



POST PO Box 18 DICKSON ACT 2602
OFFICE 65 Sandford Street, MITCHELL ACT 2911
PHONE 02 6241 3177 | FAX 02 6241 7649
EMAIL info@norwoodpark.com.au
ABN 66 008 439 441
WEBSITE www.norwoodpark.com.au

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PRESS RELEASE - UNFOUND ASHES

In 1992, 85 memorials were relocated to a newly constructed Children's Court Wall at the Norwood Park Crematoria in Canberra. Norwood Park wrote to affected families at the time.

One of the memorials related to a deceased child who was cremated in 1978. In 2016, following a request by a family member, Norwood Park's records were unable to establish the location of the ashes relating to that child.

Following media reports regarding the deceased child's unfound ashes in late 2018, two other families came forward seeking to confirm the location of their loved one's ashes. The families have been notified of the whereabouts of those ashes.

Stephen Beer, who has been the Managing Director of Norwood Park since 2011, said "It is with great regret that any undue stress has been caused by the circumstances surrounding the unfound ashes of the deceased child who was cremated in 1978. Our dedicated staff work tirelessly to provide an essential service to our community with dignity and respect, and we feel personally devastated that any stress has been caused to the affected family. We apologise wholeheartedly to the affected family that our records have been unable to establish the location of the deceased child's ashes."

Since its establishment in 1966, the Norwood Park Crematorium has performed over 50,000 cremations and has taken great pride in creating and maintaining memorial gardens in a tranquil and safe setting for the local community to gather, memorialise and remember deceased loved ones.

Mr Beer added "We regard our reputation as impeccable, and often receive compliments about our landscaped grounds which sit elevated above Canberra and which are one of Australia's most established memorial parks. Norwood Park is committed to the community and plans to invest significantly to expand and modernise our chapel in Canberra, with works expected to commence during the next 12 months".

Norwood Park confirms it will continue to work co-operatively with Transport Canberra and City Services ('TCCS'), in implementing the recommendations contained in a report commissioned by the TCCS following the media reports in 2018.

Out of respect for the deceased child, whose ashes remain unfound, and his family, Norwood Park intends to make no further comment on this matter.

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