

**“SERVICE ABOVE SELF”
IN THE ANTIPODES**

**Rotary in Australia and New Zealand
1921-2014**

by

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Table of Contents

Certificate of Authorship	iii
Acknowledgments.....	viii
Abstract	iv
Methodology.....	vi
Publications	ix
The Oceania region	x
Introduction.....	1
Chapter One – In the Beginning.....	5
Chapter Two – An Association of Clubs.....	18
Chapter Three – Serious about Service.....	33
Chapter Four – Projects and Programs for Youth	41
Chapter Five – Projects and Programs for the Aged	65
Chapter Six – Community Service	74
Chapter Seven – International Understanding.....	94
Chapter Eight – World Community Service	109
Chapter Nine – Vocational Service.....	125
Chapter Ten – Meetings.....	131
Chapter Eleven – Communications	140
Chapter Twelve – Rotarians	145
Chapter Thirteen – Influences.....	164
Chapter Fourteen – Rotary in Context: Past, Present and Future.....	173
Chapter Fifteen – Conclusions.....	188
Notes	191
Bibliography	204
Appendix A.....	213
Appendix B.....	214
Appendix C.....	215

Certificate of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of Charles Sturt University or of any other accredited educational institution, except where due acknowledgment is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by colleagues with whom I have worked at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere during my candidature is fully acknowledged.

I agree that this thesis be accessible for the purpose of study and research in accordance with the normal conditions established by the Executive Director, Library Services or nominee, for the care, loan and reproduction of theses.

.....
Herbert Paul Henningham

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of the Rotary movement in Australia and New Zealand and is based upon research into primary sources by a “participant observer” who has been personally involved for more than 60 years. The thesis provides a brief background to the development of Rotary from 1905 and traces the history of the movement in the Oceania Region from its beginnings in 1921 to the present, with emphasis on developments since the Second World War. It also examines the major achievements of Rotary and some of its significant projects and programs and their contribution to human welfare at local, national, regional and international levels.

The thesis considers the structure of the organisation as an association of autonomous clubs with a common purpose – to serve society locally, regionally and internationally. It examines the major changes that have occurred to meet changing circumstances and the influence of Rotary on the development of the service club movement at large. “Service clubs” are defined in the thesis as groups that have service to the community as the leading ostensible objective. A working assumption of the thesis is that the activities of these clubs – and notably Rotary – are significant and worthy of further research.

Rotary has been embraced with more enthusiasm, attracting more members relative to population, in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands than in any other region. The thesis explores this relative popularity and the distinctive aspects of Rotary in Australia and New Zealand in terms of (1) relatively egalitarian societies facilitating the recruitment of members over a wider spectrum of the community; (2) the well-established practice of mutual aid developed in Australasia by a comparatively recent colonial frontier experience; (3) a ready acceptance of and a talent for the development of bureaucratic organisation inherited from a colonial past and (4) the abdication (in part) by the diminishing congregations of the established churches of what were previously seen as their social welfare responsibilities, leaving a missionary vacuum to be filled by secular associations.

This study provides some provisional answers to questions about the contribution of Rotary to human welfare, but it also raises further questions about the methods Rotary has adopted to identify needs and the effectiveness of some Rotary programs. The thesis has been written against the backdrop of the history of institutions and of voluntary societies. Scholars writing accounts of trade unions, lodges, fraternities, friendly

societies and comparable social groups have noted how much work remains to be done on these significant social organisations. This thesis is offered as a modest contribution to that developing body of research.

Methodology

In this thesis the methodology employed is that of social history; described by famous historian G. M. Trevelyan, in his Introduction to *English Social History*, 1944, as "...a history of a people with the politics left out". A popular definition is "history that concentrates on social, economic and cultural institutions of a people". As such it is concerned with the study of organisations and popular movements that are not necessarily linked directly to the major structures of the state, such as parliament, the civil service and the military; or to recognised and dominant belief systems – those of religions and ideologies. Social history gives equal importance to all levels of society and recognises that the activities of "great" men and women and powerful institutions – which dominate published sources of all types – make up only a small segment of human experience.

It is now widely believed that, until the mid-twentieth century, established histories gave "too little attention to the many local, small-scale changes in social life".¹ Social history corrects this oversight, often addressing those mundane and familiar activities that may at first seem to be without a significant past, or to be readily understood by unfiltered observation. The historian takes on a more detailed view, which analyses the processes of change, the causality of events, and the interplay of individual lives and social themes.

Social history is a particularly suitable methodology for the study of voluntary organisations. It is to the credit of social historians that they have rescued topics such as choirs, trade unions, baking festivals and advice columns.

This thesis draws upon research into primary and secondary sources, largely generated from the organisation being studied – Rotary itself. There are numerous internal records – club and district histories, minutes of meetings, proceedings of conferences, institutes and conventions, handbooks, manuals and guidelines for members, decisions and recorded actions of committees; and published magazines, pamphlets, leaflets and newsletters. There are also oral testimonies – recorded conversations in which Rotary members have shared their views and experience over many years, recent responses to my requests for information and opinions; and my own records and my memory, fallible perhaps, of personal involvement in many of the projects and programs described. As a researcher, I have scrutinised these sources for the stated and verifiable information that they contain, while also seeking to be

conscious of the assumptions, cultural viewpoints and biases inherent in their content.

Obviously, the assessment of such primary sources requires that they be placed in context and interpreted in ways that yield a historical understanding. The thesis will be dominated by descriptive writing, as a documented representation of Rotary in this region is an important initial step.

The thesis will also offer a developed view of social forces and the process of historical change.

There is a general view, held by some socialist writers, that philanthropy functions as a means of mitigating the worst of poverty, thus stifling dissent. Indeed, in this writer's own experience, left wing elements active in student politics in the immediate post-World War Two years strongly criticized social work students (in most immoderate language) for working with and for governments and "hypocritical philanthropic plutocrats", thus deferring the revolution and perpetuating a social system that enslaved the proletariat. A study reflecting this strand of social theory would be very different from the present thesis. Another not uncommon view has been that, in a welfare state, citizens should stand ready to pay their taxes and look to the state to provide tax-funded welfare services, with support provided by community groups seen as largely irrelevant. In contrast, the author regards Rotary and similar organisations as having played – and as continuing to play – a worthwhile and significant role by meeting special needs that taxpayer-funded services are not reasonably expected to provide

Before making any critical scrutiny of Rotary clubs in Australasia, scholars need to know their exact history and place in society. This thesis is occupied with that task. It is also valid to record the achievements of Rotary and the positive experiences of those who have committed much time and effort to the movement; this does not necessarily contradict those who have a more critical view of charities and service clubs but contributes to an understanding of why these organisations exist in their present and historical form.

This thesis makes no claims to be the last word on Rotary in Australasia. It is intended to be the first word – an introductory study which will offer an informative history, while preserving documents, sources and indications for further research by future scholars.

Publications in which some research material used for this thesis has appeared previously:-

The Story of Rotary Institutes in Australia, 1978

Seventy Five years of Service, Rotary in Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, 1921 -1996, 1996*

Leaders in Service Down Under, 2000, (245-316)

In Search of Health, 2001

The Probus Story, 2006

With Health in Mind, 2011

* A revised and updated version of a 1991 unpublished study, held in the Rotary Archive at RDU House, Parramatta.

Other volumes published in Australia and New Zealand of which Rotary was the principal subject:-

Harold Hunt, *The Story of Rotary in Australia 1921-1971* Australia

Fred Hall Jones, *Rotary in New Zealand 1921-1971* 1971 (NZ)

H.T Thomas, *Rotary Mosaic*, 1974 (NZ) – a compendium of background information by a former president of Rotary International.

A.R. Dreaver, *Rotary in the Seventies* 1980 (NZ)

(Sir) Clem Renouf, *The Rotary International Health, Hunger and Humanity Program* 1999 (Australia) – the development of the program that enabled Rotary clubs to work together on projects to meet global health, hunger and human welfare needs (e.g. Polio eradication) described by the Rotary International former president who initiated it.

This list does not include any of the many Rotary club and district histories published in Australia and New Zealand. Those consulted for this work are referenced.

