

**MYRON BENEDICT "JACK" CRYAN****Sept 26, 1915 - Sept. 16, 1992**

This biography is written to preserve the memory of Brother Jack Cryan for the benefit of the young men of the Squires Circle that was named in his honour. In 1992, St. Thomas Council 1467 reactivated Squires Circle #1282, under the leadership of Brother Paddy Morgan, PGK and PFN. With the passing in September 1992 of PDD Brother Jack Cryan, the Circle, under the leadership of Chief Squire Jim Artibello, was then renamed and dedicated to the memory of this special man. Brother Jack was a Catholic gentleman held in deep respect by all who knew him.

Jack Cryan was born in Port Stanley, Sept 26, 1915 and grew up on a farm just outside of Port Stanley. Not much is known about Jack's early years and education. We do know that he rode the train from Port Stanley each day to attend St. Joseph's High School and that he moved to St. Thomas on the occasion of his marriage to his sweetheart Kathleen [Kay] Murphy.

Jack and Kay were devoted members of Holy Angels' parish where Jack served as Usher and Eucharistic Minister for many years. He was so conscientious about his duties at Holy Angels that he would always arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of mass.

Although we know that Jack worked for many years as a nursing assistant at the former St. Thomas Psychiatric Hospital, we know most about Jack's life as a Knight of Columbus.

He took his 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Oct. 1946, and his 4<sup>th</sup> degree June 1959. In 1985 Jack became an Honourary Life Member of the Order. Jack so impressed the Order with his personal qualities, his dedication to his Faith and his service to the Order and to the community that the Supreme Council in New Haven, Connecticut appointed him District Deputy of District 50, in 1986-87. This was certainly a special appointment because Jack was appointed to this honoured and important position WITHOUT EVER HAVING BEEN ELECTED AGRAND KNIGHT. This was a truly exceptional honour for a truly exceptional Catholic gentleman.

Jack's personal mission in life seemed to be one of compassion for those in distress as he had a soft heart for those in emotional, material or spiritual need and for the bereaved.

While working at the "Psych Hospital", Jack's compassion for the most needy and lonely of the patients was seen by all. Jack also realized that many patients who died there did so without relatives or friends. Jack saw the need for people to act as pallbearers for the funerals of these people and so he approached his Brother Knights about providing this service. Out of this special work of mercy began the tradition of Council 1467 of the Knights of Columbus providing pallbearer service for anyone or any family in need within the city, regardless of their church affiliation.

Jack was a frequent visitor to the funeral homes of the city to express his personal condolences to the bereaved and he was the one who was instrumental in starting the practice of the Knights

assisting with the Salvation Army Christmas Kettles on a regular basis.

For many years Jack was the one who regularly visited sick members on behalf of the Council, arranged for masses for the sick and deceased and organized almost single handedly our annual Corporate Communion Breakfast.

For his service to those in need, both in the Council and throughout the city, Jack received the special honour of a medal from the province of Ontario in 1976 - the Ontario Medal of Good Citizenship.

But it is important for the young men of the Jack Cryan Circle of the Squires to know that what people remember most about Brother Jack were not his titles or his awards or the positions of responsibility he held, but rather people remember his special personal qualities.

Brother Jack was a special person.

In his dealings with other people he was the ultimate gentleman. In a world where more and more people seek attention by being loud, "in your face" and perhaps obscene, in a crowd Jack Cryan stood out because he was quiet, polite, unassuming and genuinely respectful and humble in his relationship with others. Jack was a quiet gentle person who made an impression on people in the right way.

Jack was a humble person, not rich with worldly possessions, but rich with the respect of everyone he encountered as he always went out of his way to be helpful and kind to others. In the eyes of those who knew him, Jack was a devout Catholic and truly a saintly man. His role of Eucharistic Minister at Holy Angels' was one which he accepted with great humility, as anyone could see when he approached the altar to receive his pyx to carry the Blessed Sacrament to those in nursing homes. Jack always approached the altar with his hands folded and his head bowed. He was not backwards about sharing the importance of his faith in his life but he was not brash about sharing it with others either.

Jack was a shy person who struggled at times with stuttering and did not speak easily in front of large numbers of people. But when he did, Jack would often give credit to the Knights of Columbus for giving him greater self-confidence and the opportunity for personal growth.

Jack was truly a leader in Council 1467, not by holding a high ranking office or a position of power, but by being a genuine "servant leader".

Brother Jack Cryan died September 16, 1992. Throughout his life he was passionately faithful in his role as a Catholic gentleman, to his marriage, to his Church, to the Knights of Columbus and to his fellow man.