

**Archive Tribute of**  
**Peter Eric John Thorley**  
**13/07/56 – 17/09/2018**

**Written by**  
**Joanne Brooks**  
**Humanists UK**  
**Accredited Funeral Celebrant**  
(Working Script)

## Tribute

Peter was born on July 13<sup>th</sup> 1956 in Holbridge Essex. He moved to Suffolk when he was seven years old where he attended Clare secondary school. Peter was always a live wire growing up, often getting into trouble and playing pranks on his family. He was always so much fun and always full of adventure.

Peter joined the British Army in 1971 when he was fifteen years old and became a member of her Majesty's division The Royal Anglian Regiment. This is where Peter met his best friend John. Peter and John joined the third Battalion of the Regiment stationed in Munster, West Germany. They were also stationed together during tours of The Gambia and Northern Ireland during the troubles.

Peter and John remained in the same platoon and shared the same barracks and the same room throughout most of their Army career. Their relationship wasn't always harmonious, however. They had very different tastes in music and would regularly clash over what to play in the barrack room. Peter preferred The Beatles and John preferred Motown and Slade. They were always there for one another. They spent so much time together that others would regularly ask: "Are you two Brothers?" followed by; So your Gay then?" I'm sure John will regale you with some of their dicey army stories later.

After leaving the army in 1981 Peter moved to Wales and joined the South Wales fire service. Being a proud Englishman in a Welsh fire service doesn't come without its dangers. Peter would often play rugby against different watches. On one occasion his own teammates told the opposition that he was English so that he would get 'special treatment' in the rucks and mauls.

Peter loved to share his stories of his time in the fire service. I'm sure some of you have heard the one about the burning building, the dog, the paramedic

and the bus. If not, his family will fill you in later. Another memorable story was when a young man called the fire service because certain body parts were caught in the mattress springs. Apparently, the ambulance and fire crews were laughing so much they dropped him on the stretcher.

While in the fire service Peter met his second wife Julie. Peter and Julie went on to have five wonderful children; Jo, Scott, Julian, Olivia and Chelsea. Peter was an amazing dad. He was always understanding, loving and kind and would do anything for his children, including his step daughter Clare. Over the years he taught them all to drive, often dicing with death. His children think he felt safer being shot at in Belfast!

As parents and children often do, Peter would disagree with what constitutes 'good music', causing some disagreements on car journeys. He turned into Rain Man when it came to music trivia. He could tell you the year that almost any song was released between the 1970s and 2000s and every Christmas number one.

The family is divided when it comes to sporting loyalty. Scott and Julian follow Peter's love of English rugby, but the girls have a lot more sense, sticking to their Welsh roots. As you can imagine this would cause many conflicts during the six nations.

Peter supported his children through their university courses and early careers. He would drop everything to help when needed. Often travelling across the country helping with various DIY projects and when Jo, his eldest, was involved in a minor car crash he rushed home, forgetting his wife, who was still shopping in Marks and Spencer.

After early retirement from the fire service Peter worked as a carer. He loved his job. He formed some lasting friendships and took great pride in his work.

He clearly worked very hard, but his family would always question whether taking his patients to local coffee shops, watching Cardiff Blues and taking regular walks around the coastal paths of Wales was actually 'work'.

Those who knew Peter well knew how much he loved keeping fit. He ran marathons in his younger days and always enjoyed cycling and walking around the Welsh coastline and the Brecon Beacons. He defied the odds, being so active despite his serious knee injury years earlier. He would give his family regular updates on the number of steps he had walked that day. He would even park in the furthest parking bay in Tesco to top-up his steps.

Peter will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him. He was a kind, loving and generous man who led an exciting and eventful life. He battled his illness with bravery and humour, joking that he was allowed two pints of beer; one for him and one for the tumour. He even wanted to get t-shirts printed when he went on a family holiday to Dubrovnik reading, 'Tumour on tour'.

His legacy will live on in his five children who are devastated by his passing. Peter would not have wanted you to be sad today. He would want you all to celebrate his life and continue to tell his weird and wonderful stories.

Before his passing he said to his children that he was not sad to die because he had an amazing life and had lived life to the fullest. His love was unconditional. His kindness and generosity will be remembered by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.