



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Making The South Shore A Better Place



Honoring a Legacy of Service

A Q&A with Andy McCawley

CEO of the New England Center and Home for Veterans

When the remains of Alfred Thomas Langevin, a United States Army soldier from Weymouth who was missing in action for more than 80 years, were finally identified and returned home, it marked a powerful moment of remembrance for his family and community. After assisting with his repatriation and funeral services, Keohane Funeral Home chose to donate the full federal stipend received for the service to the New England Center and Home for Veterans, supporting veterans who face challenges such as housing instability, unemployment, and access to healthcare.

Recently, we sat down with Andy McCawley, CEO of the New England Center and Home for Veterans, to discuss the significance of this gift, the enduring legacy of Pvt. Langevin's service, and how community partnerships continue to make a difference for veterans today.

Q: Can you share how NECHV helps veterans? What is the mission?

A: The New England Center and Home for Veterans is a dedicated Human Services provider to our community's most vulnerable Veterans, those at-risk-of, or experiencing, the disruptive and disabling condition of homelessness. The mission of the Center is to ensure that every Veterans receives the support and assistance to be able to live with sufficient independence and dignity. The NECHV does this by providing a broad array of services, both at its Boston facility and additional locations across Massachusetts, and in the community at-large. We also connect with and support Veterans in their own homes.

Q: What does this donation from Keohane Funeral

Home mean to the New England Center and Home for Veterans?

A: The NECHV is both publicly (via government taxpayer dollars) and privately (through philanthropic donations) funded. It relies on the generosity of donors like the Keohane Funeral Home to ensure that every Veteran is provided the best support and care to achieve their goals.

Q: What was your reaction when you learned that Keohane Funeral Home chose to donate the full federal stipend to NECHV?

A: We felt very honored and very grateful. I know that the federal funding that the Keohane Funeral Home received to support Pvt. Langevin's return home to Weymouth likely did not even begin to cover the actual expenses of the very fitting and dignified service that the Home provided. The donation will enable the Center to support Veterans facing challenges today and is certainly a wonderful way to commemorate the legacy of Pvt. Langevin's service and sacrifice.

Q: Why is the story of Pvt. Langevin so powerful for the veteran community?

A: I think it might be so powerful among Veterans because of Pvt. Langevin's sacrifice. When a young American steps forward and commits to serving the nation, there is a very real element of the potential cost. That young person is fundamentally offering to lay down their life, if it comes to it, as Pvt. Langevin did. The majority of service members and Veterans (thankfully) are not called on to make the ultimate sacrifice, as Pvt. Langevin was, but it is always a possibility.

Q: Why is it significant that this gift was made in memory of a WWII soldier who was missing in action for more than 80 years?

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Funeral Service of Pvt. Langevin

A: I think that part of the significance is that it represents the commonality and bonds between Veterans that spans all generations and eras of service.

Q: Keohane Funeral Home played an important role in bringing Pvt. Langevin home. What does their involvement represent to you?

A: I believe that the Home's involvement represents the best in our nation. It exemplifies the Town of Weymouth and the community's appreciation that the freedoms we enjoy have not and will not continue to come free. They are retained through service and sacrifice, sometimes the ultimate sacrifice, such as in the case of Pvt. Langevin. The Keohane Funeral Home exemplifies positive citizenship and community engagement.

Q: How will this \$10,000 contribution help veterans served by NECHV?

A: The generous donation will help fund the services provided to more than 1700 veterans and family members engaged with the NECHV.

Q: What does this gesture say about the role local organizations can play in supporting veterans?

A: It says that not only does the home and the Town of Weymouth and its citizens appreciate the service and sacrifices of the past, but they do not forget the veterans of today, regardless of how they might be struggling.

Q: What does this gesture say about the role local businesses like Keohane Funeral Home can play in supporting veterans?

A: Local businesses, and especially the Keohane Funeral Home are leaders in the community, and their actions and initiatives are important to how people think about veterans.

