

Cape Breton businessman Irving Schwartz dies

Interests ranged from furniture to landmine clearance

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Well-known Cape Breton businessman and philanthropist Irving Schwartz died Saturday in Sydney. He was 81.

Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter paid tribute to Schwartz's life, and expressed his condolences to Schwartz's family and friends.

"Irving Schwartz was not only a remarkable businessman, his legacy as a community leader and philanthropist will be the achievements for which he is most remembered," Dexter said. "I was deeply saddened to learn of his death."

Schwartz, a native of New Waterford, was the founder and CEO of Schwartz and Company Limited, a successful furniture and retail business based in Sydney. He was involved with more than 30 companies over the years, including Seaside Cable TV, nursing homes, computer software and oyster fishing. He was inducted into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame in 2003.

Schwartz was also co-founder of the Canadian International Demining Corps, a Sydney-headquartered charitable organization supporting an international ban on anti-personnel landmines and providing mine-clearance services in Bosnia, Mozambique, Kosovo, Jordan and other countries.

Schwartz was named to the Order of Canada in 1998, and was upgraded to an officer of the order in 2004.

"He was a tireless force for good," said Parker Donham, who was a reporter at the Cape Breton Post when he first met Schwartz 40 years ago.

"He constantly thought about what he could do to make Cape Breton a better place, New Waterford a better place, Sydney a better place," Donham said. "He just brought a tremendous positive energy to that."

Deputy premier Frank Corbett also expressed sadness at his passing. "Cape Breton was very fortunate to have a leader like Irving Schwartz," Corbett said. "His passion for life, family and community will be sorely missed."

Source: CBC News <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/cape-breton-businessman-irving-schwartz-dies-1.870078>