

Orokonui Ecosanctuary Remembrance Service

Welcome

Welcome to the Orokonui Ecosanctuary and in particular to the first Remembrance Service and Walk through the Ecosanctuary tonight.

I'm John Finlayson from Hope and Sons and we are proud of our continued support and association with the Ecosanctuary.

We are especially pleased to be able to help facilitate this Remembrance walk which it is hoped will be an annual experience.

We came here tonight to remember the importance of the past and reflect on the things that are significant in our lives.

The past is a place of reference, not a place of residence;
The past is a place of learning, not a place of living.

Hope and Sons has been a significant sponsor of the Orokonui Ecosanctuary since 2010.

We make an annual contribution to the Ecosanctuary, and to date we have donated over \$100,000. This contribution is acknowledged at the Ecosanctuary with the placement of a bench seat inset with a plaque in memory of all those families we have cared for each year. Tonight, you will be able to walk passed 4 of those seats, and this will an opportunity to maybe sit for a moment - reflect, remember and appreciate this unique night-time experience at the Ecosanctuary.

Remembrance Time

The idea of the Remembrance Service and Walk is to provide an opportunity for people to come together, to reconnect in these beautiful surroundings and to reflect.

Tonight, is an opportunity to reflect on where the Ecosanctuary has come from, acknowledge the legacy left by the pioneers of this Ecosanctuary and to look forward. Chris Baillie General Manager of the Ecosanctuary will talk more on that shortly.

At Hope and Sons what we do each day with the families we care for, is to encourage and enable them to take the time to reconnect with family and friends, remember and reflect on a life that has been significant to them.

This evening half of us here are Hope and Sons staff and family and it reflects the personal connection we feel towards the Ecosanctuary. Also a number of us have in recent times experienced the loss of a close family member and so for us tonight is the opportunity to also think of ourselves and remember and reflect on those special people no longer with us.

I would now like to introduce Michael Hope our Managing Director to reflect on our association with the Ecosanctuary and the importance of taking time to remember and reconnect with people and places. – Michael.

[Michael to speak]

For the Orokonui Ecosanctuary it has been quite a journey to get to the point now where we are able to stand in this glorious building on the door-step of an Ecosanctuary of significance.

Many people have contributed to make this possible and I would like to ask Chris Baillie, General Manager of the Ecosanctuary to add her reflections. - Chris

[Chris to speak]

We have come together tonight to remember and reflect on the importance of people and place.

It is obvious that this place has different meanings and importance to each individual. And we have acknowledged people significant to the Ecosanctuary.

We are shortly going to have a wander through the ecosanctuary, and I thank you for taking the time to be here. As we walk along the tracks we will not only take with us the words and thoughts that have been shared and spoken this evening, but you will also take with you the many memories of those close to you that have been important in your life.

Explain walk

The walk will be a loop walk going passed some feeding stations and back passed 4 of the Hope and Sons and Dignity Funeral Services Memorial seats. If you wish you can return to the main building from the feeding stations, not doing the loop walk.

There will be Ecosanctuary and Hopes staff guiding at front and back of walkers.

We will all go a one group assembling down at the entrance gate accessed down the ramp off the deck.

We do have some lanterns that will be carried by our staff and glow-sticks to take with you which may be useful as the night falls.

You are very welcome to stay in building or sit out on the deck

After the walk, you are welcome to stay on for a cup of tea.

Closing

So, in closing this Remembrance service I would like to offer these thoughts:

As I said at the beginning –

We came here tonight to remember the importance of the past and reflect on the things that are significant in our lives.

People will walk in and walk out of your life, but the ones whose footsteps make a long-lasting impression are the ones you should never allow to walk out.

Life is about accepting the challenges along the way, choosing to keep moving forward, and savouring the journey.

May the walk through these beautiful and natural surroundings remind you of the things that are important in life - Appreciate, be kind, be gentle.

Let's now go and enjoy the Ecosanctuary.

Thank you.

Walk in Ecosanctuary

Bring people back to Cafeteria Area

Closing words

Refreshments