



BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
FUNERAL CEREMONY
A Celebration of
Ian Edwards
1981 - 2010

held at
Solihull Library Theatre
10.00am
and Robin Hood Crematorium
12.30pm
on
January 17th 2011



Conducted by Victoria Denning
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British Humanist Association Official
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BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
FUNERAL CELEBRATION

at

Solihull Theatre

of

Ian John Edwards

Welcome from Ian

Hails there everyone! Thank you very much for coming to my funeral. Sorry this may freak you out hearing my voice again, but I wanted to say "Hi" and explain why I chose each track you will hear. First track 'Avonland' by Ancient Rites I chose because I have always liked medieval-sounding Black Metal except that after this song it goes into a true metal masterpiece: 'Heavy Metal' by Majesty really sums up just how important Metal is to me. It really has been my life, my religion and has provided me with so much strength when times have been hard. Let all the posers die that infiltrate and infect our beloved and sacred Metal; always keep it true! On a lighter note the last song should bring a smile to your face.

Music *Avonland* – Ancient Rites

Heavy Metal – Majesty

Penis Song – Monty Python

Opening words

As Ian said, thank you very much for coming to his funeral ceremony. During his illness last year Ian bravely made copious notes about this day and how he wanted you, his friends and family to spend it, saying your goodbyes, recalling memories and celebrating his personality, achievements and life. Ian has chosen a funeral in the Humanist tradition and I am Victoria Denning, a celebrant with the British Humanist Association; it is a privilege to conduct this ceremony.

Humanists believe we should try to live full and happy lives ourselves and, as a part of this, help to make it easier for other people to do the same.

We are all part of this earth and this universe and part of the procession of humankind down the ages. We all contribute something – large or small - to our fellow human beings. Our immortality lies in the influences we have had on people’s behaviour and the memories that remain in the minds of our friends and relations. All human relationships are unique, and Ian will have shared different aspects of himself with each one of you – greater or smaller depending on how well you knew him and this will have left you all with individual memories of him.

Today’s ceremony will contain music chosen by Ian, a review of his life, tributes from Ian’s parents and friends, some photos of Ian from the family album and later there will be time for private reflection to recall your memories or use the time to say a silent prayer. After this ceremony the family and a few close friends will accompany Ian’s coffin to the crematorium for the committal.

At one o’clock you are all invited to the Assembly Rooms in Poplar Road, where the afternoon will be spent celebrating at a Farewell Gig for Ian, listening to some more of his favourite music, sharing more memories, talking about the Ian you knew and sampling some of his favourite beers that he wanted to treat you to. The events of the day are being recorded so that friends who could not be here today to celebrate with us will be able to view them on 2 DVDs and maybe some of you present will want to obtain copies from Carol & John when they become available.

Ian died in the middle of December and you may wonder why you have had to wait so long for this funeral celebration. John and Carol apologise; they wanted to wait until the pantomime season ended to guarantee Ian top billing!

Before I tell you a little about Ian’s life over the past twenty nine years I would like to read a short passage by Grady Poulard, called A Measure of a Man.

Reading

A Measure of a Man

The measure of a man is not determined

By his show of outward strength,

Or the volume of his voice,

Or the thunder of his actions,

Or by his intellect.

It is seen in the love that he has

For his family and for everyone,

The strength of his commitments,

The genuineness of his friendships,

The sincerity of his purpose,

The quiet courage of his convictions,

*The fun, laughter, joy and happiness he gives
to his family and to others,
His love of life,
His patience and his honesty,
And his contentment with what he has.*

Grady Poulard.

Life Story

Let's find out the Measure of this man.

Ian's life began on May 24th 1981; he was the only child of John and Carol Edwards, and a cousin to Susie, Sally, Emma, Jenny and Richard.

Probably the one and only thing about Ian that was average was his birth weight, 6lb 6oz, as from then on he was unique! The family home was in Welford Road, Shirley, and both John and Carol said he was a lovely baby, with the sun shining out of his backside. They did have a few problems with him at night. John told me the only way to get his son to sleep was by rocking him in his arms and singing to him, you know...the usual lullabies 'Speed Bonnie Boat like a Bird on the Wind', plus the odd Iron Maiden, and Queen numbers: 'We Will Rock You', 'Another One Bites the Dust', etc.....so from an early age Ian's taste in music was being nurtured.