Countries and geographical areas in the Oceania region in which there are Rotary clubs

American Samoa

Australia

Cook Islands

New Caledonia

New Zealand

Norfolk Island

Papua New Guinea

Samoa

Solomon Islands

Timor Leste

Tonga

Vanuatu

The Antipodes?

Australasia? Oceania? Down Under? Antipodes? What is the most acceptable name for Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific Islands? Objections are raised to all: some New Zealanders object to “Australasia” – though it is claimed to have been first used by the French as “Australasie” or south of Asia; some Western Australians have been known to reject “Oceania” – which, though used in Rotary International literature for this region, has been applied to varying groups of countries and islands; “Down Under” – said to have been coined by the Anzacs during the First World War – still raises the ire of some Australians.

The main objection to “Antipodes” seems to be that it perpetuates “cultural cringe” – indicating that we accept our inferiority as being the “opposite” of the United Kingdom; however it seems to this author to be more generally acceptable than the others; hence its adoption for this work.

Introduction

An attempt will be made in this thesis to extend knowledge of

- (a) the activities of the Rotary movement in Australia and New Zealand;
- (b) the values, characteristics, motivation and social attitudes of Rotarians and
- (c) the methods employed by Rotarians to identify and meet social needs at home and abroad, to promote high ethical standards in all vocations and to advance international understanding and friendship.

The work is undertaken in the context of evidence that the Rotary movement in Australia and New Zealand has attracted a higher membership in relation to population than in any other region of the world and anecdotal evidence that, while meeting its service commitments to internationally-accepted standards, it has developed unique organisational structures providing a highly professional quality to what is, essentially, a voluntary organisation of amateurs.

Considered in the study are:-

- (1) As background, the formation of the first Rotary club in 1905, the growth of the movement for the next sixteen years and its extension to Australia and New Zealand in 1921;
- (2) Rotary's organisational structure as an association of autonomous clubs and the requirement that all members be involved in both decision-making and the actual service work;
- (3) The extension of the movement to Australia and New Zealand; the early identification of needs and first projects; and the enthusiasm for extension;
- (4) Projects and programs for youth, the aged, the community, communities in developing countries, the advancement of world understanding and the promotion of professional and business ethics;
- (5) Meetings at various levels – local, district, national/regional and international – and their varied functions and purposes;
- (6) Communications within the world-wide Rotary network;
- (7) The changing composition of Rotary: until the present Century, members were predominantly middle-aged, upper middle-income, married males over 40 years of age, most of whom were business proprietors, managers, senior executives, professionals or retired people in these categories; but, in the second decade of the 21st Century, Rotary includes many women and, in addition, draws public-

spirited people in the middle-income range who are not necessarily business and professional “leaders” with discretionary authority in their vocations but are still able to meet the financial and service demands of Rotary; and with a significantly higher percentage of retired people.

- (8) Other service clubs based on the Rotary model and their particular areas of service;
- (9) Rotary in its historical context and the influences of our colonial past on the evolution of unique aspects of the movement in the region;
- (10) The decline in the number of members in the 21st Century, common to most clubs and societies, but partly balanced by an unprecedented increase in the number of Rotary-sponsored services.

It will be demonstrated that Rotary in this region has initiated many valuable internationally-adopted projects and programs, particularly for youth and for the welfare of people in developing countries; and that, at all levels, soon after initiating or developing a new project or program of more than local significance or to meet a transient need, Rotary in the region has almost invariably established formal structures with clearly-stated objectives and clearly-defined, procedures.

That Rotary has changed considerably since the first clubs were formed in Melbourne, Sydney, Wellington and Auckland in 1921 will be clearly seen. It has changed, not only in the Antipodes but also throughout the world, to meet changing circumstances, to meet different needs and to reflect a changing society. Some resistance to change has been noted but, as current and past leaders of Rotary International from this region have emphasised, the regular review and, where necessary, modification of constitutional documents, policies, procedures and programs is generally accepted as essential in any dynamic organisation that hopes to remain relevant.

It will be shown that Rotary clubs, though following some earlier forms of male socialisation, show the influences of secularisation, the managerial revolution, and the redefinition of class roles in industrialised societies. As business and professional men in early twentieth century America, the first Rotarians met on equal terms in a society that prized individualism and material success. These men, generally though not universally – for some did manage to embrace both – were less inclined to join ritualised societies such as lodges, or to imitate the purely social world of gentlemen’s clubs, which followed the potent model founded in Britain. Both lodges and exclusive

social clubs existed and flourished in America but they did not meet the emerging need for a simple, convivial social circle, organised on rational principles and offering inclusive rather than status-seeking eligibility for membership. Status they already enjoyed and Rotary offered the benefit of mutual recognition, which might be contrasted to this view of the more elaborate world of the gentlemen's clubs:-

Almost everything about gentlemen's clubs...signalled their exclusivity. Club architecture, décor and, most especially, the membership roll were markers of a private, elite world. The men sitting in the soft leather armchairs created and perpetuated a distinct society not only around interests, friendships, and political leanings, to be sure, but also around status. London clubland reflects how status could be created in a social, male-only environment away from the home and the workplace.¹

Or to the mystical and liveried society of the lodges, as described here in a study of one nineteenth century American lodge:-

There are three major degrees in Masonry; Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master Mason. These are referred to as the Blue Lodge, or Craft Masonry. The Blue Lodge degrees all represent, in language and symbolism, the Victorian struggle to be progressively upwardly mobile and reflect appropriate masculine roles. The degrees themselves are representative of the Victorian notion of progress and each degree represents individual advancement. ... The Entered Apprentice degree is intended to prepare initiates for their 'search for Light, the light of divine Truth' and in order to achieve this the candidate was 'entrusted with certain secrets of the Order, all of them moral, ethical, and wholesome.' ... The candidate is made to understand that the compasses represent emblems of virtue and 'are symbolic of the required circumscribed passions for right conduct ... that true standard of rectitude which alone can assure purity of character and happiness.' The square is meant to symbolise morality. To the Entered Apprentice, these are part of the Three Great Lights ...²

Other organisations that most closely foreshadowed Rotary were the Friendly Societies, which combined features of both lodges and trade unions. Most were founded in the nineteenth century but the origins of their movement may go back to the mediaeval era and craft guilds. A grand sense of archaic origins has led to some unlikely self-representations: "The Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Manchester Unity claims on its website to have been established before Jesus was born."³ The friendly societies were not socially exclusive but usually drew members from the skilled working class and small business sector. A recent historical study of the friendly societies in Australia notes that, as a topic, they have been largely neglected by social historians and that: "The societies have been variously but erroneously presented as primitive trade unions, embryonic insurance companies or poor men's Masonic lodges."⁴ One would be

erroneously presenting them again if one were to say that they are a forerunner of Rotary clubs. However, the friendly societies were a form of socialising with the intent, primarily, of serving members but also the wider community. In that, one can discern a common thread with the service club movement. They were also all-male and provided men with a social space outside either the workplace or their homes and families. The friendly societies, unlike Rotary and other service clubs, had ceremonies, oaths, costumes, parades and other forms of formalised role-playing. As a condition of membership they raised funds which were used to protect members who became ill or unemployed – such functions were largely replaced, during the 20th century, by the benefits of the welfare state. Service clubs never aspired to this function. The friendly societies, as social activity groups, went into decline during the 1920s and largely ceased operation during the 1950s – although they still exist, having evolved into very professional bodies for investment and health insurance.

Finally, in this study, consideration will be given to the historical context in which the Rotary movement has developed in the region and to some of the recent trends that suggest the future directions of the movement, including pressures to use its numerical strength and influence to undertake projects and programs on a grand scale, both regionally and internationally; the collateral demands for a positive public relations policy (ostensibly to encourage public support for its projects); the identification of needs; the influence of the recruitment of women into Rotary ranks; and some recent initiatives.

