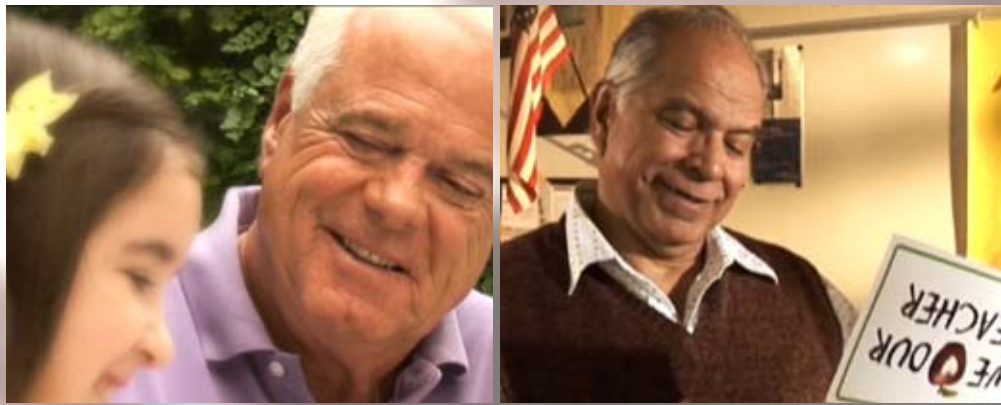




LEGACY GUIDE



*Making A Difference
Telling Your Story*



Preserving and honoring legacies is at the heart of Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary. We are the largest memorial park in North America, offering a wide selection of magnificent memorial properties (many with positive feng shui), allowing a family to select the property most suited to each individual. Whatever property you choose, it will always be cared for and maintained for the benefit of future generations. Your legacy deserves a place as beautiful as Rose Hills.



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It's Priceless. It's Irreplaceable. And You Already Own it.

Human nature. It's what drives us to love, to achieve, to dream, to create—and to want to be remembered for it. It's only natural to want future generations to know you were here, and that you made a difference in the world. Simply put, that's a legacy.

The legacy of Mozart is the richness of his music and the pleasure it brings and will continue to bring to the world. Frank Lloyd Wright left a legacy of timelessly beautiful architecture. Walt Disney's legacy is wide-eyed children experiencing a world of fantasy—and grownups reliving childhood memories.

While not every legacy has such widespread impact, all legacies are important. Each is as personal and unique as its creator. Everyone has a priceless gift to leave behind, whether it's having saved a life, donated library books, supported a charity, or raised happy, successful children.

Whether your legacy is as grand as building a museum wing honoring your family name, or as intimate as passing down the story of your life experiences, what matters most is that you let future generations know that you made your mark in the world—and that by doing so, you're inspiring them to do the same.





Legacies Come in All Shapes and Sizes

Certainly, many artists, writers, scientists, educators and entrepreneurs assure their legacy of contribution through their work. However, a positive and life-affirming legacy can take many other forms as well.

People wishing to offer future generations a better quality of life (and are able to do so) might fund the construction of a hospital wing, a campus building or homeless shelter. Likewise, helping to create a municipal park, playground or garden can provide a place of beauty and happiness for many to enjoy.

Others extend their gifts to the future by contributing money, property or simply their time to a favorite cause. This can include charitable organizations, places of worship and academic institutions.

If you enjoy the fine arts, for example, creating an endowment to fund art and music programs for schools in your local district would be meaningful now and well into the future. If you're an animal lover, you might want to consider supporting the local rescue shelter or zoo. The donation of your time or dollars can make a life-long difference.



Many people choose to give the gift of life itself through organ, tissue or whole body donations. You can simply fill out an organ donor card or place a donor sticker on your driver's license. Or you can register with organizations such as www.onelegacy.org, assuring that your life-giving donation is lovingly passed along. Alternately, leaving your body for medical research can help doctors and scientists find cures for diseases and train aspiring physicians and surgeons.

But remember, your children and their children are also your legacy. The heritage, values and traditions that you choose to pass along to them are just as significant in leaving your mark in the world.



