11 years at Urban Systems, an interdisciplinary consulting firm. Catherine has always had a passion for cemeteries. She founded the cemetery planning and design practice at Urban Systems, where she has prepared plans and designs for many municipal and Indigenous cemeteries. Catherine also thrives on bringing more nature into communities. She is now President of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects.

GROUNDING IN NATURE: SUSTAINABILITY IN CEMETERIES

Speaker: Tenille Thompson, RLA, BCSLA, CSLA, Urban Systems

Tenille is a leader in landscape architecture specializing in parks and community master plans, civic spaces, cemetery planning, and green infrastructure. She has led master plans, detailed designs, and construction administration for cemeteries, bringing a deep understanding of industry trends, operational practices, policies, and bylaws. Viewing cemeteries as vital community assets, she designs spaces that balance historical significance and ecological stewardship to support reflection, connection, and long-term sustainability.



SPEAKERS

HOT DOGS AND DECOMPOSITION ADVANCED EMBALMING

Speaker: Dr. Damon de la Cruz

Dr. Damon de la Cruz began his career in funeral service in 1993. He has worked as an embalmer and funeral practitioner in Los Angeles, Portland, and throughout Ireland. Damon ran a successful trade embalming company throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties for several years. After being awarded a Doctoral degree in Pathobiology from the University of Southern California he began teaching. Currently, he is the Director of Education at the Frigid Fluid Company and an instructor at several Funeral Service Education programs internationally.



DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF

Speaker: Dr. Sara Murphy



Sara Murphy, PhD, CT, is a death educator, Certified Thanatologist (Association for Death Education and Counseling), and suicidologist with fifteen years of scholarly, pedagogical, and professional experience. She is a faculty member at the University of Rhode Island where she has developed and taught over fifty interdisciplinary courses on thanatological theory; death, dying, and bereavement; biopsychosocial grief experiences; grief writing; and stigmatized means of death. She is also an affiliate faculty member in the Thanatology Graduate Program at Marian University, where she teaches courses on suicide and on the literature of loss.

SERVICE AWARDS

50 Kevin Carmichael
Henderson's Fraser Valley Funeral Home

Janet Ricciuti
Service Corporation International Canada

40 Joseph Marciano
Schara Tzedek Cemetery

Keith Louw
Hollyburn Funeral Home

Bruce Robertson
First Memorial, North Vancouver

35 Everett Baker
Grand Forks Funeral Home

Burke Sanbrooks
Springfield Funeral Home

Hamish D'Avellar
Vancouver Casket/ Avanti

Kim MacMillan
Forest Lawn Funeral Home and Memorial Park

30 Kevin Lewis
Service Corporation International
Vancouver Island

Anna Christian
Surrey Monument Company

Mike Oliver
Surrey Monument Company

Iain Smith
Arbor Memorial

Devan Wilkie
Bell and Burnaby Funeral Home

25 Glen Whittaker
Everden Rust

Trudy Sandland
First Memorial, North Vancouver

Ron Lund
Maple Ridge Funeral Chapel

Janice Winfrey
Sands Funeral Home, Duncan

Connie Kimmich
Springfield Funeral Home

Thank you

To all those who have spent their careers in service of others.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

DAY 1 | THURSDAY, MAY 8

12:15PM - 2:15PM	AGM and Townhall Crystal Pavilion
2:15PM - 4:15PM	Exhibitor Showcase and Reception Crystal Pavilion Foyer
4:15PM - 5:00PM	Break
5:00PM - 6:00PM	Cocktail hour and Exhibitor Networking Crystal Pavilion Foyer
6:00PM - 9:00PM	President's Banquet and Service Awards Crystal Pavilion
9:00PM - LATE	Social Oceans 999

DAY 2 | FRIDAY, MAY 9

8:00AM - 8:45AM	Breakfast with Exhibitors Crystal Pavilion Foyer & Crystal Pavilion
8:45AM - 9:00AM	Opening Ceremony and Cultural Acknowledgement Crystal Pavilion
9:00AM - 10:15 AM	Opening Keynote Crystal Pavilion THE PERCEPTION CHOICE Presented by Warren Macdonald
10:15AM - 10:25AM	In Memoriam
10:25AM - 10:45AM	Break with Exhibitors Crystal Pavilion Foyer



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

DAY 2 | FRIDAY, MAY 9 - CONTINUED

10:45AM - 12:15 PM	Option A Crystal Pavillion Ballroom SE HEALTH: INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY Presented by Victoria McKay and Tyler Geisler
	Option B Gazebo HOT DOGS AND DECOMPOSITION Presented by Dr. Damon de la Cruz
10:45AM - 3:00PM	Option C Offsite OFFSITE CEMETERY TOUR, LUNCH AND SESSION 'GROUNDED IN NATURE: SUSTAINABILITY IN CEMETERIES' Presented by Catherine Berris and Tenille Thompson
12:15PM - 1:30PM	Lunch with Exhibitors Crystal Pavilion Foyer
1:30PM - 3:00PM	Option A Crystal Pavillion Ballroom DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF Presented by Dr. Sara Murphy
	Option B Gazebo Advanced Embalming Presented by Dr. Damon de la Cruz
3:00PM - 3:15PM	Break Crystal Pavilion Foyer <i>Cemetery Group Returns</i>
3:15PM - 4:15PM	Closing Keynote Crystal Pavilion THE POWER OF LOOKING STUPID Presented by Cliff Prang
4:15PM - 4:30PM	Closing Ceremony Crystal Pavilion



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COMFORTING LOSS.
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Thank you for joining us.

PO BOX 363 Station Main
Chiliwack, BC
V2P 6J4

Telephone: (250) 592-3213
Toll Free: (800) 665-3899