He was a baby who never crawled – he stood up and began walking, taking his first steps at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. By taking him camping and on walks from a very early age John and Carol inspired in Ian a love of the outdoors. They regularly went away with their YHA friends and children and often, in the evenings whilst the adults were enjoying a game of cards and a drink, Ian would be standing watching through the bars of his playpen which doubled up as his cot inside the tent.

At the age of eight Ian began playing Mini Rugby but by the time he was eleven he had moved on to play football for the Red team in Little League. I am not saying much more about his love of football, at this point, other than that he was a devoted Liverpool fan, as John will be including that in his tribute.

When Ian was about ten years old Carol and John bought a holiday cottage in the French countryside at Tayac near Les Eyzies. Ian loved this cottage and he looked forward to visiting it every school holiday, exploring the surrounding area, relaxing, learning to play Pétanque, and kicking a football about on the local football pitch.

Back in England the happy family camping weekends continued into Ian's teenage years with his group of friends, James, Jonathan, Faith, Ruth, Gareth, Helen, Martin & Gregory. On a trip to a cottage in Barmouth, one year, Helen proved her worth as a good friend, when Ian was caught in a strong current out of his depth in the sea. Helen managed keep Ian calm and swimming sensibly and so helped get him back to shore. She had probably saved his life and they returned quietly to the cottage as though

nothing had happened.

Ian attended the local schools in Shirley, not particularly enjoying formal education but still managing to achieve ten GCSEs at Tudor Grange School before moving on to Solihull Technical College where he began to enjoy learning at last. He did a GVNQ in Travel and Tourism and an element of this course included spending a week sightseeing in New York and organising an event with the Lord Mayor in Solihull.

He passed the course with a 'merit' grade by virtue of working through the night on every piece of coursework in order to meet the deadline for handing it in! During the course he had become very good friends with Sebastian Jones and it was with Seb, John Bastable, and his father that Ian celebrated his 18th birthday with an evening tour by car of the classic pubs and breweries in the Black Country. I don't think this was where Ian's love of real ales began as I am sure he had already discovered those. Each received a booklet, illustrated with photographs and maps, showing the locations of the pubs they had visited and which beers they had drunk.

Not long after this Ian took a year out of formal education, deferring the place he had been offered at Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Arts. He didn't really know which route to take career wise; he knew exactly what he didn't want to do, and twice he filled in computerised career questionnaires which revealed that the only options that appeared to fit his criteria was as a dog handler or cloakroom attendant!

Ian went on volunteer holidays for the National Trust, helping with conservation projects at Golden Cap on the South coast, the Stourhead estate, and in Wasdale. His jobs included improving the condition of a river for salmon laying, clearing gorse, repairing footpaths and renovating dry stone walls. He went with MENCAP to the Pennines to help on a holiday with a group of children and he worked the summer season as an Assistant Warden at Wilderhope Manor Youth Hostel in Shropshire. His big trip was a fortnight visiting Transylvania and other parts of Rumania on an international conservation holiday.

During this year Ian took up his place at the College of Food, and Tourism to do a HND course in Adventure Tourism Management and joined the Birmingham University Conservation Volunteers group. With his love of the countryside it seemed very probable he would find an outdoor career path to follow; perhaps dog handling would be his route after all!

Whilst doing his Tourism Management Course, Ian spent a week in both Anglesey and Spain canoeing and being reasonably adventurous. This was a part of the course he really enjoyed, but he had too good a sense of self preservation to want to get involved in the rock climbing. He was beginning to realise he was not daring enough to become a leader in dangerous sports and he also found out how expensive his third party insurance cover would be if he was to make a career as an outdoor instructor.

After qualifying, he took on several unrelated temporary jobs, replenishing shelves at Safeways and putting up marquees in Kings Heath Park for the Garden Show, before he found a responsible job working for Securitas. This was a job that suited Ian perfectly at the time, even though it meant working 12 hour shifts in a windowless building in the city centre. He would work three full days and then have four days off, which meant he could attend Heavy Metal Gigs all around the country. So he stayed with the company for two and a half years, during which time billions of pounds must have passed through his hands.

