

Motorcycle funeral procession for area Hells Angels chapter president John Gray travels through the intersection of Ninth Line and Aurora Road to Churchill Cemetery Monday.



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

700 bikers attend funeral for president

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

Wearing "In Memory of John O" black armbands, about 1,000 people, including 700 bikers, filed past the casket holding the president of the Hells Angels-Woodbridge chapter Monday. Some carried helmets. One carried a baby. A few bent and kissed John Gray goodbye. He was laid to rest in full

colours of the oldest and biggest motorcycle club in the world.

A Hells Angels blanket draped the casket after it was closed.

Mr. Gray, 54, of Musselman's Lake, was killed last Tuesday when his motorcycle collided with an oil truck on Aurora Road east of Woodbine Avenue.

Bikers from across Canada attended. Some offered words of comfort to Mr. Gray's widow, Chris, son Robert, daughter Rayan and his mother, Marion.

Following the half-hour service at Fratelli Descio Funeral Home in Woodbridge, hundreds of Hells Angels and friends mounted their big bikes and escorted the funeral procession through Woodbridge, Richmond Hill and Whitchurch-Stouffville to Churchill Community Cemetery in Ballantrae.

During the funeral, a Hells Angel known as Carl, pointed out Mr. Gray stood six-feet, five-inches tall and weighed more than 300 pounds.

STOOD BEHIND FRIENDS

"If you saw John O and didn't know him, your eyes would open wide," Carl said. "John O stood behind his people and his people stood behind John O. It was the safest place to be."

Mr. Gray was described as a born leader, a family man and a lover of life.

"He was proud of the Hells Angels and we were proud of him," Carl said.

Steven Horn said his brother-in-law had a quiet strength.

"John will live on in our memories," he said.

The funeral, including the long procession, was peaceful, said York Regional Police Staff Sgt. Don Hunt.

It took 10 minutes for the procession to get through each intersection.

Mr. Gray was buried alongside his two sons.

His death marks the third tragedy to strike the family in as many years. Mr. Gray's son Jesse was stabbed to death at a field party in Uxbridge in 2002, while a second son, John Jr., died suddenly in November.

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