

Alf Blything remembered

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Family, friends and former business associates filled the nave of Cobourg's Calvary Baptist Church as well as the basement Thursday afternoon for the service honouring the late Alf Blything. It was a celebration presided over by Reverend Andrew Truter.

Blything died Monday, July 20 at age 74.

Born July 4, 1935 in Birkenhead, England, he was the youngest of seven children. He had two brothers and four sisters.

Blything served with the English army in Egypt for two years before returning to England to work in the accounting office of Unilever.

It was at this time he met Edna, his wife of 50 years. They continued to live in England, in Port Sunlight, for another five years before emigrating to Canada in 1963.

They began their Canadian life in Sault Ste. Marie. Blything started out with Algoma Central Railway but he soon took exams to work in the federal government and began a long career with the Employment and Immigration department.

A brief stint in Parry Sound followed, then, in 1978, he and Edna moved to Cobourg where he continued to work for the government until his retirement.

Blything was a very active community participant. He

was a member of the Chamber of Commerce board, a member of the Art Gallery of Northumberland and part of the founding board of the Northumberland Community Futures Development Corporation.



Alf Blything

He was a member of the Cobourg Rotary Club for over 30 years, and served as president in 1984.

After his retirement, Blything pursued his love of art with great enthusiasm and enjoyed much local acclaim for his intricately detailed drawings and lively paintings.

He was a member of the Cobourg Art Club and as well an energetic member of the Colborne Society of Artists.

Blything's niece Susan Freeman presented the family tribute at the funeral. She said her uncle embodied "the true meaning of the word public servant."

Among the many adjectives she used to describe his character, she mentioned "generous, adventurous, honest..., a man of faith; a spiritual man."

Blything was "the heart and centre of the family," Freeman said.

While the Blythings did not have children, he loved them and would goof around with them, build snowmen, sing carols, encourage their cre-

ativity, and employ his own nonsense poem to great effect many times: "Chuff, chuff. Woo woo. Second verse, same as the first".

Ernie Everingham, a fellow Rotarian and Blything's best friend, gave the eulogy.

What stood out repeatedly from his comments, and what was most evident in the slide show of photographs presented on a big screen before the service, was that around Blything, everyone smiled — as did he in every photograph.

Blything was a bit of a jokester. He could easily ignore sticking to whatever the script of moment was when a twist of his inventive imagination would inspire something more humorous. Indeed, his best friend said, in best and most humorous sense, his "mind was strange".

"Pen in hand, he would sketch what he saw — not what was there," Everingham said.

Blything was lover of celebration in the company of friends.

"He was caring, empathetic... generous with his time and his talents."

Truter revealed during his homily that Blything thought deeply about passages in the Bible and once came to him during a Rotary meeting with an insight that he hadn't thought of and because of this and other instances, he thought Blything, "had insight in matters spiritual that was most uncommon."