Chapter One – In the beginning

The Rotary movement – and, indeed the whole service club movement – began on the evening of 23rd February, 1905, when, at the instigation of 38-year-old Lawyer Paul P. Harris, four men met in the small, upstairs office of a mining engineer in the Unity Building, Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. and formed a club of business and professional men with a single object: friendship. One hundred and ten years later there are some 1,235,000 members of 35,200 Rotary clubs in 220 countries with the objectives of fellowship and service: service to the community, service to communities abroad, service to and through each member's vocation and service to the cause of world understanding and peace.¹

Rotary has been the inspiration and the model for the many more international associations with similar aims and objectives: originally for males, Kiwanis, Lions, Civitan, Optimists, Sertoma, the Association of Young Men's Service Clubs (Twenty-Three, Round Table, Junior Chambers of Commerce), Apex; and, for women, Inner Wheel, Altrusa, Lionesses, Quota, Soroptimists and Zonta. In addition to these are the junior service clubs sponsored by those groups: Rotary's Interact (14-18 age group) and Rotaract (18-28); Zonta's Z Clubs and Lions' Leo clubs. Thus the movement that began with four men in a single club in 1905 can be said to have spawned some 100,000 service clubs with a total membership of between 3,500,000 and four million people.

There was no thought of service in the minds of those American businessmen who formed the first Rotary club; or, if there was, no evidence of altruism has been preserved. The objectives were simple and direct: friendship with other business and professional men and advancement of each other's business interests as a means of advancing their own – a process that is widely known today as “networking”.

To ensure harmony in the club, business or professional competition was eliminated by limiting membership to only one man from any vocational “classification”. Thus there could be one lawyer, one doctor, one butcher, one baker, one candlestick-maker...

It was the enjoyment of congenial company at the regular gatherings for fellowship (which soon became weekly dinner and luncheon meetings) that seems to have engendered feelings of goodwill, extending beyond their own circle to embrace the whole community. In 1907, the goodwill thus generated expressed itself in the first “service” project, tentatively suggested by Paul Harris but formally proposed and strongly advocated by a now almost forgotten patent attorney named Donald Carter:

provision of a “public comfort rest room” – euphemism for a lavatory – in Chicago City Hall.² With this humble but useful initiative, the Rotary Club of Chicago was transformed from a social club to an embryonic service club and became the foundation of a movement that would encircle the globe. This was not achieved without resistance from some members who saw the new role for their club as a threat to the “mutual assistance” principle on which it was founded.³ It is probable, however, that if the first Rotary club had remained a comfortable little friendship group it might well have been also the last and only Rotary club – an interesting anachronism destined to disappear without trace within a generation; as did its now forgotten predecessor, the Club of Commerce, “...consisting of one of each Trade”, founded in 17th Century London by Robert Murray, better known for introducing the Penny Post.⁴

A second Rotary club was organised in San Francisco in 1908, followed by a third in Oakland, California, the following year which established the practice, since followed by all clubs, of holding a weekly luncheon (or dinner and later breakfast) meeting. Also organised in 1909 were clubs in Seattle, Los Angeles, New York City and Boston. By now it was accepted that the objectives of Rotary clubs were “fellowship and service” and the elitism of Rotary had been compounded by the expectation that those invited to membership would be recognised as vocational and community “leaders”.

In 1910 the number of clubs grew to 16 and The National Association of Rotary Clubs was formed. Rotary “principles” were adopted in the form of five objectives, which were distinctly different from those to which latter-day Rotarians subscribe:

1. To extend and develop Rotary Principles by the organizing of affiliating Rotary clubs throughout America.
2. To unify the work of the affiliating Rotary clubs and to promote their common good.
3. To arouse and encourage civic pride and loyalty.
4. To promote progressive and honorable business methods.
5. To advance the business interests of the individual members of affiliating clubs.

It is clear that these objectives, in the brutally competitive business climate of Chicago in the first decade of the 20th Century, still strongly emphasised the mutual support of members above the token inclusion of “civic pride” and “ethical practice”, with no mention at all of social service.

Rotary crossed the Atlantic in 1911 when clubs were established in Dublin, London

and Belfast. The name of the association was changed at the 1912 convention to “The International Association of Rotary Clubs” and the constitution was amended by replacing the objectives, adopted only two years earlier, with five new objectives:

1. To promote and recognize the worthiness of all legitimate occupations and to dignify each member’s occupation as affording him the opportunity to serve society.
2. To encourage high ethical standards in businesses and professions.
3. To encourage the efficiency of each member by the exchange of ideas and business methods.
4. To promote the scientizing of acquaintance as an opportunity of service and an aid to success.
5. To quicken the interest of each member in the public welfare and to co-operate with others in civic development.

The new objectives reflected the rapidly changing ethos of Rotary, strongly influenced by the business philosophy of Arthur Frederick (Fred) Sheldon, emphasising service and ethical practice above the mutual promotion of business interests.⁵ They show rather more similarity to the four clauses in the “Object of Rotary” in the current Constitution:-

First: The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

Second: High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations and the dignifying of each Rotarians occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

Third: The application of the ideal of service to every Rotarian’s personal, business and community life;

Fourth: The advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

There were now (1912) 50 clubs with 5,000 members. The system of “districts” (then called “divisions”) was established for administrative purposes; five in U.S.A., two in Canada and one in Great Britain and Ireland.

Widespread floods in Ohio and Indiana, U.S.A. brought the first combined effort of Rotary clubs in 1913. Members contributed active relief service and more than \$25,000 in donations for the victims. For the first time, delegates from Great Britain and Ireland attended a Rotary convention (in Buffalo, N.Y., U.S.A.).

With the outbreak of war in 1914, British clubs concentrated on relief work of many

kinds, including the housing of Belgian refugees. The work intensified as the war progressed and entertainment for wounded soldiers was provided. In Manchester, Glasgow and London Rotary companies of Special Constabulary were organised. One of the many music hall identities who entertained troops in the field was famous Scottish comedian Sir Harry Lauder, a member of the Rotary Club of Glasgow.⁶

Meanwhile clubs in the United States, not yet involved in the war, continued with the work of expansion and organisation. A new standard constitution and by-laws and a Rotary “code of ethics” were adopted. Provision was made for “additional active” membership – business partners or associates of members but only from the same firm or partnership as the member representing the classification – competitors were still not welcome.

The system of Rotary districts was enlarged and the term “district governor” was applied to the leader.

Charter Number 200 was issued, in 1915, to the Rotary Club of Columbus, Ohio.

Also in 1915 the first Kiwanis club was organised in Detroit, Michigan. This was the first of the many to follow the Rotary pattern.

The first non-English speaking Rotary club was established in Havana, Cuba, in 1916.

American clubs embraced war work with enthusiasm in 1917 with Liberty Loan drives, promotion of civilian military training, mobilising schoolboys for farm work and campaigns for numerous comforts for soldiers in training camps. In this year, too, an “endowment fund” was established for “eleemosynary purposes”. This fund was the forerunner of The Rotary Foundation which was to become by far the largest privately-funded educational and charitable foundation in the world. Another important initiative was the interest in work for crippled children.

The first club in South America, Montevideo, Uruguay was organised in 1918. The “Allied Rotary Club of France” for Rotarians in the Armed Forces was established in Paris and became the forerunner of the Rotary Club of Paris, formed three years later. The war ended and Rotary membership passed 40,000.

In 1919 Rotary was extended to the Philippines, China, Panama, India and Argentina; and in 1920 the Rotary Club of Madrid, Spain, became the first in continental Europe; and the first club in Japan was formed.

The 1,000th Rotary club began in York, England, in 1921; and the first Rotary convention held outside the U.S.A. convened at Edinburgh, Scotland, at which the most

significant decision was the adoption of a new Rotary objective: “the advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace”. Clubs were organised in South Africa, France, Mexico, Peru, Denmark, Newfoundland; and the International Association of Rotary Clubs appointed two Canadian Rotarians, James W. Davidson, F.R.G.S., of Calgary and Lieutenant Colonel J. Layton Ralston, C.M.G., D.S.O., K.C., of Halifax, special commissioners to introduce Rotary to Australia and New Zealand.

