

80 mourners gather to say a final farewell to Derick

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A real character, a one-off and everyone's friend – that is how mourners have remembered popular Lincoln man Derick Bell, who died after a heart attack at the age of 72.

About 80 people gathered at St Michael's Church in Waddington on Tuesday, January 30, for the funeral of a man who lived life to the full despite disability.

His coffin was draped in the Union flag in recognition of his 32 years picking litter at RAF Scampton and a representative from the base joined the congregation.

Mr Bell was born with one arm, but overcame physical and mental disabilities.

He was honoured by the Queen with the Imperial Service Medal in 1996 for his work at Scampton and was a massive supporter of charities – even sleeping rough to raise money for the Nomad Trust.

He lived with carers Janice Goodson and her late husband Maurice in Rookery Lane, Lincoln, for 25 years, before moving to St Michael's care home in Waddington a few months before he died on December 18 last year.

The Reverend Annabel Barber told the funeral congregation at the church: "I think we have all been enriched by having known Derick.

"Derick started coming to church here a few months before he died and he would tell everyone each time he came that: 'Everyone knows me from all of the churches in Lincoln'.

"At first I was not sure if this was a fact or just Derick's view on life – then I found out it was true.

"He was not just a member of



Mourners attended the funeral of Lincoln man Derick Bell, who died after heart attack at the age of 72



many churches – he was also a member of the Mothers' Union.

"One time after a service at the cathedral he was found in Bishop Bob's car waiting for a lift home.

"His singing in church was enthusiastic... but not everyone

would say it was in tune!

"He had a lifelong association with the RAF and it's nice to have a representative from Scampton here.

"He was very proud of his work and the medal he received for his long service.

"He lived his life as fully as he possibly could."

Rev Barber said Derick's first holiday was with Janice and his adoptive family to Spain. She said: "It was also the first time he'd been on a plane and you can imagine his child-like enthusiasm – but he was surprised you couldn't get off halfway along."

Claire Richardson, 43, who knew Derick from when she worked at the Miller's Arms, said: "He would call in at the pub every other day – he was certainly a one-off. I remember once he said he wanted to join the pool team but then admitted he couldn't play.

"He never let anything or anyone get him down."

In June 1996, the Lincolnshire Echo reported how Mr Bell was thrilled to be informed of his medal of honour in a letter from the Officer Commanding RAF Cranwell.