Q: How important are partnerships with community organizations to the work NECHV does?

A: Partnerships are vitally important to the NECHV. We could not accomplish our mission to support veterans, and equally importantly, we would not be able to connect with veteran needs in the community if we did not work closely with and in collaboration with our partners

Q: What message does this donation send about remembering veterans across generations?

A: It is a message that we as a nation, and specifically the Town of Weymouth, and the folks at the Keohane Funeral Home, will always remember and honor the service and sacrifice of those who wear the uniform of our nation for 8, 80 or 800 years.



“Frank with Keohane Funeral Home did an excellent job. Everyone there was fantastic and did really well. We had a wake and celebration of life. We went to the cemetery. Everything was perfect. Frank couldn't have been more helpful. The Aftercare service has been helpful. Thank you, Kathy.”

~ Will F.



“John, with Keohane Funeral Home, was wonderful, and so helpful. He itemized things, and helped with the website. I am so grateful for the Aftercare service! Carol provided me with some key information that I did not know, or would have thought about. Thank you so much!”

~ Margaret H.

Understanding the Seven Stages of Grief



Grief is one of the most unique and painful experiences we go through as human beings. It doesn't follow a schedule, and it doesn't look the same for everyone. While no two journeys are identical, many people find comfort in understanding the commonalities that can follow a loss.

Grief is the deep sorrow we feel after the death of someone we love or after another profound loss, such as a divorce, serious illness, or unintended departure from a job. During this time, it's common to experience intense emotions and even physical symptoms. While these feelings can be overwhelming, it's important to remember that grief is a natural and necessary response to loss. There are many ways to navigate grief, both on your own and with the support of family, friends, or community, that can help you move through it and come to terms with what has changed.

To help those who are grieving better understand their feelings, grief counselors and mental health professionals have identified seven stages of grief, offering a broader picture of what people may experience. It's important to remember that these stages are not linear. You may move back and forth between them, skip some entirely, or feel several at once. All of it is normal.

1. Shock

Immediately after a loss, many people feel numb or disconnected. Shock can act as a protective response, helping us process overwhelming news in smaller pieces.

2. Denial

Denial can feel like disbelief. It gives the mind time to slowly absorb what has changed. This stage may come and go in waves.

3. Anger

Anger is a natural response to pain. It may be directed at circumstances, medical providers, other people, yourself, or even the person who passed. Beneath anger is often deep hurt.

4. Bargaining

In this stage, thoughts may revolve around "what if." Bargaining is the mind's way of trying to regain a sense of control in a situation that feels uncontrollable.

5. Depression

As the reality of the loss settles in, deep sadness may follow. This can include changes in sleep, appetite, energy, or motivation. This stage reflects the weight of what has been lost.

6. Reconstruction

Gradually, many people begin to adjust to life without their loved one. While the pain may still be present, daily routines start to return. You may begin finding small moments of stability again.

7. Acceptance

Acceptance does not mean you are "over it." It means you are learning to live with the loss. The love remains. The memories remain. The grief simply becomes something you carry differently.

It's important to say again: grief doesn't unfold neatly. Some days may feel manageable, and others may feel just as heavy as the beginning. Milestones, holidays, and anniversaries can bring emotions back unexpectedly. There is no "right way" to grieve. There is only your way.

At Keohane, we understand that support doesn't end after the service. If you or someone you love is navigating loss, we are here to help connect you with resources, guidance, and compassionate care today and in the months ahead.

CAREER SPOTLIGHT



Nicole Plaisted,
Apprentice Funeral Director

When people think about careers that make a difference, they often picture healthcare, education, or public service. But one deeply impactful and often misunderstood field is funeral service. For those drawn to helping others through life's most difficult moments, it can be one of the most meaningful careers imaginable.

Like many in the profession, Nicole didn't set out from the beginning with a clear plan to become a funeral director. What she did know, however, was that she wanted to help people.