Music had been a very important element in his life since those early lullabies! Ian had learned to play guitar when he was younger and had composed and played pieces as part of his GCSE Music examination. He had joined the Birmingham University Rock Society whilst at the College of Food and was involved with Bilksirnia – a group of believers in True Metal. He became close friends with Philsy, another metal fan, and became a 'Brother of Steel' with the Stoke crew and, along with other Metal Warriors, drank and listened to their music regularly in Scruffy Murphy's and Eddie's Club (until it burnt down). Ian and his friends formed a band called "Fred Low" and they played cover versions of cheesy songs, changing the words and delivering them in the style of Vic Reeves. If you come to the afternoon event you should be able to hear some of their "Classics"! Ian was also a very occasional guest singer for the band "Mother Trucker". He had to look the part and it was at about this time that Ian got his first tattoo. John and Carol were away at the time but Ian proudly revealed it on their return. Carol couldn't bear to look at it to begin with, and she can't remember whether it was Iron Maiden or Liverpool but it was to be the first of many. Ian was very proud of his tattoos as he only had them done for something that really meant a lot to him. Tom & Chris remember he would cut off the sleeves of his T shirts to help keep cool, but of course it also helped show off this art work. On his upper arms were the very important ones – crossed spiky flails on his right and Man O War's, the 'Sign of the Hammer' logo on the other, with the four words True Metal Strength Religion, which you may have noticed on your ticket today. There was "Iron Maiden" on one outer forearm with "England" tattooed in Nordic runes on the inner arm; and the other had "Liverpool FC" in gothic script plus the ornate scroll and words from the top of "The Shankly Gates" at Anfield. Most recently Ian had the Lost Horizon slogan "No Fate; Only the Power of Will" tattooed on his wrist and he had more planned, but only on his arms.

He became more and more discerning in his music and liked to keep his summers as free as possible so he could attend the proper metal festivals like Bloodstock, Wacken in Germany and our local Bulldog Bash. Through his love of True Metal, Power Metal and Black Metal Ian made many, many like-minded friends, at concerts, gigs, via the Internet and in pubs. In a quote on My Space he said "I like epic, soaring, fast bands that make me want to oil myself up, put on a loin cloth, grab my sword and run up a

mountain to shout from the top how proud I am to be into real metal! Sadly this only happens in my room, on my bed!

Ian loved his beers, but a little like his music he became more and more discerning, elitist almost. He became the Young Persons' Representative for Solihull CAMRA (the campaign for real ale) and he and his father recently had an article published in the winter edition of 'Solihull Drinker', describing the beers they sampled in a trip to the Lake District. He even managed to teach Carol to like some beers, though not the India pale Ales that were his favourite.

At a reunion at the College of Food Ian was told about seasonal jobs with Village Camps in Switzerland so he applied and left Securitas to become an Activity Leader and Group Counsellor at Anzère and Leysin in the Canton of Vaud, helping look after children aged from 5 to 16 and supervising their daytime activities. All counsellors had to have a pseudonym and Ian was given the name 'Bearded Vulture' because of his goatee beard. It was here that Ian became good friends with Mike McCarthy, another big Liverpool fan, Adam Sewell, Lizzie Nelson, Laurent and Hillivie amongst many other wonderful colleagues. Despite it being hard work, Ian said it was one of the best things he had ever done in his life and he spent some of his happiest times in Switzerland.

2008 saw Ian's friend Matt move out of a house he was sharing with old school friends Tom and Chris, and Ian was pleased to move in and help pay the rent. This house, which they named Castle Gayskull was in a quiet residential, conservative road, in Hall Green. It became a house full of sport, table tennis, darts, Frisbee golf and, Ian's pride and joy, a top-of-the-range football table which was due to have the players carefully painted as specific individuals, like the ones he had done in Switzerland!

