

Press Release

May 23 2014

Sir Edmund Hillary's house journey continues

After four years of hard work and fundraising Sir Edmund Hillary's previous home will be opened as a leadership centre on Thursday 29 May, the 61st anniversary of the ascent of Mount Everest. The event will also coincide with the school celebrating its first decade.

The journey began in May 2010 when the house was moved from its site in Remuera to its new position at the Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate in Otara, with support from the Hillary family. The house, built by Sir Edmund and Lady Louise Hillary in 1956, has been rebuilt under the guidance and drive of Gail Thomson (previous commissioner at the Collegiate), whose vision was for the home to become a leadership centre at the school which bears his name.

When the house was re-sited on a new concrete pad in 2011, Gail said, "Sir Ed's former home will be a wonderful place where students from this community, and in time from around New Zealand, will feel strongly stimulated to achieve and reach their goals and dreams; as he did – planning many of his trips and adventures from the study here. We feel so privileged to have this very significant symbol of New Zealand history but there is a huge task to raise the rest of the funding needed – however, he will continue to provide the motivation needed to achieve this on behalf of young people in New Zealand".

This fundraising, driven by a newly formed trust, has included selling bricks from the house with support from Rotary; help from Lions and businesses with materials and supplies; and sponsorship and funds from trusts, companies and the previous Manukau City Council and the government.

Further fundraising is now underway so a coordinator can be appointed and programmes rolled out from the centre. This may include programmes already running in the community which require a base for operations.

Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate has three schools, a primary, middle and senior school, and an early childhood centre on its campus.

(Ends)

Gail Thomson
Trust Chair