Nicole Plaisted has recently completed her apprenticeship at Keohane Funeral Home and Cremation and has a single class left at Cape Cod Community College to earn her degree from its mortuary program. Once complete, she'll advance into the formal role of Funeral Director. Throughout her apprenticeship she's had the opportunity to work with families and has come to appreciate the opportunity she's been given. We asked Nicole about her path to become a Funeral Director and why she chose it.

Q. How did you decide to become a Funeral Director?

A. I always knew I wanted to help people. When I was younger, I had experienced some significant

losses, so I wasn't unfamiliar with funerals and passings. But it wasn't until I saw a course offering at Cape Cod Community College that I really started to consider it as a career. I reached out to a few local funeral homes and had some meaningful conversations. That's when I really started to think I'd enjoy doing this as a living.

Q. What did your friends and family think about your choice?

A. My Mom is a nurse, so she was on board from the start. Most of my friends and families thought it made a lot of sense. They knew I'd be a good fit for this line of work.

Q. What do you love about your job?

A. I love interacting with the families. No two days are ever the same. Every situation is unique. People grieve differently and a big part of the job is figuring out how to communicate with each member of a family in a way that's appropriate and compassionate. Bringing them through the process is a huge responsibility that I don't take lightly, but it's also an incredible honor to be part of it.

Q. What advice would you give to someone interested in a career in funeral services?

A. Go for it! I really believe it's one of the most meaningful careers you can have. But for someone new, you have to be able to give yourself some grace. This is not a job that can be taught in school alone. It's hands-on. Because of that, it takes time to truly learn how to be as effective as you can be.

Q. Do you think there are any preconceived notions about what the job is about?

A. When I tell people what I do, I almost always get the same reaction, "Oh, I could never do that" because they assume there's nothing but sadness. And, it's true, there's a lot of that. But I also see so much love. There's laughter and remembrance and beauty as well. I can't think of anything I'd rather do with my life.

A career in funeral service challenges you, teaches you, and ultimately allows you to serve others in a profound way. While it may not be the most conventional path, it's one that offers purpose, variety, and the opportunity to be part of something deeply important.



**Learn more about careers
at Keohane Funeral Home
on our website!**

PLANT

a row

GROW

fresh produce

SHARE

with those in need



At Keohane Funeral & Cremation, we believe care for our community extends far beyond the services we provide, it lives in the everyday ways neighbors support one another. That spirit is at the heart of Plant.Grow.Share., a collaborative initiative inviting local gardeners, families, and organizations to grow extra fruits and vegetables and share their harvest with those facing food insecurity.

In partnership with Interfaith Social Services, Weymouth Food Pantry, and Holly Hill Farm, this program is rooted in a simple but powerful idea: plant an extra row, grow with intention, and give what you can. The result is more than fresh produce, it's dignity, connection, and improved access to nutritious food for our neighbors across the South Shore.

For more than 15 years, Plant.Grow.Share. has brought together individuals, families, businesses, and civic groups to grow and donate food from backyard gardens, community plots, and workplaces. Holly Hill Farm further strengthens the effort through education, offering workshops, demonstrations, and hands-on volunteer opportunities. In 2025 alone, its Farm to Food Pantry program donated more than 7,600 pounds of fresh produce and flowers to local pantries.

As part of this initiative, Keohane Funeral & Cremation proudly serves as a produce drop-off location. Gardeners can bring their donations to our Quincy and South Weymouth locations, where our team will ensure they reach local food pantries quickly and efficiently.

"Plant.Grow.Share. is about neighbors helping neighbors in a very tangible way," said Co-President John Keohane. "When someone shares even a small harvest, it becomes something

bigger—an act of care that strengthens our entire community."

Learn, Grow, and Get Involved

Residents were invited to attend gardening workshops led by Holly Hill Farm's Jon Belber. They cover garden planning, extending the growing season, and organic and regenerative growing practices. Attendees also received free seed packets (kale, beans, and radishes) courtesy of Keohane.

Whether you're an experienced gardener or just getting started, every tomato, pepper, or cucumber you grow, and share can make a meaningful difference.