At this time Ian's working life took another change when he decided he would like to do a one year Speech and Language Therapy Assistants course at Bourneville College. He felt it would also be good experience if he could get some work in the care sector and he applied for a job as support worker with Tracscare at the Maypole. During the interview, sporting a suit (yes Ian had a suit that his grandmother had bought him and he could look very smart when he needed to!) he was asked whether he had any questions – he pulled out a long list which later Elaine, his boss, said made them feel as though Ian was interviewing them rather than the other way around. He was appointed and he became responsible for bathing, feeding, and the general care of severely disabled adults, some with challenging behaviour. After the first two days of being there he was full of it for, despite it being hard work, it gave him so much joy and satisfaction. He worked alongside Andy, Elaine, Rydell, Anthony, Tracy, Sarah, Sheila, Natalie, Wendy, Amanda, Anne, Chris, Adam, Steve, Keith and Tash, all of whom have managed to arrange cover to be here today. For the first time in his life Ian felt part of a

very supportive, fully-committed team and he really respected each and every one of them.

At the start of 2010 Ian returned to Liechtenstein on holiday to visit his girlfriend Carina, who he had met years before and started going out with in October after the 2009 Solihull Beer Festival. Ian had been feeling unwell before he left England, but his GP had diagnosed the pain in his legs as sciatica or possibly a slipped disc and Ian was awaiting tests. Thanks to two health professionals in Liechtenstein the seriousness of his condition was recognised and he ended up in hospital in Switzerland where he had part of a Lymphoma tumour removed from the base of his spine. John and Carol immediately flew out to be at his bedside as he came round from the operation and Carina and her parents Delia and Andy and her brother, Mike were wonderful, providing accommodation and support until Ian was fit enough to be brought back to Birmingham two weeks later to continue his chemotherapy.

As the “E” Team, Ian, Carol & John mutually supported one another and managed to keep as positive as possible throughout a traumatic and harrowing year, enjoying many good days filled with love, hugs and affection, which many of you have heard about through texts and e mails.

We will now take time for a slide show of Ian’s life.

Slide Show - Ian’s Life in pictures

Music *Renewal* followed by *Courting* – Nest

In Ian’s funeral notes he requested that the next piece of music be played around half way through the celebration as it meant a lot to him and it helped him. It says all about the sort of music he liked and he wanted people to be able to read and reflect on the words.

Message from Ian

For my reflection piece I have selected Lost Horizon’s song ‘Lost in the Depths of Me’ as they are the group that has consistently filled me with the most power and feeling of metal pride in my heart. Amazing musicians, epic, wailing vocals and positive life-affirming lyrics! I owe Lost Horizon so much. They are the true Kings of Metal.

As they say – “No Fate, only the Power of Will”.

Ian’s Reflection Piece *Lost In The Depths Of Me* – Lost Horizon

I will now hand over to John who will tell you some more about his son and his passion for football.

John's Tribute

There are obviously loads of little ways in which I will miss Ian, from the way he used to peel satsumas at the dining table (hold up an example) to the way he insisted you could not clink glasses and say "Cheers" without looking the person directly in the eyes – a Swiss custom I believe. But I feel this celebration of Ian's life wouldn't be complete without me saying something about his football interests - because Ian was a football fan like no other, as the French would say "Un Fan du Foot Extraordinaire".

As a Scouser I tried to bring him up correctly and for me that meant taking him along to watch Liverpool Football Club. Sure enough he became a fan of the Anfield Reds, although I can't remember what the first match was we saw together nor how many times we stood on the Kop. I do know that if he had to pick two of the best days of his life it would be 24th & 25th May 2005. He was working for Village Camps in Leysin at the time and all the children had helped him enjoy his 24th birthday, the day before the Reds were due to meet AC Milan in the Champions league final in Istanbul. Ian didn't finish work until the children were all in bed at around 11pm, which meant he couldn't watch the match live, at least not properly. So he got somebody, his boss I think, to video the game and gave everyone strict instructions that they were not to give him any inkling of the events of the match or the final result.

He always hated knowing the result before watching any game on TV! I had visions of him watching the recording at 3am, tired & alone, and with Liverpool 3-0 down at half time, feared he'd think "Sod it!" and go to bed, so missing the most incredible come-back ever. I knew that if I sent any message whatsoever like "keep on watching" he would never forgive me, so I just had to hope he would think of the words of You'll Never Walk Alone and not give up hope. Of course I was worrying needlessly and he was shocked that I even entertained the idea that he wouldn't see it through to the end.

