



'I DID IT MY WAY' NHS HERO CAPTAIN TOM'S FUNERAL SHOWS SMALL CAN BE BEAUTIFUL

Captain Sir Tom Moore is an inspiring reminder that small funerals can still be personal and meaningful.

The COVID-19 epidemic has placed restrictions on the number of people who attend send-offs, adding an extra level of heartbreak for grieving families.

But the ceremony held for Capt Sir Tom, who died with coronavirus last month, shows how an intimate send-off can still reflect the personality and beliefs of the deceased.

The 100-year-old Army veteran, who raised almost £33m for NHS charities by walking laps of his garden, died in Bedford Hospital at the beginning of February.

The funeral was attended by eight members of the hero's immediate family – his two daughters, four grandchildren and his sons-in-law – in line with COVID restrictions.

His family asked the public to pay their respects from home to "continue to support the NHS", while an online book of condolence was set up in his memory.

They also suggested people either plant a tree in his memory, or donate to the Captain Tom Foundation or a charity of their choice.

Capt Sir Tom asked for My Way by Frank Sinatra to be played towards the end of the service.

He wrote: "I want the service to end with My Way by Frank Sinatra because I always did things my way and I especially like the line about having too few regrets to mention".

Pure Cremation founder Catherine Powell says the funeral shows how grieving families can still hold a personalised send-off despite the safety measures.

She said: "With a personalised book of remembrance, the ability to make charity donations, and cameras to broadcast the service, the funeral of Captain Sir Tom Moore was a meaningful and poignant goodbye to a beloved man.

"It's a reminder that non-traditional funerals can still pay tribute to a loved one while providing friends and family with a sense of closure."

In a statement released before the funeral, his daughters said Capt Sir Tom had spoken "openly about his death and his funeral" over the past year.

A willingness to talk about end-of-life plans is healthy and becoming more widely accepted in UK society, Catherine adds.

She said: “The COVID-19 epidemic has had some positive side effects, prompting families to open up about what sort of service they want when they die.

“The funeral of Captain Sir Tom is a wonderful reminder of how we can continue to inspire people even after death – no matter what type of ceremony you have.”