



Memorialising your pet

Memorialising your pet can be a very helpful and positive thing to do by providing something to focus your grief onto thereby helping you to cope, by acting as a source of comfort, and by providing a reassuring lasting memory. There are a number of different ways to memorialise your pet.

- a. Create a free online memorial in the Ralph site – you can include text, photos and videos of your pet.
- b. Get your favourite photo enlarged and framed or create a collage or photo album. Alternatively you can get a portrait painted from your favourite photo or have the photo converted onto canvas.
- c. If your pet has been cremated, you can keep his/her urn or casket in an appropriate place in the home (e.g. above the fireplace, on a bookshelf), perhaps along with a photo or other memento. Be careful not to turn the site into a shrine though as this can be unhelpful to bereavement and recovery.
- d. Plant a bush, small tree or flower bed or create a rockery, perhaps in your pet's favourite outdoor spot; if planting something it is sensible to plant more than one as if you only plant one it may happen not to survive which can cause further distress. Another lovely idea is to spread some 'forget-me-not' seeds or scatter seeds, or embed some cards impregnated with seeds.

You can also have a plaque with your friend's name and details fitted onto a garden bench or seat where you can sit out, relax and remember them fondly.

- e. Bury your pet's body or an urn/casket containing his/her ashes in the garden and mark the site with some form of headstone, if not a proper one then a plant or flower bed. The body or casket can be wrapped in the pet's favourite blanket for example.
- f. Make a scrapbook with photos, pictures drawn by children, sympathy cards or small mementos (e.g. a collar name tag). You can also include your personal memories of your pet, especially about milestones or funny incidents.

g. Make a charitable donation in honour of your pet – this could for example be to a veterinary organisation researching a cure or improved treatment for the disease from which your pet died, or alternatively to an animal welfare organisation.

h. Have a lovely soft cushion made with your pet's name on it which you can cuddle when relaxing. Or you can have a blanket made with your pet's name on it which you can wrap yourself in when cold and feel a sense of being close to your departed friend. These are comforting ways to memorialise your friend.

i. You can use your pet's name in your email address or for example as your username for sites that require registration. These are some more modern ways of memorialising your friend.

You will find links to selected makers of pet memorabilia on the Ralph site as well.