

## Heil-Schuessler Funeral Homes



New Athens, IL Funeral Home Location



New Athens Conference Room



Marissa, IL Funeral Home Location



Reception Set up at Marissa Location

### Marissa Location

114 S Main Street  
Marissa, IL 62257  
(618) 295-2321

### New Athens Location

101 Jackson Street  
New Athens, IL 62264  
(618) 475-2151

What has been known as Heil-Schuessler Funeral Homes for over 25 years was the joining of two of the longest continuing businesses in Marissa and New Athens, Illinois.

The first funeral home in Marissa was established in 1891 by Henry Finger and was named the Finger Undertaking Company. The business became known as Finger and Son in 1924 when his son Frank joined the company. The Finger family operated the funeral home until 1975 when it was purchased by Randall Heil. The company then became known as Finger-Heil Funeral Home.

The history of the Hull Funeral Home begins in 1910 when it was founded by Harry Hull. His son Lee took over in the 1930's. The Hull family ran the funeral home until 1974 when it was purchased by Oscar Cuddy, changing the name to Cuddy-Hull Funeral Homes. In 1982 Steven Schuessler bought the company.

In 1988 Randall Heil and Steven Schuessler merged the two businesses and they both became known as Heil-Schuessler Funeral Homes serving both Marissa and New Athens.

In 2010 the funeral homes were bought by Randall's son, Vance Heil.

While we have enjoyed a long and dignified history and the many changes along the way, comforting and caring for the families who call upon us in their time of need has been our top priority for over a hundred years.

We are very proud of our past, but we are always looking toward the future and for better ways in which to serve our families.

### What do you consider to be your business's most significant accomplishments?

Maintaining a consistently high level of standards. Every call that we receive is a privilege to serve and we are only as good as our last call. We consider every call to be unique and strive to give our families not only comfort but a lasting legacy of their loved one. We work together as a team and everyone plays an important role in the communities that we serve.

### What is it about this profession that makes you get out of bed every day?

Like most of the men and women of this fine profession I have always had the internal desire to serve and have always felt that this was my calling. I look forward to the opportunity to guide our families during their time of loss and help them find a way to honor the one who has meant so much to them.

### What keeps you up at night?

In today's online and global economy where the largest dominate I wonder about the longevity of the independent funeral home. If the families that we serve no longer find value in what we are providing and are simply looking for a method of disposition. Consider a future where in the event of death a family goes online, fills out a data sheet, signs the release, enters credit card and in a week receives in the mail an urn and certified copies, never stepping foot inside a funeral home or seeing a director. This could be the next service provided by Amazon.

### What advice would you give to those just entering the profession today?

Continue to be adaptable. So many things have changed in the 18 years since I graduated mortuary school and I am beginning to see once strong firms beginning to fail for the first time in their history simply because they are not willing to adapt to the ever changing needs of our clients. Listen to the communities that you serve, they are telling you what they want, we as a profession need to hear them.

### Knowing what you know today, what advice would you give to your younger self?

Take care of your back and your knees. The five minutes it takes to get the casket lifts out of the closet now will save you the ten minutes that it will take you to get out of bed in 20 years.

### Where do you see the profession going in the next 5 years?

I see us moving into more of an event and hospitality industry. While one generation may choose a more traditional service for their parents, many have already decided that that is not what they would choose for themselves. There has been a noticeable shift in the last decade from providing funerals to now hosting gatherings and celebrations of life. Many times without the decedent present at all. In order for us to stay relevant we are going to have to offer our families more than a place to hold a funeral and give them a reason to use our facilities rather than a park, community center or banquet hall.

**If you had the power, what would you change about the profession? (not the business)**

I would like to see us **work together better as a profession**. I feel that when we start treating each other as colleagues and less as competitors that a united profession will be a much stronger one.  
*Vance Heil*