

# Kennedy Cremated in Duxbury

By PAULA MAXWELL

The bodies of John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife, Caroline, and sister-in-law, Lauren Bessette, were cremated at the Mayflower Cemetery crematorium in the wee hours of the morning last Thursday, away from the glare of cameras and in the presence of several close family members.

Escorting the bodies to Duxbury from Hyannis were Funeral Director Paul Sheehan from Doane, Beal & Ames in Hyannis and Kennedy family cousins said to include Max Kennedy, Douglas Kennedy, Mark Shriver, and distant cousin, Father Michael Kennedy, a visiting priest from Ireland.

so present during the cremation were Duxbury Cemetery apt. Joe Zoibro, crematory workers Gordon MacAuliffe and even Barboza, as well as local police officers Sgt. Bill Burgoyne

and patrolman Chris Johnson. The group was expected around 10 pm Wednesday night but arrived in Duxbury well after 11 pm with a state  
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police escort. Local police met them at Exit 10 off Route 3 and accompanied the group to the Mayflower crematorium. Several police cruisers then blocked the entrance to the cemetery and officers were stationed at points nearby to keep onlookers away. There were no reported incidents or disruptions.

Zoibro said his immediate thoughts after getting notification about the cremations was to represent the town in a professional manner, treat the situation as normally as possible with dignity and respect, and make the family members comfortable.

"There had to be a certain amount of secrecy. We did not want a media circus," said Zoibro. "If they showed up we were prepared to keep them at a distance."

Only two of the four cremation chambers were in operation because a minor chimney fire at the crematorium on June 4 caused \$2,500 worth of damage to the chimney's wooden shingled facade. Repair work is ongoing.

Zoibro said the entire cremation process normally takes about 21/2 hours before the deceased's remains can be placed in cremation containers. The group finally left with the remains at about 5 a.m.

Just a few hours later, around 9 am, close family members boarded the U.S.S. Briscoe in Woods Hole with the remains and headed to an ocean site off Martha's Vineyard. There the ashes of the three victims were committed to the open sea, a final resting place several miles off the coast near Gay Head in view of the shorefront estate of Kennedy's late mother, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and near where Kennedy's small plane plunged into the sea Friday night, July 16th.

The burial for the 35th president's son was reportedly carried out in keeping with his

expressed wishes.

Zoibro said he is seeing more and more Catholic cremation ceremonies. The practice has been permitted since 1963 when church law was revised. Prior to that it was a practice frowned upon by the Catholic church.

Zoibro said it is not that unusual to perform cremations on an overtime basis. "Sometimes we accommodate people for special religious reasons or often remains are shipped across country on deadline."

Officer Johnson said local police were first alerted by state police around 9:30 pm Wednesday. At 11pm state police notified them that the group was en route to Duxbury. Johnson met the contingent on motorcycle and escorted them to the cemetery. There, officers Tom Johnson, Brian LaRue, Tim Wigmore and Diane Garafolo were stationed to assist on patrol in the cemetery.

Funeral officials had earlier called to alert cemetery department assistant Trisha Wilsey, who notified Zoibro that the recovered bodies would be arriving sometime later that night.

Johnson said he had no comment on what transpired at the crematory as he and Burgoyne stayed with Kennedy family members. He

said, "It was sad. They did say they would be at that boat by 9 am and they were."

Zoibro said he tried to accommodate the group in any way possible with telephones and anything else they needed.

Earlier in the afternoon on Wednesday, the bodies of the three victims were recovered off Martha's Vineyard, 116 feet below the surface and 7 1/2 miles off shore near the crash site.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy and his sons, Patrick and Edward Jr., were aboard the USS Grasp to accompany the bodies to Woods Hole where they were transported to Barnstable County Hospital for autopsy before being taken to Duxbury.

Town Manager Rocco Longo and Police Chief Mark DeLuca were notified by town personnel of the cremation plans though neither attended.

Zoibro said that last year 2,400 cremations took place at the town crematory, the only municipal facility of its type in the state.

News media called cemetery officials after the fact attempting to find out details but all calls were referred to the Town Manager.

"I'm glad we were able to accommodate the family," said Zoibro "It was very sad."