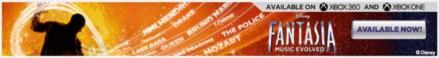
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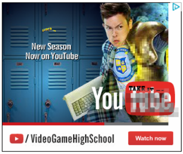
CITY OF HEROES / 5 SEP 2014

THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE FOREVER IN THE GAMES THEY LOVED

375 A look at memorials to those shining lights extinguished too soon.



BY LUKE KARMALI→ When Robin Williams tragically passed away last month there was a global outpouring of grief. Across the world and from many different walks of life, individuals came together to mourn the man that made them laugh. Though we'll each remember him in our own ways, within hours the gaming community as a whole had rallied together to ask popular developers to commemorate Williams, a life-long gamer, in their titles.

One of the companies approached was Blizzard Entertainment, following the news that Williams had spent a significant amount of time exploring Azeroth and its mysteries in World of Warcraft. Though the studio was initially silent on its plans, datamined files seem to suggest that when Warlords of Draenor launches later this year, it'll do so with a memorial to the late comedian in tow. Yet Williams won't be the first individual to be immortalised in such a way. In fact, MMOs have a long history of celebrating the lives of those we've lost, because they're more than games to many of those who play them.

This May be How World of Warcraft Will Remember Robin Willia...
00:55
IGN NEWS

"MMOs are very much about people," World of Warcraft game director Tom Chilton told me when I sat down with him recently. "The people you play with: that's what makes MMOs special. Because it feels like a living and breathing world, you're not just a visitor. You spend a lot of time in it and you really come to call it home. So creating these memorials in the world carries more weight and meaning than it would in a more transient game."

That's why people want to see Williams remembered in these games, and that's why similar moves have proved so helpful in providing closure for online communities in the past. While we don't know for certain what shape Williams' online memorial will take, we do know how others have been commemorated in the past. The list of in-game MMO memorials is long - too long to cover in full here - but we whittled down six of the most moving in a bid to show the true power of such a gesture.

City of Heroes – Coyote

When the sun set on Paragon City in late 2012 and heroes from around the globe were forced to hang up their capes for the last time, there was a great deal of mourning. Of all that was lost, however, one of the most poignant things has to be the in-game tribute to Matthew Bragg, a CoH fan who unfortunately passed away shortly after the game's original release.

In life, Bragg had been one of the first pre-beta members on the official City of Heroes boards, posting under the moniker of Kiyotee. Always friendly and helpful to new recruits, it was only fitting following his death that members of the development team decided to add a new NPC to the world in order to commemorate him.

The NPC superhero Coyote, who also bore the real name of Matthew Bragg, was Old Man Coyote's avatar on earth, and found in the tutorial zone where he had a chance to kindly share his wisdom with newcomers long after his namesake was no longer able to do so. Though City of Heroes may be gone, memories of Coyote and the other heroes met along the way will undoubtedly live in the minds of Paragon's denizens for some time to come.

Guild Wars 2 – Oldroar

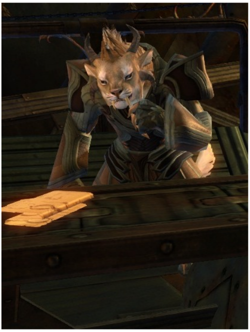
Roger "Oldroar" Rall Tribute Video
THE MEMORIAL & LEGACY OF
ROGER "OLDROAR" RALL
THE INSPIRATION BEHIND 'THE SANCTUM OF RALL'
0:00 / 4:52
YouTube

For those unaware of how MMO communities operate, it's not unusual to see groups of gamers that play together in one title all move to set up shop together in a new one when it's released. Roger "Oldroar" Rall was one of the leading officers of Gaiscioch, a Celtic-themed guild originally founded during Dark Age of Camelot, though since making its presence known in titles such as Warhammer Online, Rift and The Elder Scrolls Online.

The run-up to Guild Wars 2 was accompanied by a massive storm of hype, with more than a few sites and guilds expecting it to be a genre-revolutionising title that would usher in a new Golden Age for MMOs. Rall was no exception, making plans for what challenges he'd help lead his fellow guildmembers through once the gates to Tyria officially opened.