Another recent memory was standing alone side him on the Kop last September at Jamie Carragher's testimonial match, trying to hide the tears streaming down my face as we sang "You'll Never Walk Alone" together, fearing it might be for the last time. Because we were not just father and son, we really were 'best mates' for football and drinking – and there aren't many Dads who can claim that. But Ian was no "Glory Hunter". The team he saw most in his final years was Shirley Town. He and Nick Ackers were probably the 2 greatest fans of the "Toon" and went to almost every home and many of the away games, urging the team to defend properly with their personal chant of "No Free Headers!" Ian summed it up on part of his "My Space" page which I'll quote: "I've always been into teams (and things in general) that the majority of the masses find

uninteresting, not to be different, but because that's just what I'm genuinely interested in. For me, Skonto Riga from Latvia are way more interesting than a big name like Real Madrid!"

Accordingly he was a fan of many of football's minnows, international teams such as Iceland, the Faroe Islands & Liechtenstein. I've worked out that Ian had visited 18 different countries during his life; and there are only a couple where he hadn't watched a football match or got a "favourite" team.

In France it was Bordeaux & Les Eyzies. Italy: Venizia.

Germany: Hoffenheim (near our friends Barbara & Wolfgang who live at Sinsheim) & St Pauli, the team local to Wacken, where the world's truest Metal festival is held, which Ian attended 3 or 4 years on the trot.

In Spain it was Malaga FC. Norway: Brann Bergen.

Iceland: KR Reykjavik. Belgium: Cercle Brugge.

Poland: Crakovia. Ukraine: Metallist Karcov.

Romania: Brasov. Austria: Wacker Innsbruck.

Czech Republic: Viktoria Pilzen. Latvia: Skonto Riga.

In Wales it was Glyn Ceiriog. You've never heard of them? When Ian was 10 he wrote to lots of non league clubs in Wales asking for their details and hopefully some souvenirs, and some kind soul from this tiny village near Llangollen where they used to mine slate was one of the few who replied, sending him 6 or 7 programmes. That was it! Ian was a fan of them and Carol & I remember the locals at a home game being astonished when they discovered this family from the Midlands had travelled 70 miles to watch their team. And of course we had to do this more than once.

In South America he supported Uruguay's Liverpool FC. In Argentina it was their Arsenal, and for a reason that completely eludes me Velez Sarsfield. In Brazil: Vasco da Gama, Peru: Deportivo Wanka, Scotland: Inverness Cally Thistle.....

And so the list goes on.

In Switzerland, apart from Leysin, he was a massive fan of Sion, I think because their fans were so passionate. I expect there are only a handful of people in this room who know that Ian was probably the only Englishman allowed to become an honorary member of the Sion Ultras. He always tried to get to their matches when he was working over there, and indeed when he returned to the UK. When his Swiss friends got him a ticket for the Swiss Cup Final in 2009 when Sion were making their 11th appearance (undefeated in all previous 10) Ian flew over for a long weekend and was rewarded when they came back from 2-0 down to win 3-2 in the last 5 minutes.

In February this year before his cancer was diagnosed, he hobbled and at one point crawled on all fours up into the stand to watch Sion play, before going on to

Liechtenstein to visit Carina and her family. After lunch on the day he was released from St Gallen hospital, the three of us had to go to Ruggel in the north of the Principality to watch the best part of three matches, featuring 6 out of the country's 7 teams!

Another fond memory relating to Ian and football occurred 4 or 5 years ago when I drove Ian & his friend Paul Taylor to Wrexham to pick up free tickets from the Liechtenstein team hotel for their World Cup qualifier against Wales. A useful tip here:- anybody supporting Liechtenstein at one of their away games gets free tickets!

Well Ian kitted the 3 of us out in blue Liechtenstein shirts and got the blue and red flag with the gold crown draped over the stand, and as their national anthem was played, to the tune of "God Save The Queen" (which went down like a bomb in Wales!) the TV cameras zoomed in onto our little group, thinking we where the 'Away' fans who'd travelled over 500 miles to support the team. We just had to laugh.

