

# FEATURED FIRM

## Officer Funeral Home, P.C.



Founders William E. Officer, Jr. and Annette H. Officer



Marion E. Officer, Sr. and Myrtle B. Officer



Officer Funeral Home, December 1918



Officer Funeral Home, 1929



Funeral home undergoes an extensive remodel in 1967

Officer Funeral Home, P.C., is on the cusp of hitting the century mark—all thanks to a lot of hard work and a family-centered business philosophy. It all started 99 years ago with visionaries Annette Harris Officer and William E. Officer, Jr, who started the business in 1918 in East St. Louis, IL.

William and Annette's son, Marion Edward Officer, Sr. and his wife, Myrtle B Gilliam Officer, succeeded his parents as President and Vice-President of the firm in 1954. A dynamic duo, they elevated funeral service to a higher standard.

Their children, M. Bernadette, Carl E, and Marion E. Officer, Jr. became active members of the firm and officers in the corporations. Myrtle B. became CEO of the corporations in 1989 after the death of her husband. Myrtle B. continued the family tradition over the next fifteen years, introducing clientele to industry innovations such as memorial video tributes in 1989 and the launching of their website with online memorials in 1999. She was the first in her geographic region to offer custom casket interiors and custom register books.

Myrtle B.'s daughter, M. Bernadette Officer, became CEO and President. Bernadette earned a M.A. in Education from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and a degree in Mortuary Science from Worsham College. Myrtle's son, Carl E. Officer, was named Vice-President in 2004. Carl graduated from John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. He received a degree in Mortuary Science from Southern Illinois University. Representing the third generation, this sister and brother team are devoted to honoring the work of their grandparents by keeping the family tradition of providing the very best in funeral service.

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

*"View funeral service not just as a profession but as a calling! They must be knowledgeable and proficient but thoughtful and compassionate as well."* Carl E. and M. Bernadette Officer

Officer Funeral Home, P.C.—Metro East Chapel, located in East St. Louis, IL, was one of the first establishments in Southern Illinois designed and built as a funeral home in 1929. The home has been remodeled through the years to keep pace with their commitment to excellence. Fire destroyed the building in December 1986. Thankfully there were no casualties. The funeral home was rebuilt on the original site in 1988.

Knowing the importance of community involvement, Officer Funeral Home, P.C., proudly supports its community in many ways, by financially supporting church and school activities, civic, Masonic, Elks and sports organizations as well as sororities and fraternities and providing meeting space for organizations. Among many other things, they engage with the community and take advantage of an opportunity to educate the public.