Tragically, such a thing was not meant to be. Roger passed away suddenly before Guild Wars 2 launched, never getting the chance to explore ArenaNet's MMO. Not content to let such a travesty pass unmourned, Oldroar's guildmates wrote to the developer in their droves, begging the studio to acknowledge what had happened. One such tactic even saw Gaiscioch send wave after wave of cookies to ArenaNet's offices in a bid to alert the studio.

Whether it was the baked goods that sealed the deal or the power of Oldroar's story was enough on its own we may never know, but ArenaNet agreed that Roger should be commemorated. And so, it established a new Guild Wars 2 server called Sanctum of Rall, and it's here the members of Gaiscioch can be found to this day.



Explaining why this option was taken, game director Colin Johanson reveals, “We talked about a lot of ideas, at the time we were right in the middle of naming a lot of the worlds for the game and so we felt one of the best things we could do was to name a world after him, especially because one of the areas he really felt he could help make a difference for the community was in World vs World. So we moved quickly, named it, and ever since it's been one of the most popular worlds in GW2. For a long time it was one of the top worlds in WvW and I love we have a world with that history and hopefully we're doing him proud.”

Additionally, ArenaNet added an NPC in the Charr capital of the Black Citadel called Historian Goshkia (which is a pronounced the same way as Gaiscioch and pictured above), who tells the story of an ancient Charr tribune known for his leadership. He was never defeated in battle, winning countless campaigns before retiring to teach others, and eventually passing away peacefully. His name? Rall Oldroar.

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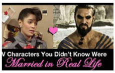

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Featured Comment

TheDoctor2654 · 2 months ago
Great article, and IMO the almost complete lack of trolling and jerkiness shows that we are all the same at heart. Lets bring this compassion and camaraderie into every article on IGN.
328 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

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interitus · 2 months ago
SWG had a food called a Maroj Melon that was given to all new players. It was named after a fan of the game who had passed away shortly before or after launch if I remember correctly.
1 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

Mesnard ➦ interitus · 2 months ago
I can see that as a possibility. Good contribution. :)

Though I didn't mention it before, our city had two or three memorials for guildies or citizens who died in real life: by naming sculptures or lightposts in gardens.
⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

IumfanFirst · 2 months ago
I don't know if this tribute has been mentioned earlier, but Gearbox paid homage to a 'fellow traveler' who passed away before Borderlands 2 came out and not only had placed him in the game but had him give away a special gun to new players. R.I.P to them all. Forever gaming.
⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

Da_Chief1472 · 2 months ago
Damn the feels, it's only 8:30 am and I'm crying.
5 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

NEWT321 ➦ Da_Chief1472 · 2 months ago
wimp
1 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

taandav · 2 months ago
I think its touching that people immortalize fellow gamers who influence or affect a game and its players. I believe its the right thing to do. Similar acts take place in real life and I dont see why the same cannot be carried over the digital world as well.
2 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

Vargo_Brandhl · 2 months ago
Oh my god... it happened. We're making heroes out of people who play video games. People who accomplished nothing but to gather other players to raid a boss for four and a half hours. Seriously?
⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

NEWT321 ➦ Vargo_Brandhl · 2 months ago
but they ARE heroes!!!
⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

nadrian3k ➦ Vargo_Brandhl · 2 months ago
U didn't read anything did u. Even ingame i think they accomplished more then a lot of ppl IRL. How many ppl did u manage to gather last time u played?...establish communities..have an impact on ppl.
5 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

romeolea · 2 months ago
Not that I have anything against it but personally don't see the big deal with immortalizing people in games. However for some it seems to work. It was an interesting article however.
⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

fookz · 2 months ago
i think its a great idea to immortalize those of our hero's that were taken from us early.
i don't think we should immortalize those who took their lives from us....
its a cowardly act and all young impressionable idiots see it someone being praised for killing themselves.
2 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

Kreisler · 2 months ago
I think Mechwarrior Online also did something for tribute by naming one of it's Jenner mechs for a fan, very young little girl who died from cancer. Good thinking by all the devs.
2 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

ORIGINALJOECOOL · 2 months ago
Great story. I have more respect for Blizzard now. That's awesome. Nintendo should show some class and do the same.
3 ⌃ | ⌄ • Share ›

SSJCajas ➦ ORIGINALJOECOOL · 2 months ago
Kinda of an uncalled for attack on Nintendo don't you think Joe?