Your Life is Your Legacy: Telling Your Life Story

Truly, one of the greatest gifts you can pass along to your children's children is the story of who you are. Imagine, for a moment, if you had the chance to get to know your great, great grandparents through their own words. Sharing your life story with generations to come allows



the pages that follow, we offer a variety of ways to tell your life story and pass it along to those who will follow in your footsteps. There is no right or wrong way to do this. There is no "best method." Whether you're comfortable around technology or just a pen and paper, you have a story to tell. With just a little thought and preparation, your life story can become your legacy. So let's get started.

First, a Little Preparation

Only you can tell your story in your own words, and you alone should decide how to tell it. You can write it out longhand or type it into a computer, record a video or audio biography, or create a personal website. While each method has its advantages, all take the same basic preparation.

them to know you as a real, breathing part of themselves. You are their roots and not just faded photo images or a hastily placed obituary.

Your life story lets them meet the people you love, visualize the places you've been, experience the memories you cherished, and appreciate the difference you've made. In

First, though, we suggest you build a family tree. It gives you a chance to revisit your own roots. Your tree can go back as far as you choose and contain as many or as few branches as you'd like, with as much or as little detail as you elect. Fill in what



you already know and don't worry about completing it all at once; you can add new information as it becomes available. Other family members along with family history websites such as ancestry.com and myheritage.com are all good places to start your research.

Talk with older family members, friends and anyone else who can provide information about events that took place when you were young. Not only can their contributions make your story more vivid, but might also trigger important memories you've forgotten. Find and look through your family's photo albums, letters, awards, souvenirs and other memorabilia, and make note of which ones impacted your life—describe what they meant to you at the time and the feelings they evoke now.

It's a good idea to always have a notepad and pen (or a personal voice recorder) at hand. You never know when or where you'll recall something you want to include, and you'll want to note it while the thought is fresh.

Putting Words to Paper... or Computer Screen

Putting your story in writing is simple and convenient. You can do your writing whenever and wherever you like and make changes easily. Don't let the thought of writing your story overwhelm you. Take it a page at a time, and always keep in mind that this is your story. You don't have to meet any expectations or timetable other than your own.

A good starting point is to draft a brief outline of significant stages. Include in your outline the names of the people and events you remember most vividly. Most people wind up writing a one- or two-page outline,



Tip: *It's sometimes easier to tell your story if you have another person interview you. You can provide the interviewer an outline of topics, or a timeline of your life. Then, you just have to speak "off the cuff" when asked about your growing up or what your first kiss was like.*



but don't feel restricted, especially if you have a long and eventful life to recount.

Remember, having an outline makes it easier to keep your story in chronological order and to organize your thoughts.

Lights! Camera! Legacy!

Thanks to readily available (and increasingly affordable) technology, more and more people are creating



videos to tell their life story. As the most personal and intimate way of sharing your story, your video—complete with your voice, gestures and expressions—will let future generations connect with you, the human being. If the video is digital, you can include it on a website, or send it to your family on DVDs.

It is easy to produce your own videos with the help of friends or family. With a simple webcam, it's quite easy to do it

yourself! Keep in mind that it doesn't have to be done all at once, or even in sequence. Take it one step at a time and remember that you can always edit later on.

If you want the more professional touch, there are a number of tribute and legacy video production companies who can create your video history “turn-key.” To find a company in your area, you can perform a simple web search with terms such as: “Tribute Video,” “Video Biography,” or “Legacy Video” followed by the name of your city. Many wedding video companies also create legacy videos.

Your video can contain as much or as little as you wish, from a simple collection of family photos or home movies to a full-on production with narration, special effects and a soundtrack. You might want to include interviews with family, friends, colleagues and/or yourself. Naturally, a lot depends on your audience. Is your video geared toward adults, children and grandchildren, or the general public? Do you want the tone to be funny, reflective, opinionated or just entertaining?

After all, you're the director!



Testing One, Two, Three.

