

# What makes a memorial?

There are a lot of things to consider when contemplating a memorial to be erected in a cemetery or churchyard.

These need to be of a material that:

- will withstand the weather
- can take a lasting carved inscription
- is suitable for shaping and ornamentation.

Time has shown that natural stone (i.e. stone, slate, marble and granite) has all these qualities.

## **SELECTING A MEMORIAL MASON**

You may wish to use a company recommended by a friend or relative, or you may need to look around. Whichever you do, it is generally advisable to use one which specialises in memorial masonry.

They should understand stone and so be able to give you reliable advice as to whether the stone you are choosing is suitable for the type of memorial you require – and for the area in which it is to be fixed. Weather, pollution and surrounding vegetation can have an effect on this.

Members of the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) are bound by strict Codes of Business and Working Practice and, should a dispute unfortunately arise, by the findings of a free and objective Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

Members must have public and products liability insurance of no less than £5 million, employee liability insurance of no less than £10 million and must also give a guarantee of the stability of their memorial.

## **WHAT YOU MAY CHOOSE**

Cemeteries and churchyards generally have regulations governing the kinds of memorials, and sometimes also the inscriptions and ornamentation, they will allow. These vary from place to place and so need to be checked before any choice is made. A memorial mason will be able to assist.

There are often special areas for the burial of cremated remains. Some just have a central memorial commemorating all those buried nearby. In others, headstones or plaques can be erected on the individual plots. Again, a reputable memorial mason should have details.



## **CHOOSING A MEMORIAL**

Because a memorial is a lasting monument and a tribute to a person's life, perhaps a final gift to someone dearly loved, it is important to choose it carefully.

Hasty decisions made while still in great distress frequently result in later regrets, so it can be sensible to wait – and to spend time on selecting a suitable design.

## **OBTAINING PERMISSION**

Before a memorial may be erected in a churchyard or cemetery written

permission has to be obtained from its management. Your memorial mason will see to this for you.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR MEMORIALS**

It is important to remember that it is you and not the cemetery or churchyard management, who is responsible for the maintenance of your memorial. If it should become dilapidated or unsafe, steps may be taken to lay it down or remove it. It is therefore wise to arrange for it to be regularly maintained – and insured.