* * *

The four men who met in the Chicago office in February 1905 were Paul P. Harris (lawyer), Gustavus Loehr (mining engineer), Hiram Shorey (merchant tailor) and Silvester Schiele (coal dealer). Though still remembered as “founders” Loehr and Shorey, in the words of Paul Harris, “failed to follow through” but Schiele remained and became the first president of the club.

Paul Harris was the one who suggested the formation of the club — still nameless at that time – and who was responsible for guiding its development from a single club to an international movement, until his death in 1947. It is Harris who is now honoured as the Founder of Rotary; at times, indeed, he is at risk of being deified for so doing.⁷

Rotary reaches the Antipodes

The earliest known attempt to introduce the Rotary movement to Australia was frustrated by The Great War.

In 1914 Walter Drummond, a Melbourne architect, called at the office of the International Association of Rotary Clubs in Chicago and spoke to the secretary, Chesley Perry. He explained that he was interested in learning more about the Rotary organisation, of which he had heard good reports during his travels in the U.S.A. Perry telephoned Paul Harris, the founder of Rotary, who promptly invited the young Mr. Drummond to visit him at home.

As Paul Harris later said, “...after a day of discussion he was keenly interested and left our home resolved to inaugurate the movement in Australia. He could, no doubt, in time have carried out his expectations had it not been for an unexpected and shocking circumstance: the outbreak of war.”⁸

There were several further suggestions of extension to the South West Pacific recorded (of which some interesting correspondence is preserved in the archives) between 1914 and the time of the appointment of James Davidson of Calgary and Layton Ralston of Halifax as special commissioners to introduce Rotary to the

Antipodes in February 1921; but none met with any success beyond yielding a list of names of leading citizens who might be interested in Rotary.⁹

The choice of Canadians for the assignment is significant. It was decided (by whom is not known) that Canadians should be involved in the attempt and the idea was submitted to the Canadian Advisory Committee which immediately pledged the support of Canadian clubs, agreed to nominate the commissioners and offered to share the costs.¹⁰ Though no reference has been made to the reasons for the selection, it seems probable that the board of the International Association of Rotary Clubs would have been aware of the close ties of Empire at the time and had judged that Rotarians from a sister Dominion could be assured of a warm welcome, whereas the attitude of social leaders to U.S. citizens might have been more cautious. (The first vice president at that time and president the following year was Dr. Crawford McCullough of Fort William, Ontario, Canada.)¹¹

Davidson and Ralston arrived in Sydney on 22nd March, 1921 and, as someone has so aptly put it, ...found it closed! It was "Show Week" – the ten days during which the country goes to the city for the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society's Easter Show. "Show Week" incorporates the Easter Holidays (Good Friday, Easter Eve, Easter Sunday, Easter Monday) and to that extended week-end was added "Show Day".

They duly reported to Rotary International General Secretary Chesley Perry, "The Easter Show was on. When they do a thing in Australia they do it well. A Holiday is a holiday, though to us it seemed more like a two weeks 'dislocation'. Including Sunday it lasted for five days and then there was a week on the part of many business houses in getting ready for it and a week recovering."¹²

They decided that, as the time seemed not quite propitious, they would go on to Melbourne to meet Walter Drummond, who had already spoken to several leading citizens. Before doing so, however, they did manage to meet several prospective members and were interviewed by *The Sydney Morning Herald*, which made a generous allocation of space to the report of the interview.¹³

Reporting to Chicago, Davidson wrote, "Everything looks encouraging, though there are some features that astonish them...I refer to the use of first names etc." One can well understand the astonishment, in 1921, of men such as Thomas Bavin, Sir Henry Braddon, Sir Tannat Edgeworth David, W.H. Ifould and Charles Lloyd Jones on being suddenly expected to call each other Tom, Henry, "Prof", Will and Charles.¹⁴

In Melbourne they met Sir John Monash, Administrator of the Victorian State

Electricity Development authority. One of Australia's most famous war heroes, General Monash had commanded the forces that breached the Hindenburg Line in August 1918. He agreed to accept charter membership of the proposed Rotary club and became its second president. Drummond had also spoken to W. A. Osborne, Professor of Physiology in the University of Melbourne, who also accepted the invitation to membership. With the recruitment of these two men of distinction, the enlistment of others to the ranks was not difficult.

A preliminary meeting was held on 7th April at which an organising committee was formed; and the inaugural luncheon meeting was held on 21st April with thirty seven charter members. Professor Osborne was elected president. A cablegram was read from the Rotary clubs in the United Kingdom: "Forty Rotary Clubs Motherland greet first in Australia." Greetings were received, also, from the Rotary Clubs of Calgary and Halifax in Canada.¹⁵

Walter Drummond, who seven years earlier had suggested the extension of the Rotary movement to Australia and who had done so much valuable work to help the commissioners in forming Australia's first Rotary club, was not considered of sufficient seniority in his firm to be invited to membership; but he was given the "honour" of association in the office of honorary secretary. In September of that year he was elected to membership.

Having established the Rotary Club of Melbourne (where Davidson was laid low with a mysterious illness which, today, probably would be identified as a viral infection), Ralston returned to Sydney where he was equally successful in persuading some of the most influential citizens of the day to become charter members of the Rotary Club of Sydney. They included The Hon. Sir Henry Braddon (who became the first president), Professor Sir Tannat William Edgeworth David (already famous as a geologist and Antarctic explorer) and prominent barrister (Sir) Thomas Bavin (a future Premier of N.S.W.). The inaugural luncheon meeting – attended by the thirty nine charter members, both commissioners, three members of the newly-formed Rotary Club of Melbourne and one visiting Rotarian from Calcutta – was held on 17th May.¹⁶

Two days later Ralston sailed for New Zealand, leaving Davidson, still convalescent, in Sydney to help the new club's officers over their "teething" problems.

In Auckland a group of leading citizens, led by The Hon. George Fowlds, had anticipated the extension of Rotary to New Zealand by convening a meeting in 1920 "to consider the introduction of Rotary"... but, because the country was experiencing a

post-war business recession, further action was deferred.¹⁷

A second meeting in New Zealand was held on 4th April, 1921 and the reaction was wholly favourable. A committee was appointed to consider and report; but on the following day came news of the presence of the commissioners in Australia and of their intention to visit New Zealand. Action was deferred pending their arrival.

On 2nd June a luncheon meeting was held and forty two prominent business and professional men expressed their wish to become members of a Rotary club. The actual formation of the club was held over until after a club was established in Wellington. It is claimed (without any conclusive supporting documentary evidence) that Davidson and Ralston had been strongly advised to form New Zealand's first club in the Dominion's capital.¹⁸

The Rotary Club of Wellington was formed by Ralston on 7th June with thirty six members, Alex A. Roberts being elected president. Davidson formed the Auckland club one week later with fifty five members, the obvious choice of president being George Fowlds.¹⁹

Thus Rotary began in the Antipodes with 163 members of four Rotary clubs. Eighty years later (2001) there were 52,296 members of 1,376 clubs. In June 2014 there were 40,060 members of 1,407 clubs.²⁰

When former Rotary International President (1920-1921) Estes Snedecor was asked to name the four most significant contributions to Rotary during his term of office he listed the following:- 1. The first convention held outside North America (in Edinburgh, Scotland); 2. Adoption of the fourth part of the Object of Rotary (the promotion of international understanding, goodwill and peace); 3. the assignment of Canadians James Davidson and Layton Ralston as commissioners to form Rotary clubs in Australia and New Zealand; and 4. The election of Canadian Dr Crawford McCulloch as president of R.I. 1921-22.²¹

Australia and New Zealand in 1921

In 1921 Australia had a population of around 5 million and New Zealand had 1.24 million, including about 53,000 Maoris.²² Australia's indigenes were not counted in the census but it was estimated that there were about 60,000 left of the 750,000 recent ancestors, from whom, only 133 years earlier, their land had been unceremoniously stolen and who were given hardly a thought except as objects of more-or-less affectionate amusement, with an occasional expression of regret for the imminent

passing of “...the remnants of a fading race” as Daisy Bates was to describe them.²³ The forebears of most people of both countries were English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh, with small communities of Germans and Italians, a sprinkling of Chinese, Indians and Afghans, a few Greeks, Scandinavians and others, almost all of European ancestry.

