

# Nothing surpassed his love of family

By LEE BALLANTYNE  
Managing Editor

He was a hell of a guy!

That, in a Harry Mulhall nutshell, accurately describes Harry.

That's how he would have written it.

I'm sitting at his typewriter, trying to put this story together on Harry's battered, blue, IBM Selectric machine. A machine that's seen thousands and thousands and thousands of words, every one of them a gem.

I feel somewhat inadequate. He had a flair for words... he spent much of his life perfecting his skill as a word-smith. I know he could have done much better than I am capable of doing - I also know he will understand my weakness.

I cried last night. I wasn't alone. There are many Belleville residents who share my feelings. At The Intelligencer today, we struggle not to cry. We carry on.

We mourn our friend over beers (in the fashion of journalists everywhere) and recall his strengths (many), his weaknesses (few), his friends (uncountable), his enemies (none we can think of.)

Those who know Harry need no reminder of his personality, his selflessness, his feelings for his fellow man.

Harry the Hat, as long-time Bellevillians remember him, had, in my opinion, three loves.

He loved to travel. I doubt there's a spot on the globe Harry didn't visit. His specialty was exotic locations. Marrakesh ... Afghanistan ... the Indian subcontinent ... those are but a few of the locales Harry passed through. Earlier this year, he took his family to Colombia, just a short junket in Harry's estimation.

Love number 2. This place. This industry. This job ... That's right -- Harry couldn't get enough of the news business. When the rest of us were congratulating each other on today's scoop, Harry was worrying about tomorrow's Page 1. While being admitted to hospital this week, Harry asked his wife Mary to make sure the City Page was taken care of for Saturday. It is, Harry.

Love number 3. The BIG one. Everything else meant nothing compared to this ... his family.

I sat across the desk from Harry for eight years, which doesn't make me an expert on him, but certainly makes me an expert on his office habits.

The most noticeable habit was one of pure, overwhelming love he felt, and showed, for his family.

For his wife, Mary. Rarely a day went by when they didn't exchange feelings over the phone. Every morn-

ing Harry called home with a loving wake-up call for Mary. A normally outgoing Harry would retreat to a secluded part of the office at 7 a.m. to share that private morning moment with Mary.

For his children -- daughter Maggie, the young woman occasionally embarrassed, often thrilled by his show of affection in the office when she visited.

For son Simon, his pride in the accomplishments of a young musician, his caring concern for a broken arm or bruised shin on an active youngster.

For youngest son Nicholas, his exuberant joy and boundless energy in displaying that love whenever Nicholas dropped in.

Nothing, absolutely nothing, was more important to Harry than his family. And that love, coupled with his love of community and fellow man, is what makes Harry special to me.

He passed briefly through my life and made me a better person. And for that I thank him.

The fact that Harry shared the front page this week with Rene Levesque makes me wonder if they're both not sharing a cigarette somewhere, having a laugh and swapping old journalists' tales.

I sure hope so.

Intell.  
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