12 Other Characters Who Have Lifted Mjolnir

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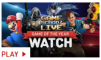
New Details on Terminator: Genisys



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John Wick Review

4 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

ORIGINALJOECOOL → SSJCajas • 2 months ago

Not at all,Mark. Blizzard announced they were going to have a char in game dedicated to Robin Willaims. That's being respectful towards someone who liked and spent a lot of time playing your game. We all know how much RW loved Zelda. He named his daughter after her! If Nintendo doesn't show the same love and respect for him as he showed for them, then I won't respect them and deservedly so.

^ | ˅ • Share ›

SaMoKo • 2 months ago

There is nothing vile rat would have loved more than to see some trolling on the comments section, but this page has been really clean. Well, I'm sad now. Death2SuperCaps.

^ | ˅ • Share ›

manfku • 2 months ago

Beautiful article. Thank you.

2 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

SoulDestroyerUK • 2 months ago

One of the nice things about crowd funded games, there are some that allow you to name an NPC/AI. So I look forward to racing my late father in Project CARS and maybe having a run in with him in Elite: Dangerous

2 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

aquaisra • 2 months ago

This is such a great article! The stories were all very touching.

4 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

StepOff54 • 2 months ago

Have you ever met someone in an MMO, you talk a ton in chat, never hear their voice, but have a great time playing with them for a few hours, then you disband and never talk again. Thats what hits me pretty hard. The fact that I'll never see that person again, know their name, or their story, just that they were a nice and helpful person and fun to be around in a video game. That is what makes MMOs special.

7 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

JohnnyBenchCalled • 2 months ago

I was very touched by the memorial in Fable 2 to one of the developers from Fable Lost Chapters who had died at just 19. You entered one of the demon doors and it was awash in beautiful scenery with the haunting music box playing....then you read the poem at the memorial...when you find out it was written by that guy, it hits pretty hard. Very sad but great that they could give his family the feeling that their son will be remembered by many.

4 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

Konetsugu • 2 months ago

The only thing like this that I've ever seen personally was Michael Mamaril in Borderlands 2.

3 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

RaiUchiha • 2 months ago

I started tearing up halfway through the first page.

8 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

manfku → RaiUchiha • 2 months ago

Yea me too. F.U cancer.

5 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

WufflesTheWorgen MOD • 2 months ago

This actually made me cry a bit.

Very touching, all of them.

8 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

BromegaSupreme • 2 months ago

Great article. More articles like this and maybe we'll see more solidarity between all gamers...

4 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

Modan94 • 2 months ago

This is a very heartfelt post and i really do think more games and even other media franchises should take the time to remember and pay tribute to those who enjoy their product whether famous or a simple person who had a passion for the game and was an avid member of the community should be memorialized out of respect

3 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

Micro.Softie • 2 months ago

I swore I would never shed a tear over a video game. Just want to say no matter how much I might have gotten mad at you guys over the years. I appreciate every single gamer that I have had the privilege to battle alongside, or go up against. without you guys the world would be so gray. Even you cursed trolls have helped take something digital and breath in a real reflection of life. Love my gamers!

2 ^ | ˅ • Share ›

Guyuz · 2 months ago

people can say what they want about gaming companies, but beyond the money grabbing and the false marketing, there are those who's true passion is gaming, and creating the worlds that we cherish. and those people care about us, and they feel touched by how much happiness their work has brought upon us. that alone elevates their work from a simple game to an amazing piece of art that can truly affect human beings.

to them, being able to immortalize their loving fans in their game is first and foremost an honor to themselves. i wish them all the best.

3 ^ | v • Share ›

DarthRevan1111 · 2 months ago

Star Wars Galaxies!!! such an amazing sandbox MMO. Truly a masterpiece and I wish for something similar in the future

3 ^ | v • Share ›

Mesnard → DarthRevan1111 · 2 months ago

Agreed. SWG did not have any major monumental tributes in game, but the staff was always very accommodating for people holding memorials for departed members. I personally attended one of them. It was nice seeing the devs/GMs work hard to make those events possible.

^ | v • Share ›

DC_Klarion · 2 months ago

Kingdom Hearts Sora and Roxas

2 ^ | v • Share ›

Mr_Enforcer · 2 months ago

Slightly different type of tribute, but what about Bioware's "Operation Tribute" multiplayer missions for Mass Effect 3, in tribute to the late Robin Sachs, who voiced Zaeed Massani?