Only a little more than two years earlier the gallant ANZACs had been welcomed home after the horrors of Gallipoli and the Western Front. Australia had recruited 416,809 and New Zealand 100,444 volunteers between 1914 and 1918. Of these, 59,258 Australians and 16,697 New Zealanders lay in foreign fields; and 166,815 Australians and 41,317 New Zealanders had been wounded, many of them more than once. No countries of the Empire had suffered such losses in proportion to their populations. Both young nations were still mourning the loss of so many of their sons but were fervently proud of their achievements and, though the family ties of Empire, emotionally, culturally and commercially, were still strong and seemed unbreakable, few if any on either side of the Tasman were in the slightest doubt about the “national identity” over which, ninety years later, it seems to have become fashionable to agonise.

W.M. (Billy) Hughes was Prime Minister of Australia as he had been since 1916 but the Australian Parliament was still based in Melbourne and its first meeting in Canberra was six years in the future. In New Zealand, William Ferguson (Bill) Massey was serving his ninth year as Prime Minister. Both countries were politically stable.

The wealth of both nations depended mainly on rural production; manufacturing industry was still in its infancy. The Ford Motor Company began assembling cars in Melbourne but the private motor car was mainly for the affluent.

The Queensland And Northern Territory Aerial Services (Qantas) was established by Hudson Fysh (later to become a Rotarian). Keith and Ross Smith, flying a converted Vickers Vimy Bomber, had flown from England to Australia in only 28 days. The first scheduled airmail service in New Zealand began, linking Christchurch, Ashburton and Timaru; and later in the year Norman Brierly (also to serve in Rotary) began the first internal airmail service in Western Australia. The Royal Australian Air Force was established with the gift of 100 war surplus aircraft from Britain. New Zealand was yet to be given its independent Air Force.

Gladys Moncrieff had made her debut at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne, as Teresa in *The Maid of the Mountains* (and was to sing the part 3,000 times); W. B. McGinness won the newly-launched Archibald Prize and was to win it six more times before he was done; while two of New Zealand’s famous daughters, artist Frances Hodgkins and

writer Katherine Mansfield (the latter nearing the end of her short, brilliant and turbulent life) remained expatriate in England; but the sensitive Maori portraits by Gottfried Landauer and Charles Goldie were gaining recognition at home. Herbert Guthrie-Smith's environmental history, *Tutira, the story of a New Zealand sheep station* was published. Edith Cowan, in Western Australia, became the first woman to serve in a parliament in Australia.²⁴

Many houses in the cities and suburbs and larger regional towns on both sides of the Tasman, had gas lights, gas stoves and coal or wood fires for warmth; and many had the luxury of ice chests. In most small country towns and villages and on the farms these luxuries were not available: there were fuel stoves for cooking, log fires for heating, a drip-safe (a simple evaporative cooler) to keep butter and milk cool; and rainwater was stored in house tanks and cooled in canvas water-bags hanging on the veranda or under a tree. Candles or kerosene lamps were used for lighting – even the pressure light was yet to arrive, but some accepted the risks associated with carbide gas for the benefits of a bright light. The domestic wireless was a thing of the future. There were still beautiful tall clipper ships moored in harbours to carry their cargoes of wool, grain and frozen meat to Europe – mainly to the “mother” country.

One communicated by letter or, in an emergency, by telegram. A majority of the few country telephone subscribers enjoyed the friendliness of the “party line” at the expense of privacy, while city subscribers were still connected through a manual exchange. Motor cars were for the privileged. One travelled on horseback, in a sulky, buggy, wagonette or spring-cart (which might be described as the 1921 equivalents of the motor-cycle or farm quadricycle, roadster, family car, station wagon and utility truck). Farm produce (wool and grain) was transported on huge wagons drawn by bullocks or draught horses. Both countries had established railways but in Australia, which had been served by a highly efficient rail network for more than 60 years, a multiplicity of gauges caused considerable inconvenience; so, in 1921, a Royal Commission recommended the adoption of a uniform gauge, for which we are still waiting.

There was free primary education for all with the local equivalent of the British public school system for those who preferred and could afford it. Universities were well established in all Australian State capital cities and in Auckland, Christchurch (Canterbury) and Dunedin (Otago) but a majority of their academic staff, as well as the principals of many of the private (or “great public”) schools were still being recruited

from Great Britain; the result, not of “cultural cringe” but of a shortage of locally-qualified candidates.

Though higher education was still restricted to the privileged few, literacy was universal and truancy from school was policed by state authorities. Most completed their education at the age of twelve years but the numbers proceeding to secondary education was increasing rapidly and the period 1901 to 1925 has been termed an era of “new idealism towards schools”.²⁵ “In each of the States of the new Commonwealth of Australia there were similar developments. There would be new secondary schools, differentiated by their courses of instruction. Economic progress and national development would surely follow.”²⁶ (One detects here an inclination for public service and a faith in the betterment of society through educational opportunities.)

Most urban people lived within walking distance of their work or were less than half an hour’s tram, train or bus ride away. Those men who worked in shops and offices wore three-piece suits (the jacket of which might be exchanged for a black alpaca coat in the office or a grey dustcoat in the shop), polished boots and a clean collar every day – few enjoyed the luxury of a daily change of underwear and a daily bath or shower was probably regarded by most as an affectation of the affluent or the mildly eccentric.

White-collar workers addressed each other formally. Even the most junior office or shop assistant was “Mr” or “Miss” and, while there was less formality in the blue-collar workplace, the factory foreman or sheep station overseer were still customarily “Mr”. Socially, even women who had been close friends for decades still called each other “Mrs”, reserving given names for family or intimates.

In the vast majority of households the husband and father was the breadwinner and his wife was the home-maker. Though the recent war had brought many more women into the paid workforce, marriage remained the prospect for most; after which all but a few were content – indeed required – to become full-time housewives and mothers, at which respected occupations they often became very highly skilled.

The 1921 housewife was, at the same time, cook, baker, cleaner, laundress, seamstress, knitter, milliner, nurse, pre-school teacher, financial manager, story-teller, spiritual adviser, communicator, counsellor and mistress; and she still contrived to preserve domestic harmony by convincing her husband that he was head of the family. Many country women were also responsible for the poultry, dairy and kitchen garden. (Women’s aspirations, however, are further discussed in Chapter twelve.)

After church on Sunday most families, whether the occupations of their breadwinners were in the professional, commercial, skilled trade or labouring categories – doctor, lawyer, shopkeeper, clerk, farmer, timber-worker, railway fettle – sat down to Sunday dinner, traditionally a hot roast consumed at midday, wearing their “Sunday best” suits, collar and tie for men, high-necked, long-sleeved apparel of sober hue for women and hardly less inappropriate garments for children – summer and winter. On Christmas Day, of course, similarly attired regardless of the temperature, the traditional Yuletide fare of their British ancestors was ingested.

The churches in 1921 were still social centres for fellowship and service as well as worship. Church members of virtually all Christian denominations were active participants in the social work of the parish; visiting the sick, helping the needy, comforting the distressed and bereaved; and also raising funds with their fairs, fetes, jumble-sales, dances and balls. A spirit of service, inherent in their church membership but also inherited from their recent pioneer forebears, noted for their mutual support in times of trouble, prevailed throughout all society, whether churchgoers or not.²⁷

Entertainments were simple and largely home-made: reading, playing records on the gramophone, singing around the piano, playing cards or board-games, ballroom dancing and occasionally visiting the theatre or the (silent) moving pictures. Most watched and many played sport – cricket, football and tennis – and golf for those who could afford it – being the most popular. Coastal-dwellers enjoyed surfing (without boards), sailing and fishing. For country folk river-fishing and shooting were not only recreational pursuits for men and boys but also provided extra food for the table. In cities and larger towns they sometimes enjoyed recitals by the town band in the ubiquitous “rotunda” in the park.²⁸ Sport and entertainment, like life itself, were more sedate than they have become in the 21st Century. However, a jarring note occurred during the first South African Rugby tour of New Zealand. The Springboks defeated a Maori team at Napier, moving a visiting journalist to report to his newspaper in a now famous cable:

BAD ENOUGH HAVING TO PLAY OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED NEW ZEALAND NATIVES BUT SPECTACLE THOUSANDS EUROPEANS FRANTICALLY CHEERING ON BAND OF COLOURED MEN TO DEFEAT MEMBERS OF OWN RACE WAS TOO MUCH FOR SPRINGBOKS WHO FRANKLY DISGUSTED.²⁹

Racism was alive and well in some far-flung outposts of Empire and was to remain firmly entrenched for much of the Twentieth Century – and, sadly, small pockets of xenophobia still exist in the second decade of the present centenary.

