



## THORAK REGIONAL CEMETERY, DARWIN

SHOWING THE WAY WITH THE FIRST EICKHOF COLUMBARIA IN AUSTRALIA

Encouraging people to inter cremated remains in a cemetery continues to present a challenge in the industry. The Thorak Regional Cemetery has incorporated an innovative style of Columbaria into its cemetery to provide the Darwin community with an attractive and new alternative for the interment of cremated remains. They have purchased one of the Eickhof Columbaria which has a very different presentation to the various niche wall designs currently used by Cemeteries in Australia.

Thorak Regional Cemetery, a half hour drive from Darwin, managed by Litchfield Council is the only active cemetery in the Greater Darwin area. Built on the old Berrimah Experimental Farm, it was opened in 1988 and named after Klaus Thorak, a distinguished veterinarian who cared for the farm animals.

The columbaria is situated on the central access way of "The Courtyard of Tranquility, an enclosed landscaped garden designed specifically for the interment of cremated remains.. The Manager of Thorak Cemetery, Glen Minaker from Vancouver, Canada, knew the design features of the Eickhof Columbaria from previous installations and testimonials of other North American cemeterians.

The features of the Eickhof Columbaria include:-

- The concealed fasteners make the process of opening and closing each niche very simple, with only one set screw used to both tighten and loosen allowing for easy removal of the shutter.
- Flexibility of design and size meant that Glen was able to choose an interesting shape (in this case octagonal) thus adding to the aesthetics and appeal of the courtyard garden.

Other advantages flowing from this flexibility meant that:-

- The niche size can be ordered to hold either a single urn or two urns (companion niches) offering families a choice. With the larger double niches, the larger shutter allows the names and dates of two individuals.
- The generous interior space will allow the urns of all sizes and shapes, either utility or decorative, to stand upright within each niche.

- With this ample interior space, families will find comfort knowing 100% of the cremated remains will remain in one urn.
- With a good choice of granite colours, Glen chose the "American Rose" granite as it matched the deep red earth tones of the Northern Territory. The concrete base was colour toned to match.
- Gold leaf engraving was selected to enhance visibility, while at the same time adding a "richness" to the columbaria.
- The exterior granite shutters along with the interior aluminum plates provide an extra layer of weather proofing and protection of the cherished contents.

Austeng arranged transport and installed the unit.

Plans are in place to match this Eickhof octagonal columbaria along with a water feature along the central axis of The Courtyard of Tranquility. Landscaping will include carefully chosen trees providing shade along with seating for quiet contemplation and reflection.

The columbaria has a total of 106 niches. Of these, 28 are companion (double) and 78 single, a portion of these singles niches are large enough for two smaller urns.

Costs per niche vary from \$1225.00-\$2,125.00 depending on size and position of the niche. These price points will allow a significant return on investment which is even more attractive given the maintenance free design of the columbaria. Glen comments "I am very pleased with the columbaria and the interest it has received from the community. Based on recent sales, it's proving to be a popular choice for those who wish to inter the families cremated remains above the ground, safely secured in an attractive, rock solid enclosure. A family recently bought a single niche at-need, then purchased 7 others pre-need. A testament that people are prepared to pay for a premium, aesthetically pleasing product.

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact.

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