



Natural Burial

Natural burial, or green burial, is the act of burying the body as naturally as possible. It is the most eco-friendly manner of caring for our dead.

Natural burial grounds offer a sanctuary for both the dead and the living. Below ground, the un-embalmed body is placed in a biodegradable casket or shroud and buried without a vault so decomposition can occur. Above ground, the land is restored to its natural habitat, and our presence in the ground ensures the land is protected forever.

Demand for natural burials grounds is growing worldwide, with over 200 sites in both the US and UK. Ontario has a few 'hybrid' sites attached to conventional cemeteries. Kingston's city council is keen and Kingston could be home to Ontario's first 'stand-alone' natural burial ground.

Consider a natural burial ground in Kingston

Your final act is giving back to the earth.

The body is buried approximately three feet below the surface, allowing the nutrients from your body to contribute to the earth's renewal.

Your final resting place is among nature.

Imagine a beautiful Ontario meadow. In the summer butterflies and bees fly among the wildflowers, and birds build nests in the trees. It may be a cemetery, but its full of life. In the winter, the snow brings calm.

A natural burial does not pollute.

It's apparent how polluting conventional burial is, with the hardwood and metal caskets, vaults and bodies embalmed using formaldehyde. But many don't know that cremation is not eco-friendly either. A cremation retort operates at 760 to 1150 °C for one to three hours. At least one SUV tank worth of fossil fuel is used for each body and carbon dioxide is emitted into the atmosphere. Modern retorts capture toxic emissions so ask your funeral home if they have a high efficiency retort.

For some, natural burial is a traditional approach.

Natural burial isn't new, but it's an idea getting renewed attention from many who hold no value in conventional burial or cremation. Some faiths (eg, Jewish, Muslim) practice this today, while for others it's a return to a traditional approach.

Your presence in the ground protects the land forever.

Once a body is buried underground, you are essentially acting as a land steward, ensuring that no one can build on that habitat.

Natural burials and funerals

Whether it be big or small, religious or secular, a ceremony is compatible with natural burials.

A service may be held before or after the burial, at a place of worship, funeral home, family home, or even outdoors at the burial site. Because embalming doesn't occur with a natural burial, the burial will preferably be held within a few days following the death. There are circumstances that may require a longer delay between the death and burial and there are facilities where the body may rest in a cool environment until burial.

Costs

Most natural burial sites try to keep the price as low as possible, in an effort to make this environmentally friendly option accessible to everyone.

Eco-friendly burial containers, like shrouds or biodegradable caskets are less ornate than conventional caskets and therefore less expensive. A full body plot is usually more expensive than cremation, however people find value in this incremental expense because of the parting gift they leave the planet.

Other common questions

No worries: diseases don't leach into the soil, water isn't poisoned, and animals have no interest in us.

Cemeteries in Ontario are highly regulated and approved by a medical officer. It's perfectly legal and safe for everyone.

Tell your family

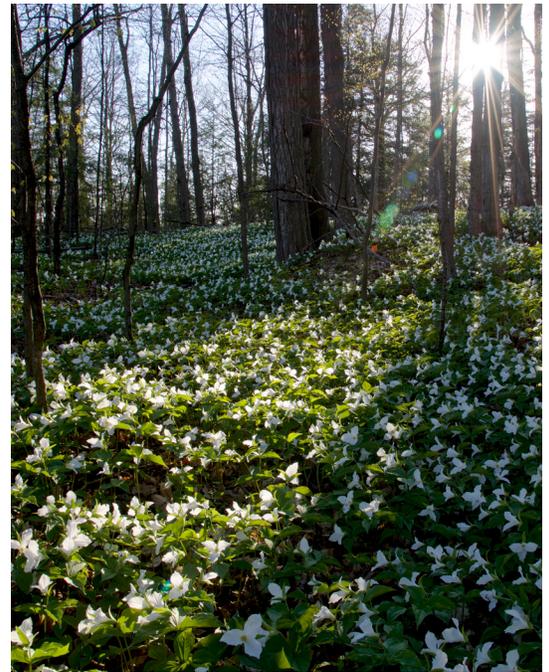
If you are interested in your final rest being in a natural burial ground, the most important step is to share your wishes with your family or friends.

It can be a difficult conversation, but your family will be glad to know that they are fulfilling your wishes. This document may help prompt the conversation.

Kingston may get a site!

Kingston's city council has passed a motion to explore the creation of a natural burial ground. There's a dynamic team of advocates promoting the cause. Visit greenburialkingston.ca to learn more.

 greenburialkingston.com/



About NBA

The Natural Burial Association is a volunteer run non-profit helping communities across Ontario create natural burial grounds. We are motivated to take care of our planet, and offer people the option of a gentle goodbye.

We hope that one day, natural burial grounds protect hundreds of acres of Ontario nature.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.naturalburialassociation.ca

