

A first class guy

Peel Bio. Sep. 24/97 MN

It's hard to imagine any politician more synonymous with a community than Frank McKechnie was with Malton.

McKechnie came to be known as "the Mayor of Malton," but he never forgot that he came to the police village in 1951 as a toolmaker for A.V. Roe Co.

Although his colleagues jokingly chided McKechnie for his Scottish thriftiness in saving election signs from campaign to campaign, that was symbolic of his common sense, down-to-earth approach to everything he did.

It's probably what kept him in office for more than 38 years. There's not much doubt that if he had stayed in good health, McKechnie would have extended that amazing electoral record this Nov.

While he made many outstanding acquisitions for Malton, he will be remembered most for his sunny personality.

The councillor could take umbrage with the best of them at the perceived injustices of the world, but he couldn't stay mad at anyone for long. The most vociferous of debates with colleagues were quickly forgotten in the back room.

It was not just his political skills or his record of achievement that kept the voters of ward 5 returning McKechnie through 17 elections. It was also his engaging personality.

What we'll remember most about Frank McKechnie is that he was a kind, decent man who always had a big smile and a sincere interest in everyone he ever met.