There were still “currency lads and lasses” – Australian-born progeny of convicts – distributed widely throughout the respectable community in Australia and some who had, for fairly obvious reasons, migrated across the Tasman; but “the dark secret of this shameful skeleton in the family closet” was locked away, never to be revealed until the present perverse generation chose to honour its convict ancestry and acknowledge their heritage with defiant pride. The Broad Arrow Society, and celebration of the convict past, were not part of a new Australian nationalism until the post-1960s era. As Elaine Thompson observed of late 19th century Australia: “Simultaneously, with the ‘golden age’ in which the egalitarian myth was being developed, there were convicts in Western Australia and Tasmania.”³⁰ This heritage, for a long time, was not given any recognition in public memory and, even if known, was only whispered about in family history. It is probable that, in 1921, there were a few “old hands” (former convicts) still living on both sides of the Tasman, for the last convict ship had arrived only fifty three years earlier and, when emancipated, they frequently began a new life far from the centre in which they had served their sentences; but they were hardly likely to have disclosed the unfortunate circumstances of their migration to the Colonies.

This, then, was the Antipodean society into which Rotary was introduced; and the first Rotarians reflected the leadership of a range of vocations in that society.

Chapter Two – An association of clubs

Before Rotary in Australia and New Zealand is discussed further, it is important that the organisational structure of Rotary as an international movement be understood.¹

“The Object of Rotary”, as set out in the Constitution of Rotary International and in the constitution of every Rotary club in the world,

“is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster: First, the development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service; Second, high ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations and the dignifying of each Rotarian’s occupation as an opportunity to serve society; Third, the application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian’s personal, business and community life; Fourth, the advancement of international understanding, good will and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.”²

Rotary International is not a corporate organisation with authority vested in an elected or appointed elite who hand down instructions, pronouncements and policy decisions from on high to national branches for promulgation to local sub-branches or chapters. It does not choose projects and programs to be supported by its constituent clubs. It is, as its former name implied, an association of autonomous clubs; the elected leadership of which may – and does – request the support of its clubs for selected international programs but has no authority to require such support.

The association is administered by a board of directors, including a president who is elected two years in advance by the convention of Rotary International, a president elect, a vice president who is selected from among the board members by the president, and 16 members, each elected for a two year term. Half the members retire each year. Directors are elected from the 34 zones into which the Rotary world is divided: New Zealand and the South Pacific Islands being in one Zone and Australia, PNG, Timor Leste and Philippines in another. As a director is elected from each zone every four years, the Oceania region is represented by a director in either one of these Zones each biennium.³

Because of the problems inherent in electing directors and the president of Rotary International by popular vote of clubs or members, they are chosen by nominating committees, the members of which are elected by groups of clubs within each region. The choice of the nominating committee is published and, in the absence of any objection, the candidate is formally elected by the convention. If there is an objection (a

rare occurrence indeed) provision is made for a ballot. To be eligible for election to the office of director, a person must have served in the office of district governor.

The duties of the board of directors, as set out in the By-Laws of Rotary International, are to “be responsible for doing whatever may be necessary for the furtherance of the purposes of R.I., the attainment of the Object of Rotary, the study and teaching of its fundamentals, the preservation of its ideals, its ethics, and its unique features of organization and its extension throughout the world.” The board, therefore, is elected to serve the clubs.

The president, who serves for one year in that office, appoints Rotarians from all regions to serve as members of Rotary International committees to advise the board on various aspects of Rotary service. For example, the R.I. publications committee will review all the publications issued by the board for the guidance of clubs throughout the world and may recommend that some be eliminated because they are no longer relevant, that some be revised and that new publications, printed and/or online (pamphlets, videos, handbooks, manuals, leaflets, perhaps) be issued.

The board, according to the constitutional documents, exercises “general control and supervision over all officers, officers elect, officers nominee and committees of Rotary International” and, of course, controls the staff of the Rotary International Secretariat; but, paradoxically, has very limited control over its constituent clubs.

Every three years the Council on Legislation convenes, at which proposed amendments to the constitutional documents (the Constitution and By-Laws of Rotary International and the Standard Rotary Club Constitution) and also policy resolutions are debated. Enactments and resolutions of the council are submitted to all clubs throughout the world. Any enactment or resolution rejected by 5% of clubs is then submitted to all clubs in a ballot by mail for determination.⁴ This has never occurred.

An international convention is held every year, never more than twice in succession in any one country and, in the past forty years, always in a different country each year. Formerly the legislative body of Rotary International, its powers have been limited since 1970 when the Council on Legislation was given legislative authority. The Convention, an unrepresentative gathering (despite the presence of duly accredited “voting delegates”), is attended by the 20,000 or so Rotarians who choose to attend – and can afford it. The convention formally elects the president, directors and district governors (the officers of Rotary International) who have been already chosen by

nominating committee procedures.

Clubs and Districts

For purposes of administration, Rotary clubs throughout the world are allocated to districts. A Rotary district covers a number of clubs within a defined geographical area.

As noted in Chapter 2, the first district established in Australasia was numbered 53 and covered the whole of New Zealand. District 56 (or, as districts were then more usually known, the 56th District) formed two years later, covered the whole of Australia. By 2011 there were twenty nine districts (twenty three in Australia and six in New Zealand). This number was reduced in 2013, by the amalgamation of smaller districts, to a total of twenty seven.

The district is administered by a district governor, chosen nearly two years in advance by the clubs in the district, again using a nominating committee procedure, and elected at the annual convention of Rotary International. He is thus an officer of Rotary International and the representative of the international body within that district.⁵

The term “governor” was probably adopted because in the U.S.A., where Rotary began, the Nation has a president and each State of the Union has a governor. To members of the British Commonwealth, the term “governor” has an entirely different meaning. For this reason, until 1967, the term was not used in Great Britain and Ireland (RIBI) where the officer was known by the unwieldy title of “Rotary International Representative”. In Australia and New Zealand, despite the possible confusion with the representative of the Sovereign, the title was accepted – with the occasional facetious reference to “Your Excellency”.

The officer is by no means a “governor” but rather a counsellor, whose duty it is to visit the clubs and discuss their programs for the year, perhaps suggesting ways in which the service might be improved. He has no authority over the clubs except insofar as it may be necessary to remind them of their constitutional obligations and, under extraordinary circumstances, recommend the withdrawal of a club’s charter for a deliberate breach of the constitution or for the club’s failure or inability to discharge its service obligations (usually because of loss of membership). The governor is helped in the counselling role by assistant governors.

The district governor is also responsible for organising a district conference, which members of all clubs in the district are urged to attend; a district assembly (a training session) for club officers elect and a special training program for club presidents elect.

In addition, he/she is expected to attend other district activities and functions such as seminars, briefings for exchange students and other programs arranged by district officers (assistant governors, secretary, treasurer and chairmen of district advisory committees), all of whom are appointed by the governor to be responsible for some aspect of district activity.

Before taking office, all incoming district governors are required to attend a six-day international assembly – a residential school to prepare them for their one year in office.⁶ As this is attended by every one of the 530 incoming governors from the 215 countries in which Rotary serves, it is also an occasion for strong international fellowship.

The “District Governor System”, as it is known, is claimed to be successful and probably is so, for it has been adopted by all the other associations of service clubs.

The formation of a new Rotary club depends upon (a) the willingness of an existing club to sponsor the formation and (b) the recommendation of the district governor. Sometimes a club suggests formation of a new club to the governor, but more often the governor, advised by his district extension committee, asks a club to survey an area within its territory and, if it is found that a viable club can be formed, to relinquish (or share) territory and sponsor the formation.