Seed packets.



Honoring Loved Ones with Meaningful Tributes



Remembering a loved one is a deeply personal journey. Finding ways to honor their life can bring comfort, connection, and healing—not only in the days following a loss, but for years to come. At Keohane Funeral Home, we are here to help guide you in choosing the tribute that feels most meaningful to you and your family. Whether through flowers, gifts, or lasting memorials, each gesture is a reflection of love—and every life deserves to be remembered in a way that is both personal and heartfelt.

Flowers

Sending flowers remains a timeless gesture of sympathy and support. We are proud to partner with trusted local florists to ensure that every arrangement is fresh, beautiful, and delivered with care. Floral tributes can express what words often cannot, offering comfort and a visible symbol of love during a difficult time.



Memory Books & Keepsakes

Creating a memory book is a meaningful way to gather stories, photographs, and messages from family and friends. These collections become cherished heirlooms, preserving the legacy of a loved one and offering a source of comfort for generations. Whether shared at services or compiled afterward, they help ensure that special moments are never forgotten.



Gifts

Memorial gifts can provide lasting comfort to grieving families. Thoughtful options such as keepsakes, candles, or charitable contributions made in a loved one's name serve as meaningful reminders of a life well lived and the impact they had on others.



Living Tributes: Planting Trees

For those seeking a lasting and environmentally meaningful tribute, planting a tree in memory of a loved one is a beautiful option. These living memorials grow and flourish over time, symbolizing life, renewal, and enduring remembrance.



Ed Keohane of Keohane Funeral Home was recently honored with induction into the Quincy Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame, a recognition that reflects not only his professional excellence but also his deep and lasting commitment to the community. For generations, Keohane Funeral Home has been a trusted presence for families during life's most difficult moments, and Ed's leadership has continued that legacy with compassion, integrity, and innovation.

Under his guidance, the funeral home has evolved to meet the changing needs of the families it serves, while still holding firmly to the values of dignity, respect, and personalized care. Beyond his work in the funeral profession, Ed has been an active and generous supporter of local organizations, initiatives,

and causes throughout Quincy and the surrounding communities. His dedication to service—both in his profession and in civic life—has made a meaningful impact on countless individuals and families.

This Hall of Fame honor from the Quincy Chamber of Commerce is a testament to a lifetime of service and leadership. It recognizes not just a successful business owner, but a community figure who has consistently gone above and beyond to support and uplift others. Keohane Funeral Home is proud to celebrate this achievement and grateful to be part of a community that values compassion, connection, and service as deeply as Ed does.

KEOHANE IN THE COMMUNITY

To best serve our communities, we need to actively support them.

We are proud to sponsor these local organizations, among others:





“Keohane Funeral Home was amazing. I told Carolyn Delorey that when you are 67 years old, you’ve been to a number of funerals. She’s the best I’ve ever encountered in this industry. The Aftercare service is outstanding. I’m very impressed with how comprehensive your services are. I can’t think of a single thing any of you need to do to improve. Thank you for your help, Kathie.”

~ Paul H.

Pre-Planning at Keohane

Pre-planning allows you to make important decisions in a relaxed atmosphere, enabling you to control each aspect of funeral planning long before the actual need. Most importantly, it is a way you can make a very difficult time for your family a little bit easier.

Thinking about one’s funeral leaves most people feeling a little uneasy, but more adults are finding that preparing for the inevitable is a wise decision that offers great emotional and financial security. The process includes meeting with one of our funeral directors, discussing your needs and desires, providing background and biographical information, listing your family, selecting merchandise, and discussing payment options. In cases where someone has taken the time to plan ahead with Keohane, the family often mentions how that decision made the funeral process so much easier on them.

We have funeral directors that specialize in working with families interested in pre-planning. The members of our team are always available for questions or assistance. To get started, you can contact us directly or fill out our form.

**SECURE ONLINE
PRE-PLANNING
FORM**

www.keohane.com