*But that was Ian to a T. He didn't just support the team, he **had** to have the shirt, the scarf, the pin badge, a programme or two and he'd somehow manage to find time to watch their games being streamed live on the Internet on 'MyP2P'. As he said on My Space: "Foreign, smaller and international football teams also really interest me, and I have collected over 1,000 of their pin badges and over 60 football shirts over the years." In the last 6 months he was making ambitious plans for a grand tour of South America, visiting 5 or 6 countries, with a football team to watch in each one.*

One thing that surprised me when Carol & I read his plans and wishes for his funeral was that he didn't request the next part of the Celebration. Possibly he felt it would upset me too much, but I'm sure that deep down in his heart he would have wanted us to sing the song that he & I always listened to as we drove to a pub to watch a live game. So I'll ask you all to stand up and raise your scarves above your heads. If you haven't got a scarf, the Hammer sign (demonstrate) will do just great, and join Gerry & the Pacemakers in singing "You'll Never Walk Alone", not for Liverpool FC but for Ian Edwards - a truly amazing fan of football."

Singing together *You'll Never Walk Alone – Gerry & the Pacemakers*

I would now like to read some words on behalf of Carol.

Carol's tribute

Although I could not talk football, music or beers with Ian, it never mattered because we had a fantastic relationship and understood each other perfectly. When he was little, and trying to 'get away with something', I used to say 'Watch

it, 'cause I can read you like a book!' He grew up to be the same with me, and we used to talk about anything and everything, to be honest, what I considered to be the important stuff!

About two years ago when he was not living at Welford Road anymore and at a huge potential embarrassment to himself – but he didn't care – he bought me two little plastic cards for in my purse. The one was because he knew I was upset about something – this is what it says. It's called 'A Little Hug'.

A Little Hug

*Whenever you are feeling sad
And things aren't going right
And your usual happy smile
Has slipped right out of sight,
Here's a little hug from me if
I cannot be there, because I want
You to know just how much I care.*

The second one he gave me, just because he wanted to, is entitled 'Mum'.

Mum

*I just wanted you to know mum,
How very much I care
And how much it means to me
Knowing you are there.
You've raised my spirits often
When I have felt depressed,
Supported and encouraged me
When life has got me stressed.
For everything you've done for me
And all that you still do,
I wanted you to know mum,
Just how much I love you.*

In recent months, Ian and I have needed to discuss his funeral. We looked at this next well known poem together. We agreed that the one way suggested here for everyone who knew him to carry on, was much better than the alternative.

*You can shed tears that Ian is gone or you can smile because he has lived,
You can close your eyes and hope that he'll come back or you can open your eyes and see all he has left,*

*Your heart can be empty because you can't see him or you can be full of the love you shared,
 You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday,
 You can remember him and only that he has gone or you can cherish his memory and let it live on,
 You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back or you could do Ian would want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.*

I will truly miss Ian's love and hugs and also having him to talk to. But I also feel very lucky indeed to have had such a special relationship with him for nearly thirty years.

John and Carol couldn't have loved Ian more, and he wasn't embarrassed to let them know he felt the same about them. On his 'MySpace' page under 'Heroes' – he says '...if I had to choose heroes, then I really admire these people: My Mum and Dad.'

Tributes from Friends

Looking at Ian's 'Myspace' page and the two 'Facebook' pages set up by friends after Ian had died, certain words and phrases kept cropping up when friends and acquaintances remember him. For those of you who have not yet checked them out, they are worth reading, and I would like to share some of the phrases with you now.

*Life was all the richer for knowing you.
 You were a top class bloke and a true metal warrior.
 Without question one of the nicest people I've ever met.
 A wonderful person who gave so much to so many.
 Always a friendly guy and always made me laugh.
 A top guy and really was one of the lads.
 Such a lovely, lovely guy.
 A truly great bloke.
 The man was unique, a legend.
 Truly an amazing character who had time for everyone!
 He was an amazing person.
 Always warm, larger than life and always a lot of fun to be around.
 So enthusiastic about metal and indeed, life.
 An absolute diamond of a bloke.
 An absolute tonic to the world.
 An amazing friend.*

*A quality GUY.
 A man with a truly great sense of humour, and a heart of GOLD.
 He kept me strong.
 A true legend and one of the nicest guys I've ever met.
 He always had time for a chat and was just a genuine guy.
 He was positive about everything.
 He was always such a top happy bloke.
 An amazing bloke, he was always there for people.
 A kind, nice, decent, funny, cool guy.
 One of the great and genuine metal guys.
 An honest to god metal dude through and through.
 He had an indomitable spirit and a fantastic outlook on life.*

As I said earlier, very little of Ian was 'average'.

