

*A Celebration of the life of*  
**Christopher Raymond Sweeney**  
**‘Chris’**



28<sup>th</sup> April 1941 to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Service to be held at the Chapel, Hawkinge Crematorium,  
On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February from 2pm

Service conducted by the Celebrant, Michael Finneran  
Hambrook & Johns

Curtains to close during the last piece of music  
Chris's medals on a cushion, placed on the Union flag draped over his coffin  
Celebrant will wear a Black tie  
Family and/or friends as bearers? TBC on the day  
With family and friends gathering before the service, then to follow in behind as Chris is borne into the chapel **with music playing**, lead by the celebrant  
Michael accompanies Margaret as she places a single red rose with Chris's coffin during the music

## **Where Eagles Dare** by Band of the Parachute Regiment



If necessary, music to be slowly faded away as Michael stands at the lectern

### **OPENING WORDS**

I would like to welcome you all here this afternoon, as we gather to give thanks for the life of Christopher Raymond Sweeney, of Chris...to celebrate his life. You have all come here to show your love and support...each of you in your own ways, are here to honour and pay tribute to his Life's Adventure and recall all moments he has left with you

So, with words and music, we have a special ceremony today, a true celebration of Chris's life, as his family and friends share some of their thoughts and memories with you...

### **Chris's Life**

Born in Cambridge on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 1952, from his early years, Chris had remembered travelling back to Ireland as a nipper, all dressed up in a sailor suit...attending boarding school...but his life wouldn't really begin, until becoming a boy soldier.

Don't get me wrong, he was a bugger in those early days! But there was a sergeant who saw in Chris exactly what he himself had come through, and he spoke with Chris, telling him that he understood, but now was the time to get on with it! And...from that moment on...Chris did!

He would earn his wings, joining the elite Parachute Regiment...this would become his home, and his family.

Chris would serve with the regiment for many years, posted to Germany he and his mate Pip had got a band going to earn a few bob, Chris their drummer who I'm told was 'bloody brilliant'!

He would rise through the ranks, getting up to some real mischief at the beginning, at one time achieving the honour of Sergeant Major...

It had been at one of his lad's weddings during the mid 1980s, where the bride had said to Margaret, "I've got this man lined up for you!" Well, come the reception, Chris walked over and asked, "Can I get you a drink Margaret?" She had already commented on "Whose that four eyed thing at the bar?" to another friend. Well, she said to Chris, "How do you know my name?"..."Let me buy you a drink, and I'll tell you." They went off down to the pub, covered in confetti and chatted away. An old couple came and sat at their table, asking, "Have you just got married?" When told they hadn't, the old couple who'd been listening to some of the taling, suggested, "You should be!"

Margaret living in Hinckley, they would chat on the telephone, Chris over in Aldershot. It wasn't long though, before ...well, the rest as they say, is history!

Chris now had a new love in his life, competition to the lads in the regiment. He'd had a bad accident some time before, injuring his spine and shoulder in a jump, but had carried on. Sadly though, with time passing, his injuries became more frustrating, as he found it harder to keep up any more...leaving the regiment in 1987 with the rank of sergeant.

## Tribute from Kiff, The Parachute Regiment

I would like to ask Kiff, if he would like to come and say a few words about the Chris he knew...

### Kiff's words

Thank you, Kiff.

Chris and Margaret got married, and he now had a family again, with her daughters Christine, Karen and Tracey, becoming a granddad as well across the years.

From the army, Chris had loved driving, so became an HGV driver for some time, but his injuries severely restricted the time he could sit in a cab. He worked for a while 15 years ago now as a driver with Hambrook and Johns in Folkestone...as security with the social services in the town as well, but had had to give that up with what was now becoming a debilitating injury. Chris just wanted to work...

## Tributes

I would now like to invite Sammy, Chris's Granddaughter to come and say a few words for you...

### Sammy's words

Thank you, Sammy. Christopher, would you come and join me now?

### Christopher's words

Thank you, Christopher.

### Dion and Cody also to say something? TBA

At this point, I would like to ask if there is anyone else who would like to get up to say a few words about the Chris they knew, to share their memories with everyone here...?

?

## Reflection

We're going to hear Chris's favourite band play now, as they play a rock classic...during which I would like to ask each of you...to take these few moments to maybe close your eyes, think back to the good times that you spent with Chris, and for those of you with a religious or spiritual belief, a time to maybe say a prayer ...and for those of you who have a bloom ...a time for you to say your last goodbye and to place this with Chris...

## Play music

### Who wants to live forever by Queen

There's no time for us,  
There's no place for us,  
What is this thing that builds our dreams, yet slips away from us.

Who wants to live forever,  
Who wants to live forever....?  
There's no chance for us,  
It's all decided for us,  
This world has only one sweet moment set aside for us.

Who wants to live forever,  
Who dares to love forever,  
When love must die.

But touch my tears with your lips,  
Touch my world with your fingertips,  
And we can have forever,  
And we can love forever,  
Forever is our today,  
Who wants to live forever,  
Who wants to live forever,



Forever is our today,  
Who waits forever anyway?

### **Committal & Goodbye** (Curtains to close)

His journey with us complete, we now come to the time for us to say farewell to the physical Chris...but he will remain within each of you, for as long as you live... can I please ask you all to stand?

Celebrant faces Chris

Chris, your life we honour  
your departure we accept, and your memory we cherish  
Now we say goodbye.  
We miss you, your fun, your smile and your love.  
Rest now.  
For your journey with us is complete.  
But you will forever, be in the hearts and minds, of all who have loved you.

Celebrant faces family and friends,

We release his body;  
Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust  
But, if you can learn from his experiences  
if you can profit from his example  
if you can live a little better for having known Chris  
Then this will give continuing purpose to his life  
and will be a living memorial to him

May you find comfort  
and richness and example in your memories  
may you find support  
in your love for one another  
and may you find strength in your hearts.

Finally, on Chris's behalf, I would like to thank you all for joining together here today to celebrate his life; and for all the support and love that you have given across the years ...

Play music (on the loop) , curtains to before then as family and friends leave the chapel...

### **Now I'm here** by Queen

Here I stand  
Look around around around  
But you won't see me

Now I'm here, Now I'm there, I'm just a...

Just a new man  
Yes you made me live again

A baby I was when you took my hand  
And the light of the night burned bright  
And the people all stared didn't understand  
But you knew my name on sight

Whatever came of you and me  
America's new bride to be - don't worry baby I'm safe and sound

Down in the dungeon just Peaches 'n' me  
Don't I love her so

A thin moon me in a smoke-screen sky  
Where the beams of your lovelight chase  
Don't move, don't speak, don't feel no pain  
With a rain running down my face

Your matches still light up the sky  
And many a tear lives on in my eye

Down in the city just Hoople 'n' me



Don't I love him so

Whatever comes of you and me  
I love to leave my memory with you

Now I'm here  
Think I'll stay around around around  
We'll be down in the city justa you 'n' me  
Don't I love you so



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