

# Humphreys' life spent helping others

Bram Humphreys is a Christian through and through.

That spirit of caring led him to the Belleville General Hospital many times, where he visited the ill as a chaplain. It also kept him in the Salvation Army for a good part of his life and led him to join many service clubs through which he did a lot of community work.

Today Humphreys lives at Belcrest Villa nursing home and Alzheimer's disease has forced him to be a recipient of the caring he once showed towards others. But Quinte residents have not forgotten his active days.

Humphreys is perhaps best known for his shoe repair stores. He entered the business when the proprietors of B.W. Brown's Shoe Repair on Campbell Street retired. When the building was torn down he bought Adam's Shoe Repair near the footbridge.

It was during his days on Campbell Street that Doug Rushnell met Humphreys. Rushnell worked at John R. Bush Funeral Home (then the Belleville Burial Company) across the street from Hum-

phreys' store. Rushnell says Humphreys had a brisk walk and "always looked like he was going some place with a purpose." Rushnell also had contact with Humphreys at funerals.

"He struck me as an energetic individual, always concerned about the people around him and how they were doing," says Rushnell.

Through his involvement in numerous clubs and fraternal groups, as well as his visits to the hospital and local jail as a chaplain, Humphreys earned the admiration of local residents.

"He was a wonderful guy," says Alex Glover, who met Humphreys through their mutual association with the 3-47th battery after the Second World War. Humphreys had been a padre in the conflict and served in Europe but not with the 3-47th. When he returned home the unit made him honorary padre because their own chaplain lived far away, says Glover. Not until he became ill did he miss a reunion. Humphreys is remembered as the man who performed the services at the funerals of many

former Legion members.

Bill Hitchon also came to know Humphreys this way. He recalls Humphreys was a staunch Conservative and was campaign manager for former Conservative Party MP Lee Grills' in the latter's first election. One time, with Humphreys well into his senior years, the two attended a political event and Humphreys told Hitchon the people weren't vocal enough before enthusiastically adding his own voice to the clamor after discretely popping out his false teeth.

On the other hand, says Hitchon, Humphreys was "always so polite." Perhaps it was the clergyman in him. If he was a good listener, he gave it back too. "He loved to talk. He could talk for hours," says Hitchon.

Humphreys was a member of several service clubs and numerous fraternal organizations, rising to the top in most of them. Just a few include the Shrine Club, Legion and Masonic Temple.

In his youth he played at local dance halls, including one at the Outlet Beach in the Bon Ton Band in the big band era. He was also a member of the Salvation Army Band for years.

Born in England, Humphreys came to Canada when he was four and first settled in Kingston before moving to Belleville. Through his involvement with the Salvation Army he met his wife, Elsie, and the couple were married June 20, 1923. "He was very much in love with his wife," recalls Glover.



Humphreys, Bram

Profile

An Intelligencer file photograph of Bram Humphreys.

Remember when ...  
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In later years he left the Army for personal reasons but continued as a devout Christian. About two years ago he entered Belcrest Villa where he lives today.