



Some distance from the Hindon cemetery on the main road into Hindon is a memorial to Murdoch Graham and his family who were settlers in Hindon in 1897.

The memorial has now been joined by the lone grave of Don Graham, aged 72, who was buried on his Ardachy Station property at Hindon, this week in a ceremony attended by more than 120 family

members and friends.

A bagpiper played as Mr Graham was interred in the place he had chosen on the property, among rolling hills and wind-swept tussock. The grave site looks over Ardachy Station towards the Taieri River.

"It's a lovely spot in the hills overlooking the valley," said Robin Gamble, who delivered the eulogy at the funeral. Mr Gamble said Mr Graham was passionate about the area in which he lived, and always wanted to be buried there.

Obtaining permission for the burial was a long legal process, including gathering affidavits and securing consents. Funeral director Robert Campbell of Campbell and Sons, Mosgiel quoted in 2006 that it was the first time in 40 years he had been involved in a home burial.

Permission for such a burial is needed through the Burial in a Special Place Section of The Burials and Cremation Act 1964. The law stipulates that people must be buried communally if they live within 32 kilometres of a cemetery. But the Act allows for home burial if there are extreme or exceptional circumstances making the burial of that body in that place particularly appropriate.

However the process is very difficult and involved. The undertaker had to get ten affidavits from people to support the request, as well as regional council consents. The process was started four years before Don Graham even died.

Don Graham's family were granted permission by the Ministry of Health four years ago in 2002, because Don Graham and his forebears had farmed the land for 105 years and had a close association with the property. Don Graham lived all his life in the area, taking over Ardachy Station from his father-in-law in 1956.

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Mr Gamble said Mr Graham was passionate about the area in which he lived, and always wanted to be buried there.

Don Graham enjoyed a good laugh and will be well remembered for the April Fool's joke in 1991 when he appeared on the front page of the *Otago Daily Times* newspaper with a "shabbit", a creature he claimed to have bred from a merino sheep and a rabbit.

Prepared by the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand (www.cemeteries.org.nz) from information in the Dunedin Family History Group Newsletter, February 2010, which was reported in The New Zealand Herald 1 November 2006, see http://www.nzherald.co.nz/otago-regional-council/news/article.cfm?o_id=600651&objectid=10408722&pnum=1.

Burial in special place

- Notwithstanding anything in this Act, a body may be buried in any place, even though that place was not used for burials before the date of the commencement of this Act, if the Minister first certifies in writing that he is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which make the burial of that body in that place particularly appropriate and if, where the proposed place of burial is within a city or part of the district of a territorial authority which was formerly a city or borough or part of a city or borough, the sanction of the mayor, or 2 members of the governing body of the territorial authority is obtained.