If you're not comfortable in front of a camera, and you'd rather not write, then why not make an audio recording of your story? You can do it in the privacy of your room and all you really need is an inexpensive audio recorder with a built-in microphone. (If you record using a computer, a free software program like Audacity can help you make a more professional-sounding recording.) What's more, your recording can serve as dictation or narration for use in other media.

Making an audio recording is a straightforward process: You prepare an outline or a script, then speak it into a microphone. That's pretty much all there is to it. By the way, don't feel obligated to record it all at once, especially if talking about a highly emotional memory makes it hard to continue. That's why there's a pause button. Just wait until you feel ready to continue.

Choose a quiet place to record. Rooms with carpeting and drapes will help minimize unwanted noise and echo. Try not to record next to a kitchen or bathroom, or other noisy environment. Also, keep barking dogs, chirping parakeets and noisy neighbors out of earshot during recording.

Again, you might want to consider having a friend or family member interview you if that makes it easier.

Your Digital Life.

In the age of Facebook, Myspace, Flickr and other social sharing websites, digitizing one's life experiences is now a simple matter of point-and-click. In addition to these, there are new websites popping up that are designed specifically for telling one's legacy life story. Of course, you can also create your own website or blog with very little expertise or equipment other than a basic computer and perhaps a scanner for your photos.





If you decide to bring your life to the web, here are some points to keep in mind:

- Your privacy is important; think about who you will want to visit your site, and who you don't.
- To tell your story, it is best to work with a site that allows you to create content and present it in a chronological order, rather than a random selection of posts and photos in an album.
- The quality of the site (or your pages on the site) should reflect your personality. If you're a quiet and reserved sort, splashy,

bold graphics framing your story might not be right for you.

- Use the web to its fullest advantage. Post stories, photos, videos, music and documents that create a full picture of your life. The more you add now, the more you express about yourself to others down the road.

- Consider how the site will be maintained into the future.* This is, unfortunately, the one downside of the web: hosts and sites come and go. How will you assure that the content will be there 20 years from now? 100 years from now? You might also want to create a copy of the site contents on a DVD or two to be handed to family members to preserve.

**Don't forget to arrange payment of any annual renewal fee to keep your site online, if that's an option.*

Questions to Guide You

As you begin to prepare your life story, regardless in what format it will be told, you should think about both the big events and little details that describe your experiences. Don't think "nobody wants to know that." The more you express about yourself, your experiences and your feelings, and the more colorful the picture you paint of the times, the more "alive" as a person you will be to others in the future.





To help you move forward, we've prepared questions that may stimulate your thinking, trigger some old memories, and perhaps provide some perspective. They are just a starting point. Also, feel free to let someone else use these questions and interview you, so you can simply answer the questions spontaneously.

About Beginnings and Childhood

- When and where were you born? What stories did your family tell you about the day you were born? What, if any, major news events happened that day?
- Are you named for someone? Does your name have other significance? Growing up, did you have a nickname? What was it?
- What was your first memory? Who was the first person you remember?
- Where did you live and what was your home like? Who lived there with you?
- What were your parents like?
- Talk about your siblings. What are/were their names and what were they like to grow up with?

- What schools did you attend? Who were your favorite teachers? Which subjects did you like most? Which did you like least?
- Was your family religious? Did you attend worship services?
- If you had pets, what kind were they? What were their names? Do you have any pet stories?
- Who were your best friends then? How did you meet them? Did you stay friends with them?





About Adolescence

- As you entered adolescence, what physical and emotional changes can you recall?
- What were your hobbies, interests and activities at the time? Did you receive special recognition in sports, academics or other activities?
- What were your favorite movies, books and radio/TV programs at the time? Your favorite foods?
- What were your favorite songs?
- What about growing up did you look forward to most? What concerned you most?
- Who were your close friends? What did you do for fun? Did you get into mischief?
- What schools did you attend, including college? What was your college major?
- What were your goals and aspirations? What careers interested you?
- Who was your first date? Where did you go and what did you do?
- Did any major news events happen during this time? Do you remember how they affected you and your family?
- Did you have any jobs?