On behalf of John and Carol I would like to thank everyone for the cards of condolence and kind messages. They have been much appreciated and they wish to share some of these with you in the form of a short slide presentation.

Slide Show of Tributes as speech bubbles

Music *Keep it True* – Majesty

Returning to the words A Measure of a Man I read at the beginning of this ceremony, we could talk for hours about Ian and what he has done, his personality and why he will be missed. I think by now we know the Measure of Ian. What a Man, what a guy, what a legend!

Ian lost his brave fight against cancer on December 15th 2010, just five months short of his thirtieth birthday. He had spent a year undergoing grueling and intensive treatment but remained upbeat and positive throughout, never letting on to his friends how hard things were or how serious his cancer was.

One thing that helped make this time bearable for Ian, Carol and John was that they were able to take last minute mini-breaks, and eventually full week holidays, to beautiful parts of the country, enjoy meals and real ales. A Trust in Ian's name has been set up that will help others whose lives have been turned upside down by cancer and give them the opportunity to take a holiday or short break during their spells of intensive treatment. The Ian Edwards Cancer Break Trust will be a memorial to a real legend and Gift Aid forms will be available this afternoon as the celebrations continue.

Contemplation and Reflection

We will take a few minutes so you can think your own thoughts and recall your

memories of Ian. For those of you with religious beliefs you may wish to use this time for private prayer.

Music And Winter Came – Enya

I will hand over to Ian again to introduce his penultimate choice of music.

Message from Ian

I do apologise for the sound quality of this song as it was recorded from the television. I heard this countless times growing up, as it was the intro to a video I used to watch religiously - The History of Liverpool Football Club. I thought this would be a more personal touch than "You'll Never Walk Alone".

We are now coming towards the final part of this Ceremony but before we do Carol and John have asked me to say that in the will Ian left he included a long list of people that he wanted to leave a gift or memento to. Around 60 of these names have specific items added alongside and many of the others are to be invited to choose a record / CD or tape from his huge collection once the specified items have been distributed. Carol & John intend to try and hand these things over to Ian's friends in person and hope to get around to seeing all the people concerned, hopefully within the next 12 months.

Before closing this celebration and leaving for the crematorium I will hand over to Ian for his last message. He thought his final choice of music would help clear the theatre quickly but Carol & John did not think Ian would have liked people to leave without seeing some of the photographs of his many friends and relations, enjoying life in each others company and with Ian. So, even if the music isn't to some of your tastes, they ask you not to leave but to try and see if you can spot yourself, or Ian, in some of the following pictures, which will hopefully bring back pleasant memories.

Message from Ian

Thank you all very much for coming to my funeral. I hope it's been more of a celebration of my life rather than negative mourning and that you are pleased to have known me. Sadly now it's time to leave, but what better way to get you to bugger off quickly than some lovely Black Metal.

The first song, Sorrowful Farewell by Rotting Christ, is the song that got me properly into Extreme Metal. From then on I kept delving deeper and deeper into the underground metal world and it's from there that this second track is plucked from - Within the Raven Darkness by Semper Fidelis.

Hail, Hail, Steak and Ale, Horns up, Crosses Down!

Final Slide Presentation to start when he stops speaking

Music *Sorrowful Farewell* – Rotting Christ &
Within the Raven Darkness – Semper Fidelis.

Closing words

We have been remembering and celebrating with love and gratitude a life that has ended. Let us continue resolved that we will use our lives more fully and to better purpose for knowing Ian and for having shared his life.

Exit Music *Reprise of Heavy Metal* – Majesty





BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
 FUNERAL CELEBRATION
 at
Robin Hood Crematorium
 of
Ian John Edwards

Music: *Avonland* – Ancient Rites

Welcome

Welcome again. And now we come to the final part of Ian's journey today. I would like to start this part of the ceremony by reading some words written by Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

'Some people are bound to die young. By dying young a person stays young forever in people's memory. If they burn brightly before they die their light shines for all time.'
 Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Ian died young; a young man in the prime of his life with a bright future in front of him. We mourn not only for a life that has been but also for the life that might have been. We have heard that Ian's light burnt brightly before he died through his zest for life and his larger than life personality, that he was a legend! Through your memories and the Ian Edwards Cancer Break Trust Fund set up in his memory Ian will shine brightly for all time.

