

# Design

By Tanya Kenevich

# CEMETERY PORTFOLIO

## MAUSOLEUM/COLUMBARIUM COMBINATION

### The Best of Both Worlds

## LAKWOOD CEMETERY Minneapolis, Minn.

Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis, Minn., has been ahead of the mausoleum and columbarium curve since 1967. “Our first mausoleum was comprised of 3,024 crypt spaces and 2,418 niche spaces,” said Ronald A. Gjerde Jr., president of the Lakewood Cemetery Association.

However, Gjerde noticed a few years ago that inventory of niches in the building was nearing zero, and the cemetery had to consider building a new mausoleum. He turned to Carrier Mausoleums Construction and Eickhoff Columbaria to get the job done.

“With the increasing demand for cremation and cremation related spaces in a cemetery, we chose to build our new mausoleum with only 879 crypt spaces and 4,620 niche spaces – quite a departure from our product mix back in 1967,” he said. “Of course, the cremation rate in Minnesota at that time was probably only 2 to 3 percent ... it is now more than 50 percent.”

Gjerde believes that in order to attract cremation clients to your cemetery, specific options need to be offered.

He added, “It also helps if you can build something unique. If it is outside, a water feature helps. If it is inside, plenty of light helps because people love the light.”

If a cemetery does decide to offer a unique feature, make sure the project is done correctly. “Use the finest materials available because your clients will recognize the enduring quality of the granite, marble, onyx and bronze,” Gjerde said.

Gjerde believes that ceterierians need to adapt to the cremation client and continue to emphasize the importance and value of memorialization in a cemetery. “We need to repeat the message that once you have decided on cremation there is still one more decision to make, and that is where and how to be remembered,” he said.





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## THE WORK

**1| DESIGN AESTHETIC.** The challenge for Lakewood Cemetery was building a mausoleum/columbarium that would integrate seamlessly into the property's lush landscape.

**2| MATERIALS MATTER.** Ronald A. Gjerde Jr., president of the Lakewood Cemetery Association, said quality materials matter, which is why the crypt room features a honey onyx floor.

**3| FOCAL POINT.** The cemetery's free-form water feature was designed to be an integral part of the outdoor memorial pavilion, creating visual interest in the eastern quadrant of the cemetery property.

**4| LIGHT AND BRIGHT.** Recognizing that families are drawn to spaces with abundant natural light, the crypt room was purposely designed to include a skylight.

**5| REFLECTIVE SPACES.** The crypt room was designed to offer families a reflective space to remember loved ones. Natural light streams in through the stained-glass window, enveloping visitors who sit on the benches.

**6| MAKING A STATEMENT.** When it came time to build a new mausoleum/columbarium, Lakewood Cemetery was looking for a contemporary structure that would bring the wow factor.

**7| A WELCOME RETREAT.** Entry into the new building is through Lakewood Cemetery's beautifully landscaped garden.

*Photos courtesy of Lakewood Cemetery. To learn more about Lakewood Cemetery or this project, visit [www.lakewoodcemetery.com](http://www.lakewoodcemetery.com).*