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Career mortician buys her own funeral home in Ballston Lake

Kathleen Lowes Sanvidge purchased the Townley & Wheeler Funeral Home in Ballston Lake, NY



Pam Allen

Reporter-*Albany Business Review*



A funeral director with 23 years experience in the industry has purchased Townley & Wheeler Funeral Home in Ballston Lake, with plans to grow her business into surrounding communities.

[Kathleen Lowes Sanvidge](#) bought the funeral home from brothers [Harold Townley](#) and [Frank Townley](#). The deal closed June 27. Specifics were not released.

[Ballston Spa National Bank](#) and the Townleys are holding the mortgage on the property. Sanvidge plans to grow business beyond the 50 funerals that Townley & Wheeler perform a year, mostly in the neighboring communities of Ballston Spa, Burnt Hills and Charlton.

Her history as a funeral director with Gordon C. Emerick Funeral Home in Clifton Park is bringing interest from that town, and from other communities south of Ballston Lake, she says.

So far, Sanvidge has held seven funerals at Townley & Wheeler.

Sanvidge for years had dreamed of owning her own funeral home. When she sat next to [Harold Townley](#) in February during an industry meeting, she approached him about possibly buying Townley & Wheeler.

“It had been rumored that their place was for sale, and we talked about it. I love the community feel, and the charm and history here,” says Sanvidge, 40, who grew up in Clifton Park and graduated from Shenendehowa Central High School in 1990. She went on to earn an associates degree from [Hudson Valley Community College](#), did a year’s residency at Emerick Funeral Home and earned a funeral director’s license in 1993.

“I feel so honored and humbled that Howard has entrusted his hard-earned business to me. I walk through and think, pinch me is it real?” Sanvidge says.

Meanwhile, Sanvidge tells me she will wait six months before considering any major changes to the operations.