Your Young Adulthood

- What was your first “real” job?
- When did you move out of your family’s home? Where did you move? Did you have roommates? How much was your rent?
- Were you socially active? Who were your close friends? What did you do for fun?
- When was the first time you really felt like an adult? Why?
- Describe your military service, if any. Did any family members or friends go to war?
- What were your proudest moments during this time? The most disappointing?

If You Have Been Married. If You Have Had Children.

- What was the name/maiden name of your future spouse? How did you meet? What attracted you to each other?
- How long was your courtship? How did you propose (or were proposed to)?
- How old were you and your spouse when you married?
- What kind of ceremony did you have? Where was it? Who was there? Who were the members of your wedding party?
- Where was your honeymoon?





- Where did you first live as a married couple? Did either or both of you work outside the home, and where?
- Describe the adjustment from single to married life.
- If you wanted children, when did you decide to have them?
- Describe your adjustment to first-time parenthood.
- How many children did you ultimately have? What were/are their names and when and where was each born?
- What did you find most surprising about being a parent? How did you react?

Later Adulthood - In your 30's, 40's & 50's

- How did you define success at this time of your life? What goals did you set, and what deadline, if any, did you set for achieving them? If you didn't achieve them, what do you think held you back?
- How did your relationship with your children change? How did you feel as they grew older and perhaps started their own families?
- Were there memorable vacation trips? Where, why, and with whom did you travel? What did you see? What do you remember most clearly about each trip? Do you have favorite vacation or travel stories to share?
- How was it to realize you were no longer a kid? Did getting older or aging concern you?
- How did you feel about being called "Sir" or "Ma'am"?
- What were the most difficult decisions you made during this time?
- What were the worst times? The best times?





- Did you find yourself becoming more concerned about physical or health issues?
- Describe your spousal relationship. Were you married? Divorced? Widowed?

Growing Older - Life as a Senior

- What one thing first made you feel like a senior citizen? How did you feel the first time you used a senior discount?
- Describe changes in your appearance and health that took place during this time, and how and when you began noticing them. What was your reaction?
- What, if anything, began to limit your normal activity and how? What were your feelings about it?
- What aspects of your former life did you have to give up?
- Did the passing of family members and friends make you consider your own mortality? Recall your sense of loss and grief as you lost them, and how you coped with loss.
- What brings you the most enjoyment at this stage of life? What do you like least?

- How have your religious values changed?
- What would you still like to do. Where would you still like to go?

Reflecting Back

- Looking back, what do you wish you had done, or done differently?
- How have your values changed over the years?
- The world has changed dramatically during your lifetime. Which inventions and technology impacted your life, and how?
- What lessons would you like to share with a new or younger generation?
- What do you hope the future will be like? What do you fear the future will be like?
- How would you like to be remembered many years into the future?
- How do you think you have made a difference on others?
- How would you sum up your attitude on life?
- What did you forget to mention about any part of your life earlier?

A Legacy of Beauty in the Southland

More people trust their legacies to Rose Hills than any other memorial park in the world. In fact, with a history that dates back to 1914, and property encompassing over 1,400 acres, Rose Hills is the single largest memorial park in North America.

Today, Rose Hills Memorial Park & Mortuaries provide comprehensive memorial care to Los Angeles County and Orange County families. Our team can help you with cemetery property, funeral planning, funeral receptions or funeral flowers whether you're preplanning final arrangements or have experienced a loss.



Positive feng shui can be found throughout our memorial park, which includes SkyRose Chapel, the Pageant of Roses Garden, and our newest property overlooking the majestic Sycamore Lake, Mission Hills, reflecting the richness of California's early days.

We have expertise in the funeral and burial traditions of many cultures, and our team is proud to offer assistance in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean and Vietnamese.

Rose Hills is a proud member of the Dignity Memorial® network of funeral, cremation and cemetery service providers – your assurance of quality, value, caring service and exceptional customer satisfaction.

For more information about memorial property or funeral arrangements at Rose Hills, call (800) 328-PLAN, or find Rose Hills online at www.RoseHills.com.



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