

Aussie undertakers turn funeral business on its head... by offering to bury people upright

Daily Mail - Australia

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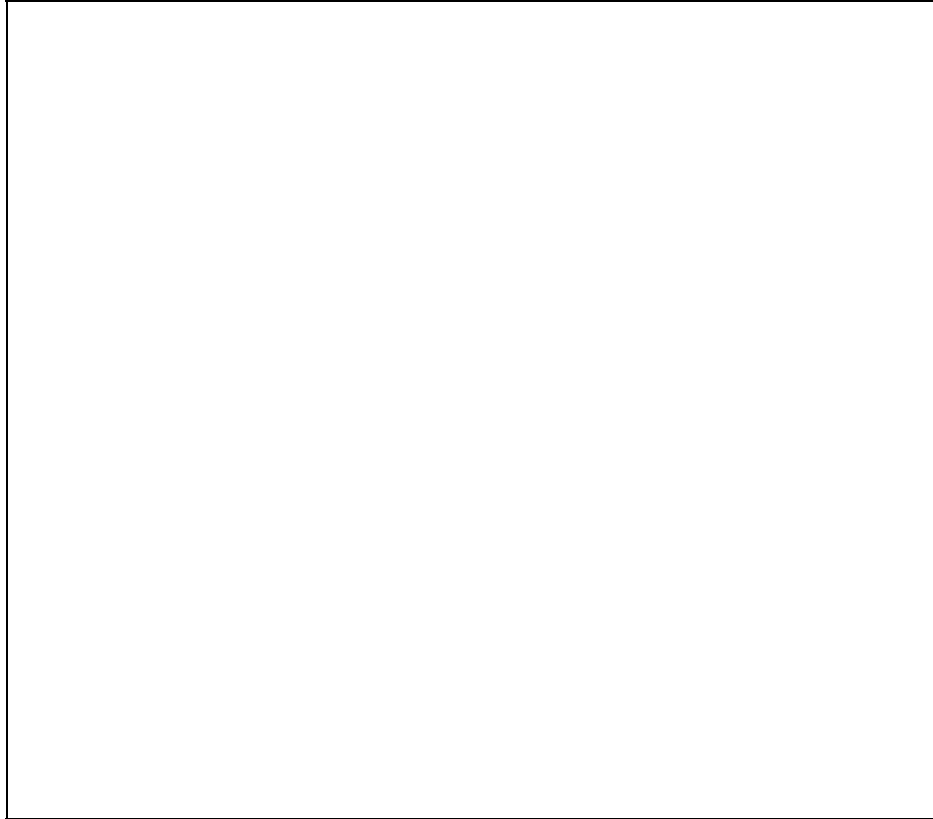
A new company is turning the funeral business on its head and will bury people vertically.

The unique scheme, about to be launched in Melbourne, Australia, is being offered as a simple, natural and economical approach to burial.

The deceased are placed in biodegradable bag and then lowered feet first into a cylindrical hole just over two feet wide and about 10 feet deep.

Company Upright Burials claims it is a world first and the method produces far less carbon dioxide than a regular burial.

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How it works: The deceased are placed in biodegradable bag and then lowered feet first into a cylindrical hole about just over 2ft wide and about 10ft deep

Tony Dupleix, managing director, said: 'When people have a traditional burial there is the process of manufacturing a coffin which is often made out of wood or a man-made fibre and there is regularly a plastic tray inside the coffin too.'

'Our burials involve far less energy intensive practices and using a biodegradable bag ensures that a natural product is going into the ground.'

And those not concerned about being 'laid to rest' will save space with many more vertical burials being able to take place in any field.

The company has been granted permission to carry out the bizarre burials at a four hectare site two hours west of Melbourne, in Victoria, Australia.

It hopes to bury between 30,000 and 40,000 people in the field.

And when the land is full, it will be transferred back to pasture.

Mr Dupleix said: 'It's a beautiful setting at the base of Mount Elephant.

'For any person wanting a peaceful, natural setting as their final resting place, this site is a superb location.

'And for every body we put in the ground, we will also be planting a tree on the mountain to partially offset the carbon footprint in the collection, storage and delivery of the body to the cemetery.'

And rather than a headstone above each body, the company will simply inscribe the names of those buried on a memorial wall.

Relatives will however be given the exact location of their loved one.

The upright burials are set to cost £1,500 - the average Australian funeral costs almost £4,000.

There have already been more than 100 enquiries from people expressing an interest in a vertical burial, however none have yet take place.

But Mr Dupleix believes principle rather than price is the main reason for interest in vertical plots.

He said: 'Most people are attracted by the simplicity of the project and the concept of being far more in touch with nature.'

Mr Dupleix said the idea was conceived during a dinner table conversation nearly 10 years ago.

He has been working every day on the concept ever since and the company opened for business today.

He said: 'There are no candles, music, grades of coffin, entourages, or other burial paraphernalia to decide on.

'We know upright burials will not be for everyone, but we so offer something new, that is simple and respectful and eco-friendly.'

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