There follows a complicated process of investigation and inviting reputable professional and business people to become “charter” members; of organising an “interest” meeting, followed by the “organisation” meeting at which those attending resolve to form a club and apply for admission to Rotary International. The new club is then designated a “provisional” Rotary club until it is admitted, after which it is usual for a special luncheon or dinner to be arranged with local dignitaries invited for the formal presentation of the charter – all quite harmless if unnecessary; but the ceremonial aspects and the sense of occasion do serve to impress the new Rotarians with the importance of the club they have joined and its status as a member club of a great international association.

To be admitted to Rotary International as a Rotary club, the charter members must adopt the Standard Rotary Club Constitution, which can be amended only by the Rotary International Council on Legislation – Rotary's “parliament” – to which every district elects its own member, who must be an officer or past officer of Rotary International. Thus every Rotary club in the world is bound by the same rules, has an equal opportunity to propose an amendment to the rules and equal representation on the

legislative body.

The standard constitution requires that each club adopt by-laws for the internal administration of the club, methods of election, annual subscription, day and time of the weekly meeting and procedures for electing a new member. A set of recommended by-laws is supplied. The club may amend its by-laws at any time, provided that any by-law is “in harmony with the club constitution and the constitution and by-laws of Rotary International” leaving so little opportunity for variation and so many possible interpretations of the rules that most clubs adopt the recommended by-laws without amendment.

Within the limits of its constitution, each club is autonomous; and most clubs are very jealous of their autonomy, vigorously resisting any attempt to impose limits beyond those already implicit in the constitution; and, equally vigorously, resisting attempts to require their support of district, national, regional or international programs or projects. Individual club support of any such major activity, though usually given willingly, for eight decades has been and must remain quite voluntary.⁷

Particularly noticeable in Australia and New Zealand, this disinclination to give automatic support to programs and projects imposed from “above” will be discussed in later chapters.

Club organisation⁸

The organisation of a Rotary club differs significantly from that of most voluntary organisations (whether charitable, sporting, political, professional, business, social or mutual benefit). The typical voluntary organisation consists of a small elected leadership group to which authority and responsibility are delegated by the larger rank and file. In a Rotary club, every member is responsible for some aspect of the club’s activities.

The club members elect a president, vice president(s), secretary, treasurer and directors. Each director is responsible for one of the “avenues of service” – club service, vocational service, community service, international service and youth service. Each member of the club is then assigned to one of these major committees.

Under the umbrella of the major committees are several committees appointed to deal with the various aspects of each “avenue of service”; thus under club service are the program, bulletin, fellowship, Rotary information, classification, public relations, extension and membership committees; responsible, respectively, for the weekly

program (guest speaker, vocational visits etc.), the weekly bulletin or newsletter, social functions for the advancement of fellowship among members and families, the continuing Rotary education of members, the allocation of new members to the correct vocational “classification”, public information (media publicity), the recruitment of new members and the investigation of candidates for membership to ensure that they are properly qualified.

Under “vocational service” there may be employer-employee relations, careers guidance for youth, vocational awards (to local business people, employees or apprentices), business and professional ethics committees – and any other committee appointed for vocational service.

Under the community service directorate may be committees concerned with community needs: care of the aged, public housing, health, education, recreation, fine arts, rehabilitation of the disabled, environment and any others appointed at the discretion of the club board.

Previously the responsibility of community and international service but now under separate directorates called Youth Service (or New Horizons) are youth welfare, youth leadership (RYLA and RYPEN), Interact and Rotaract (to support Rotary-sponsored young people’s service clubs), the Youth Exchange Program, and any other youth activity established, supported, adopted or espoused by the club.

International service usually has The Rotary Foundation, world community service, international contacts and world understanding committees.

Each of these committees under the five “avenues of service” has a chairman and several members, all of whom are expected to contribute to the work of the committee.

At the beginning of each year (in July) the various committees advance their plans for the year; and, from the various submissions, the club will adopt its “major project” for the year. It may be a community, vocational, international or youth project, but when it is chosen as the club’s major project, every member is committed to its support. The remaining projects advanced by the other committees then may be adopted as “minor” projects. Thus the club may adopt as its major project its international service committee’s submission that a certain hospital in a remote Pacific Island village or an impoverished small town in Africa be equipped with an operating theatre and, as minor projects, the vocational service committee’s recommendation that awards for vocational excellence be given to local businesses – or employees – who have demonstrated a commendable level of service; and the community service committee’s suggestions that

trees be planted around the new municipal children's playground, that a bus shelter be provided opposite the senior citizens' centre and that the Girl Guides' hall be given a coat of paint. In addition, the club will continue to do its regular jobs: it will raise funds for The Rotary Foundation, Rotary Oceania Medical Aid to Children (ROMAC), Australian Rotary Health, NZ Children's Medical Research Foundation; it will select and pay fees for candidates to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) seminar and the Rotary Program of Enrichment (RYPEN) weekend; it will roster families, each for one term, to be hosts to an exchange student from overseas; it will supervise its Interact and Rotaract clubs if any – or it will again consider the possibility of sponsoring such clubs; it might sponsor formation of a Probus club for retired people; it will assist at the annual fund-raising appeal for the Salvation Army – and/or some equally deserving body and it will be involved in a host of other activities.

Rotarians claim that, in their clubs, everyone “gets a guernsey” – they are all players; and there are no spectators.

The club structure and method of adopting projects are common to all Rotary clubs throughout the world and, as may be expected, are honoured in some countries more in the breach than the observance; but Antipodeans are particularly comfortable with the system, which gains a high level of member participation in all aspects of their service activities.

Two innovations in the 21st Century are E-clubs and Satellite clubs.

Following a resolution of the Council on Legislation in 2001, the formation of Cyber Clubs, later known as E-clubs, as a pilot program was authorised by the board of Rotary International.⁹ In 2004 E-clubs were fully recognized.¹⁰

E-clubs are intended to “...extend Rotary to business, professional and community leaders who are unable to meet traditional attendance requirements.” An E-club must maintain a web page and provides for online meetings. It is, in all respects, a Rotary club with the obligation to serve in all avenues of service. The club is obliged to meet physically only once a year at the Annual General Meeting but some also arrange special events, such as fund-raising or fellowship gatherings at their members' discretion. Members of E-clubs who live and work with modern information technology declare themselves to be very comfortable with the structure and predict their future success. In July 2014 there were 100 E-clubs worldwide with only five in Australia and one in New Zealand.¹¹

In 2013 the Council on Legislation authorized the formation of Satellite clubs. Any

Rotary club may form a Satellite club – a group of its own members who choose to meet at a different time, day and venue. Satellite club members still are – and new members are inducted into – the parent club. Usually the satellite club is formed as the nucleus of a new club to be sponsored in the future, when the required number of members to form an independent club is recruited.¹²

Attendance

One of the reasons for the strong member participation is the emphasis on regular attendance at meetings. While most voluntary organisations attract poor to mediocre attendance at their general meetings, the service clubs enjoy average attendances of more than 75%.

Rotary, until recent years, imposed very strict attendance rules. To retain membership, one was required to attend at least 60% of weekly meetings in any half year. If a member was absent for more than three successive meetings without being excused for a good reason, termination of membership was automatic. However, a member who was unable to attend a meeting of his own club could (and still can) gain attendance credit by attending a meeting of another Rotary club. This is known as a “make-up”. In this way, Rotary clubs ensured that their members participated fully in the corporate life of the club; and, with occasional make-ups, shared ideas with members of other clubs.

The strict attendance rules have been modified at successive Councils on Legislation in the 21st Century but, though automatic expulsion has been replaced by the discretionary authority of the club board to expel or invite a recalcitrant member to resign after four consecutive absences without leave, high attendance is still emphasised in the current rules. The 60% requirement remained until 2010, when it was reduced to 50%.¹³

Mere attendance, however, is not enough. Those who are seldom or never available for work on projects when required but still maintain high attendance at weekly luncheon or dinner meetings, soon gain the reputation of being “knife and fork members” and frequently resign.

