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Former councillor Jack Ireland pillar of the community: colleagues

Longtime municipal politician dies Saturday at age 85

By Henry Bury

The Intelligencer

All Quinte-area municipal politicians would do well to emulate former Belleville alderman Jack Ireland, say two previous Belleville mayors.

"As far as an alderman, you just couldn't ask for anybody better," Robin Jeffrey said Sunday.

Added George Zegouras, "He had no agenda of his own. ... The only agenda he had was to represent the people of this community to the best of his ability."

Ireland, a prominent Belleville businessman and former alderman, died Saturday at age 85.

Funeral service will be held Tuesday at 11 a.m. at Bridge Street United Church.

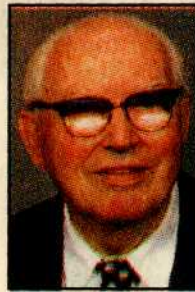
Ireland owned and operated Ireland's Appliance and Furniture Store in various downtown locations in Belleville for more than 40 years. He closed the business — which had moved to Bay-side — three years ago because of ill health.

Ireland served as Belleville alderman from 1958 to 1963 and from 1970 to 1980. He also ran unsuccessfully against Jack Ellis for Belleville mayor.

Jeffrey recalled how Ireland would always treat her fairly.

"I was the only woman on council and he treated me as he would any member of council, regardless of my gender. ... I always appreciated the fact that he treated me equally as any other individual who sits on council," she said.

Jeffrey first sat on Belleville council in 1967 and served as city mayor from 1972-76. As



Jack Ireland

mayor, Jeffrey said, "I admired Mr. Ireland in that he always did his homework and he would express his views honestly. He was always able to contribute to

council and in the decisions made at the council table."

Jeffrey said she had remained friends with him and saw him regularly in church.

"I'm sorry for his family and he will be missed by everyone around him," said Jeffrey.

Zegouras served with Ireland on city council from 1974-80, before becoming mayor the following year. They were friends for more than 30 years.

"I've always had the highest regard for his honesty and integri-

ty," Zegouras said. "He was a great humanitarian and he was committed to serving his fellow citizens."

Zegouras said Ireland served the city with distinction and will always be remembered for his unselfish contributions to the community.

"Mr. Ireland was committed and dedicated to serve the community and, in my view, he did just that with distinction.

"He will be a great loss to our community," he said.

Besides his career in business and politics, Ireland was also a longtime member of Bridge Street United Church, the Masonic Lodge A.F. & A.M. No. 283, Rotary Club of Belleville (a member since 1924) and the Belleville Shrine Club where, last year, he received a 50-year pin.

Ireland is survived by three children, 10 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Visitation is today (Monday) from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Belleville Funeral Home and Chapel on North Front Street.

An A.F. & A.M. No. 283 G.R.C. memorial service will be held at the funeral home this evening at 7 p.m.

Tuesday's funeral service at Bridge Street United Church at 11 a.m. will be conducted by Rev. Dr. Harold Wilson and Rev. Maurice McLeod.