

EULOGY FOR ART SIDDALL - PART ONE

From his nieces, nephews and friends in Northern Ireland.

To be read at his memorial service

In Loving Memory of Uncle Art,

Deeply regretted by the Hunter / Cunningham family circle, Robinson Family Circle, both in Newtownabbey and Newcastle, Northern Ireland.. Neil / Best Family Circle

We all have fond memories of Uncle Art & Aunt Nettie visiting us in Ireland throughout the years. They visited us all on many occasions and brought joy and laughter every visit to us all.

We loved listening to all the stories Uncle Art used to tell us as he was such an educated and interesting person to listen to. Aunt Nettie used to tell him off for rambling on at us but we enjoyed the banter.

He loved travelling round our beautiful countryside and listening to all our craic (pronounced crack) and stories and like Sharon took many pictures of us all in different locations throughout the years. He loved our good food and nights in and out, home cooking, potato bread and Belfast Baps with a Good Ulster Fry.

He loved our sense of humour and banter and he loved our singsongs as many of the Robinsons had hidden musical talents. We used to love listening to him playing the organ and giving us a few songs.

We miss the entire Siddall family and will remember them all. Part of our lives have now gone but never forgotten. We will cherish all of our fond memories and times with them and now Uncle Art has gone to join Aunt Nettie & Sharon. We love and miss them all and will cherish our memories of them close to our hearts forever.

EULOGY FOR ART SIDDALL PART TWO

From his nieces, nephews and friends in Vancouver BC, and Washington State

An affable wit, a charming character, and a kind soul. These are just a few of the characteristics we will remember in our uncle Art Siddall. We were all very young when Uncle Art returned from service in the Royal Canadian Navy. Any discussion of hardships, or calamities associated with the War, were far out-shadowed by his excitement and enthusiasm of meeting, and courting his Irish bride-to-be, Nettie McFettridge.

She was crowned Miss Belfast, a title that, quite suddenly and unexpectedly was endowed upon the shy and modest young miss, at a community dance held in honor of the Allied naval officers during their shore leave. Art rather boldly “borrowed” an officer’s uniform and hat and eluding any authoritative presence at the door walked into the dance, which was strictly forbidden to the enlisted men. Art spotted Nettie across the room, and asked her up on the floor to dance. Art loved to dance, and play piano and organ. These skills were essential and encouraged, growing up in our Nana Siddall’s house. Nana Siddall instilled good social behavior in both Art and his older sister, Vivian, from politeness, neatness, and posture, to brewing a proper cup of tea. A trait she would always enforce with the rest of us as well. Nettie was swept away by his charm and wit.

Art’s naval duty entailed running armed escort duty back and forth across the North Atlantic Ocean between the safe harbors of Halifax, in Canada, and Belfast, Northern Ireland. The short layovers Art had in Belfast before the return trips, were completely occupied with his sweetheart, Nettie.

Leaving behind, at the dock, a small crowded naval vessel, crewed with men who spoke and acted like sailors usually do, Art skillfully put that environment behind him, and put his nurtured social skills to work, winning not only Nettie’s heart and promise, but helping set out the welcome mat by Nettie’s family any time he should come to visit. This was a trait Art perfected masterfully. And indeed, he was always welcomed back.

Art always had an interesting story to tell, and it usually ended with raucous laughter from all who listened. Usually parts of the sailor came out in him during the telling of the story, and Nettie would exclaim Oh Art!!!!

When their precious daughter Sharon was born, in 1951, the family was complete. They were inseparable and grew and travelled far and wide together. They made central California home. They remained very social people, loved family and friends, and when they arrived, the party would begin. Sharon, always telling of far-away travels of adventure and amazement, Art highlighting and punctuating the wittier aspects which Sharon omitted, and Nettie forever gasping Oh Art!!! When the story became the least bit, the way a sailor would tell it.

This is the way we will always remember them, and I say them, because, to talk of one, would be to talk of the three of them. Without each other, they were incomplete. Once separated, they could not survive without the others. The Lord called Sharon to his House, too early for the rest of us, and in the worst of circumstances for Nettie and Art. In His mercy, He has brought Art to be together with Nettie and Sharon for all time. We will miss them dearly.

A copy of Art’s biography is available as you leave today.