CONDOLENCE MOTION

Moved by: Councillor Denzil Minnan-Wong
Seconded by: Councillor Janet Davis

Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Willis Lincoln Blair on April 5, 2014.

Willis Blair had a long and proud history of public service. Elected to East York’s Town Council in 1958, Mr. Blair remained in office as an Alderman until 1972, when he was elected Mayor of East York. During his distinguished career Mr. Blair also served on Metropolitan Toronto Council, the Ontario Municipal Board and as Chair of the Liquor License Board of Ontario.

Mr. Blair was born on May 14, 1923 in West Zorra, a small town near London, Ontario. The eldest of eight children, Willis Blair grew up on his parent's dairy farm, which had been passed down from their Scottish immigrant forebears. During World War 2, Mr. Blair enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, serving on home soil as a mechanic. Following the war, Mr. Blair attended the University of Toronto.

During his time in office, Willis Blair made a number of significant contributions to East York and Metropolitan Toronto. He was a lifelong supporter of the Westview Presbyterian Church, the Toronto East General Hospital and the East York Kiwanis Club. Willis Blair loved sports, and during his time on Metropolitan Toronto Council, he was instrumental in bringing Major League Baseball to Toronto. An avid curler, Willis Blair was founder of the World Junior Curling Championship, making East York the first host of the tournament in 1975.

Willis Blair is survived by Elsie, his loving wife of 70 years, his son Douglas (Marilyn), daughters Judy Feltcher (Charlie) and Janice Jones. Mr. Blair is grandfather of Jennifer, Christine, Sean, Andrea, Geoffrey, Alexander, Scott and Andrew and great-grandpa of Suri and Jora. Willis Blair is brother to Robert Blair (Jean), Madeleine Kirkby (Donald) and Margaret Smith.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to Willis Blair's family.

May 6, 2014