3 ^ | v • Share ›

AlexRmF → Mr_Enforcer · 2 months ago

yeah, that one was great.. one of the things that almost drew me into the multiplayer campaign. I believe I found about it after it happened

1 ^ | v • Share ›

horrorfreak11 → Mr_Enforcer · 2 months ago

Ethan Rayne is dead! I had no idea. That sucks.

1 ^ | v • Share ›

jullrich · 2 months ago

I loved this article. I remember when they added Coyote to City of Heroes. It made me realize that a lot of people are impacted in meaningful ways by gaming, just like I am. Its truly a special thing.

4 ^ | v • Share ›

Darkatron · 2 months ago

Long time reader. First time Poster
One I would like to mention that has a special place in my heart is from SWG
The Moraj Memorial
http://starwars.wikia.com/wiki...
I had chatted a lot with Nathan in the pre launch forums of SWG many years ago now, and was hit hard by his death.
When the game launched with this little feature i often made it a regular thing to go visit the site,
Id sit there, chill out, and talk to him, tell him what i had been up to, reported on the game, and just said Hi or saluted every time i went past
When the game shut down, I logged out there next to his marker
Last month, I checked out the EMU project, and headed to Tattooine, and it was the first stop off, i told him what id been up to, apologised it had been so long, and wished that the force will still be with him

15 ^ | v • Share ›

Mesnard → Darkatron · 2 months ago

Thanks for commenting! I played SWG since beta but wasn't aware the meaning behind the Bestine flag. I examined and read the story but never investigated further. It's great to learn new things about my favorite MMO even now.

2 ^ | v • Share ›

themattatack → Darkatron · 2 months ago

Wow, this is too weird. I was just reading through his article thinking that the Moraj Memorial was going to be on the list, and was disappointed when it wasn't. I was just about to comment, and WOAH it's Darka! (chr0no here, btw).

Moraj was a friend to all, including the SWG devs, and this goes all the way back to the first SWG beta tests with the Genboarder crew (this would be back when we were all surprised when a release date was set, considering all the bugs, haha).

Moraj's death sent shockwaves through the community, and to honour his memory the devs put up a flag on a little site on Tatooine. It was a really nice gesture, like all of the others listed in this great article. Thanks for this!

4 ^ | v • Share ›

Mesnard → themattatack · 2 months ago

Nice to see all the SWG love. I was a member since 2001 but never did a ton of writing on the boards - floored as I was for the game to release.

Share ›

Darkatron → themattatack · 2 months ago

Awesome to see you here man!!

1 · Share ›

Starfire123 · 2 months ago

Awesome article.

1 · Share ›

facephoenix · 2 months ago

Slightly off subject what about Gearbox's Tribute to A Vault Hunter in Borderlands 2?

15 · Share ›

bleys987 · 2 months ago

Good lord have mercy.. best article I've ever read about MMO gaming, their impact, and how important they are. Sure, we're "gaming" but we're also spending our time - our most valuable resource, with friends who share our passion.

Thanks, IGN, and Luke, for such a moving article reminding us about both what's important in real life and our "gaming life" and just how perfectly they overlap.

22 · Share ›

TokyoSexwale69 · 2 months ago

There's also that kid in Borderlands 2 that give you rare items. He also has his own trophy/ achievement.

10 · Share ›

Higgy4tw · 2 months ago

VR Rip in piece!

2 · Share ›

retronostalgia · 2 months ago

Alright, I need to find those monuments in Guild Wars 2.

4 · Share ›

KuroiLight · 2 months ago

Damn IGN, you made me cry.

25 · Share ›

PopTrogdors · 2 months ago

While my dad was not a gamer, he supported me in my gaming, and then my career in the video games industry.

He helped me and my fiancée, whenever we needed it. He was the most selfless man in the world. The monumental impact he had on our lives needed to be commemorated.

Thus, he is forever remembered at the end of Tearaway, made by an amazing company, who supported me and my fiancée, through the tough times following.

Love you Dad.

24 · Share ›

KBABZ → PopTrogdors · 2 months ago

The ending of Tearaway is amazing, one of the best I've ever experienced in my years of gaming. Really cool to hear that your dad is able to be there too.

5 · Share ›

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