This morning we heard about Ian's life from his childhood to becoming a young adult. How he loved the natural world; how he became a passionate football fan; and of his love of metal music and real ales; we heard about the paid and voluntary work Ian did which often involved caring for others or the environment in one way or another. We have heard tributes from his parents, his friends and colleagues. Ian's loyalty, his caring and compassionate personality has shone out for all to see.

John and Carol you have a son to be so proud of.

During his year of treatment Ian said that he couldn't complain as he had so enjoyed his life, excluding parts of that final year. Being part of the 'E' Team and having Carol and

John, there to support him throughout will have been a great comfort to Ian. John and Carol's strength and positive encouragement gave Ian the confidence and courage to continue fighting to the end.

I would like to share with you some words adapted from those written by Rabindranath Tagore called Farewell My Friends.

*Farewell My Friends and family
It was beautiful,
As long as it lasted,
The journey of my life.
I have no regrets whatsoever, save the pain I'll leave behind.
Those dear hearts, who love and care.
And the strings pulling at the heart and soul.
The strong arms,
That held me up.
When my own strength,
Let me down.
At every turning of my life I came across good friends.
Friends who stood by me even when the time raced me by.
Farewell, farewell my friends and family.
I smile and bid you goodbye.
No, shed no tears for I need them not.
All I need is your smile.
If you feel sad, do think of me.
For that's what I like.
When you live in the hearts of those you love.
Remember then you never die.*

Rabindranath Tagore

Reflection/Silent thought

We will now pause and take a couple of minutes, once again for you to think your own thoughts and remember Ian in your own ways. This is an opportunity for those of you with religious beliefs to use this time for private prayer.

Music: *And Winter Came* – Enya

The Committal

The time has come now for you to take a formal farewell of Ian, and in a minute the curtains will close. We will commit the memory of Ian to our hearts and minds and thank him for enhancing the lives of us all.

Ian will leave this world without fuss and without fear. Ian's death is in the order of things; it belongs to the life of the world.

*But now the journey is over.
Too short, alas, too short.
It was filled with adventure and wisdom, laughter and love,
Gallantry and grace.
So farewell, farewell.*

Constantine P. Cavafy

Ian is now beyond harm, fear and pain. Here, in this last act, in sorrow but without fear, with love and appreciation, we commit Ian's body to its natural end. We commit his character and personality to our memories, his love and friendship we commit to our hearts.

(Curtains close)

Music Title music to the video of The History of Liverpool Football Club

*Rejoice that Ian lived.
Be glad that you saw his face.
And took delight in his friendship.
Treasure that you walked life with him.
Cherish the memory of his words,
His achievements, his character, his qualities.
With love leave him in peace,
With respect bid him farewell.*

Anon

Closing words:

We have been remembering with love and gratitude the life of Ian who was a wonderful son, cousin, friend and colleague; a gentle natured, popular, loving, young man who faced up to his death with courage and I think all would agree he planned a pretty amazing funeral for himself.

Ian has requested his ashes are scattered in four places; on the pitch at Shirley Town football ground, on the pitch of A. S. Les Eyziers, in France, on the pitch of F. C. Leysin in Switzerland and under the tree that is planted in the Iron Maiden woods for him. But before that he has arranged for an unforgettable wake with drinks, dancing, DJing and the sharing of many more memories, which will, amongst other things ensure his light will continue to shine.

Life will never be the same again without Ian; but he lives on in your hearts and memories and in those of many others not present. Take comfort from each other. Talk about Ian as often as you wish. Allow yourself to laugh and enjoy your memories.

Perhaps the words of Michael de Montaigne will help you come to terms with Ian's life having been cut short:

The value of life lies not in its length, but in the use we make of it. This or that man may have lived many years, yet lived little. Pay good heed to that in your own life. Whether you have lived long enough depends upon yourself, not on the number of your years.

I hope this ceremony has brought some comfort to you. Have a safe journey onwards and continue to live the rest of *your* lives to the full.

Exit Music: - *Reprise of Heavy Metal* - Majesty

