



Orchid

Alternative Funeral Ceremonies

Orchid Civil Ceremonies was founded by Ian Foster, a trained bereavement counsellor, who recognised the need for a wider choice in styles and funeral ceremonies.

Over a period of some years he has encountered many bereaved people who expressed their feelings of disappointment and sadness at being offered only two choices of funeral: (A) A traditional religious service conducted by a minister of religion; or (B) A strictly non-religious ceremony conducted by a Humanist (i.e. atheist) officiant.

There was no 'compromise solution' and no facilities existed for those families who, despite possibly having some underlying religious beliefs, are not regular churchgoers and may have feelings of being dispirited and, or, disconnected from mainstream religious institutions.

With the feelings of the family very much in mind, Orchid Civil Ceremonies now addresses these important needs. Family members are welcome to choose the format of the ceremony which will reflect the wishes of the deceased person and which can include as little, or as much, religious content as required.

For those who have decided that a traditional Religious Funeral Ceremony would not be appropriate, the Ceremony can now be designed to meet their exact requirements.

Option 1: (Non-Religious)

Based on human values and morals: in this ceremony there is no mention of any Supreme Being or life after death and religious symbols may be covered or removed. The content is usually as follows:

- Opening music;
- Welcoming Words;
- Thoughts on Life and Death;
- Spoken Tributes;
- Poetry Reading;
- Incidental Music;
- Short period of silence;
- The Committal;
- Closing Words;
- Closing Music.

Option 2: (Semi-Religious)

Although basically non-religious, this Ceremony acknowledges that there may be mourners present who would gain comfort from the inclusion of some, or all, of the following:

- Opening music;
- Welcoming Words;
- Thoughts on Life and Death;
- Spoken Tributes;
- Psalm 23: (sung or read);
- Short period of silence;
- Chosen New Testament reading;
- The Lord's Prayer;
- The Committal;
- Chosen Hymn;
- Closing Words;
- Closing Music.

Locations

Although most ceremonies take place at a crematorium, other locations may be used as long as we have permission from the owners of the building or the land. We have conducted funerals and memorials at golf courses, sailing clubs, gardens and concert halls.

Fees

Each ceremony involves about 7-8 of professional time and up to 100 miles of travel. There is a standard fee of £150. We always work closely with the Funeral Director and family members to ensure that every ceremony is a celebration of a unique life that has been lived. To ensure our availability, it is important to let your Funeral Director know that you are using us before booking a date for the ceremony.

The Tributes

Particular emphasis is placed upon the quality and meaningful content of the spoken tributes which may be read by family members or friends. However, the Celebrant can read the tributes as necessary. Whenever possible, a draft copy of the the script is sent to the family for approval, in advance.

Music

Music has always played an important part in Funeral Ceremonies and family members are welcome to choose the kind of music that they consider appropriate. A transcript of the Ceremony is presented to the family after the close of the ceremony.

Dr.Tony Walter, leading sociologist and author of "Funerals and How to Improve Them" published by Hodder & Stoughton wrote

"Soon, it may be that Civil Funeral Ceremonies will particularly appeal to some who, while not wanting a religious funeral, want the funeral to express a personal spirituality. At present it is pure chance whether such a family can find a minister or humanist officiant flexible enough to stray outside their own belief system. With Civil Ceremonies, the bottom line is not the beliefs of the celebrant, but of the deceased."

For further details, please contact: The Funeral Director or Ian Foster, General Manager, Orchid Civil Ceremonies on Freefone 0800 838 660 or email info@orchidcivilceremonies.co.uk

