

Consider what your legacy will be

legal

By MELISA SLOAN

LIFE IS BUSY, and as we go through each day multitasking to achieve all that is packed into our daily schedule, we often don't take the time to reflect on our legacy.

It's too big to ponder... it's a question for another day.

As an estate planning and probate lawyer, legacy is something that I am immersed in often.

I am in the privileged position that my job allows me to work with people in putting a legacy in place for their loved ones by assisting them with putting their will and estate planning in place.

The other side of the coin is that I also assist the loved ones left behind.

I have discovered that those left behind love legacies that their departed loved one has left behind, no matter how small or insignificant they may be.

It's often not until someone has gone that we realise there is so much we didn't know about them.

We all have so much within ourselves that we can leave behind for future generations to cherish.

We all have stories to share, and often, we may be the sole or one of the few custodians of those stories.

Here are some lovely ways to capture cherished memories and information for loved ones and leave a legacy.

Create a video or audiobook

Creating a video or audiobook allows you to share your story, expanding your life journey.

Those left behind can then watch or

listen to it whenever they are inclined, and it's also a lovely way for future generations to learn more about their ancestors.

It is something you can do yourself, or there are a number of companies that offer this service if you need to be more tech-savvy or want something a little more professional.

A quick Google search or recommendations from family and friends should point you in the direction of some reputable service providers.

Compile your own recipe book

If you are good in the kitchen and have recipes that your family and loved ones like, why not create your own special recipe book that can be handed down for generations?

There is something special about making a Christmas pudding or a special dish using a recipe belonging to a grandparent; it allows us to feel connected to them and remember the special meals and times we shared with them.

Your autobiography

Put your life story on paper.

If the task appears overwhelming, have someone sit with you and transcribe your story for you.

Not only is it a beautiful gift to leave behind, but it is also a lovely time for you to reflect as you look back over the different journeys that your life has taken you on, the big moments that have occurred and the experiences you have encountered.

Arrange an award or scholarship in your name

If there is a cause that you are passionate about and would like to

Photo: ALEXANDER DUMMER



assist when you are no longer here, why not consider putting in place an award or scholarship in your name?

That way, your chosen charity or organisation will continue to benefit, and your legacy will live on.

This could be something as simple as having an award named after you at a sporting club where you have had a long affiliation.

Alternatively, provide financial assistance for a worthy recipient through a scholarship for a cause that is important to you.

Many lives have been significantly

impacted in a positive way by receiving awards and scholarships.

Gift a plant

Arrange for a plant that is important to you to be gifted to those who attend your celebration of life or funeral.

This leaves them with a long-lasting gift by which they can remember you, as well as being something that enhances the recipient's environment.

You can make provision in your Will or private papers for this wish to be carried out.

As you can see, there are many

simple, meaningful ways to leave a legacy.

It is something for those left behind to remember you by when you are no longer here and can be a beautiful gift that can live on for perpetuity.

So, what will your legacy be?

Take some time to reflect on this question and put your legacy in place today.

Melisa Sloan is an Estate Planning and Probate Lawyer based in Park Orchards.

For more information, go to madisonsloanlawyers.com.au.