Rotary clubs in Australia and New Zealand are about average in their attendance, compared with the rest of the world.

In the U.S.A., attendance credit in many areas was probably over-emphasised. Handsome trophies were offered to the clubs with the highest attendance in the Rotary

districts and in some clubs an attachment to a Rotary badge showed the number of years of perfect attendance of the wearer.

Clifford Putney, one of the few historians to study service clubs in USA, wrote a short scholarly article in which he compared Rotary clubs' attendance practices to the older forms of ritual in Masonic Lodges and fraternities. He suggests that Rotary, Lions, and other service clubs were more compatible with the ethos of industrialised America, and that their social patterns were more suited to networking by businessmen who needed to keep their evenings free for the domestic sphere. Referring to Rotary, Clifford Putney notes that "Clubs provided few evening entertainments; that was for members to arrange with their wives... Clubs aspired to purposiveness, to 'being of this world.' Attendance was strictly kept, lax members being subject to expulsion and clubs to dishonour if participation lagged – more evidence of clubs stressing business over recreation."¹⁴

An interesting situation was discovered in an Asian country by a Rotary International director on an official visit. He reported that it was not unusual for five or six clubs in a district to maintain 100% attendance for the full year – a seemingly impossible achievement; but this was achieved by an ingenious strategy. When a Rotarian was in hospital and was thereby unable to attend his meeting or to make up at another club, the secretary visited him with a bouquet and a letter of resignation for his signature. He thus ceased to be a member for the period of his illness but was immediately reinstated when he recovered. When attendance percentages were computed after each meeting, the number in attendance (and make-ups) still equalled the number of members on the roll. In vain the visiting official attempted to explain to the district governor that the purpose of encouraging high attendance was to extend fellowship and thereby strengthen participation in service activities. The "good book" of Rotary (the Manual of Procedure) said that every club should strive for 100% attendance and the Rotarians of that club were complying with the letter, if not with the spirit, of the exhortation.¹⁵

Most clubs in Oceania would claim a rather more sensible attitude to attendance. The Rotarian who contributes his time and talents to service projects is more highly valued than the compulsive attendee. This attitude was probably best expressed by a district governor at a Rotary institute in 1967 when it was pointed out to him that a member of his district (and his own club) had maintained 100% attendance for 25 years and had been named in the Rotary regional magazine. "Yes, I saw the story," he said, "and that was the sum total of his contribution to Rotary in 25 years of membership."¹⁶ This was

clearly an exaggeration, for the member could not have retained his membership without participation in some committee work, but the point was well made.

Attendance, though not encouraged to become a major preoccupation, is still important. The argument often quoted is that the citizen who discovers a community need might well find it difficult to persuade his fellow-citizens to support him in any effort he might make to meet that need; but members of a Rotary club can bring it to the attention of their fellow members, who will gladly provide the work force and the expertise because they are friends; and they became friends because they had been meeting for luncheon or dinner every week, had discussed local, national and international problems, had gone to family picnics and outings together. They became close friends because of their regular attendance.

The Antipodean Rotary clubs were in the vanguard of the long campaign to modify the attendance requirements by authorising clubs to cancel up to two meetings a year for national, religious or regional holidays. In both countries Christmas signals the beginning of the summer holiday when many businesses find it convenient to send their staff on annual leave. Some businesses, in fact, close their doors for three or four weeks. For a Rotary club to maintain any reasonable attendance at meetings during this period was well nigh impossible; but the problem was not acknowledged by the rest of the Rotary world, where four to six weeks annual holiday seemed an unnecessary indulgence and where the notion of a national close-down – especially in the middle of winter – was incomprehensible. Many were the devices adopted in trying to meet the requirement that a weekly meeting be held. So-called “fellowship” meetings would be convened, at which attendance of anyone arriving at the venue was recorded (and the attendance of any visitors), a few drinks were consumed and everyone went on his way. In many areas the usual venue was not available during this period, so “meetings” were convened in homes, pubs, clubs and, in some seaside towns, on the beach where a barbecue was prepared and the attendance officer faithfully recorded the names of all those who lined up for steaks or sausages.¹⁷

At each Council on Legislation, Antipodean delegates proposed some modification of the rule that demanded 52 Rotary meetings a year. It was not until 1989 that they were finally successful. The necessary amendment was enacted to allow clubs to cancel up to three meetings in any one year for national or religious holidays; and antipodean Rotary clubs were no longer obliged to hold “sham” meetings to satisfy what they regarded as an unnecessary requirement.¹⁸ Further changes are likely to be introduced at

the next Council on Legislation (2016), at which proposals to remove the requirement for a weekly meeting and regular attendance will be debated. If these proposed constitutional changes are enacted, clubs will have the authority to determine, still within limits, the frequency of their own meetings and flexibility of attendance rules by simply amending their by-laws.

The Classification Principle

In the first Rotary club (Chicago, 1905) each member was drawn from a different business or profession. The reason, of course, was to preserve harmony in the club in a city and in an age in which business competitors were not regarded as colleagues to be assisted but as enemies to be eliminated.

As the first Rotary club evolved from a mutual aid society, in which Rotarians advanced their own business interests by advancing those of their fellows, to a service club in which the *raison d'être* was the advancement of human welfare, the “classification principle” remained, justified with the strong argument that a Rotary club, by limiting membership to but one man from each business, professional or trade “classification”, was representative of the whole community, would be inclusive rather than exclusive and could not be dominated by any one professional or business group. Moreover, a newly-formed club would be forced to seek a membership from a wider field than if the charter members were permitted merely to recruit their own colleagues.

Three classifications are unrestricted: “Diplomacy”, “Media” (originally “Newspaper Publishing”) and “Religion”: Diplomacy because the Embassy or Consulate of no one nation should be – or be seen to be – favoured above others; Media so that no one newspaper or electronic news medium (with known or reputed political partiality) could be represented to the exclusion of others; and Religion because Rotary embraces all faiths; and the ministers of no one religion (denomination or sect) could be elected exclusively to Rotary membership as the representative of that classification.

Persons elected to public office for a specific period (e.g. Members of Parliament) are not eligible for membership under the classification of that office; however, members who are elected to public office may retain their membership under their existing classifications. Thus a Rotarian who is, for example, a lawyer, doctor, teacher, or accountant, may retain his membership under that classification during his term of elective office.

Modifications to the classification principle began within the first few years; and by

the time Rotary was extended to Australia and New Zealand, the system of “major” and “minor” classifications had been established with no more than 10 percent of the membership belonging to a “major” classification. Thus within the major classification of Medicine, a club of 50 members could include five practitioners; e.g. general medical practice, surgery, dentistry, ophthalmology and radiology; and Engineering might include the minor classifications of civil, mechanical, electrical, automotive and mining engineering. In due course (1966) the major and minor divisions were abandoned, each minor classification became a classification in its own right rather than one of a major group of occupations and the 10 percent limit no longer applied – except as a recommendation. Today’s Rotarians are probably unaware that it ever existed. Other modifications were the introduction of additional active (1915), past service (1930) and senior active membership (1939). Senior active members were those who had served for 15 years, or 10 years having reached the age of 60 years, or five years having reached the age of 65 years and who were willing to surrender their classifications and accept senior active status. The classification of the senior active member was then vacant and could be filled by another person in the same business or profession. Some who were still actively engaged in their occupations refused to surrender their classifications – thus legitimately, if not ethically, denying membership to a competitor – until, by action of the Council on Legislation, those eligible for senior active membership were automatically “promoted”; and officers and past officers of Rotary International, whether otherwise eligible or not, were also granted senior active status. Past service members were those who had served for a minimum of five (later three) years and had retired from the work force. An additional active member was one who was a business partner or member of the same firm as the holder of a classification and had been nominated by him. In 1977 the holder of a classification was given the right to nominate persons of the same classification who were not members of his own firm (in other words his competitors) as additional active members. Former Rotarians moving into a club’s area could also be elected to additional active membership. Thus it became possible for three members to represent one classification in the one club.

These modifications were obviously designed to permit the recruitment of more members; but each one was most vigorously resisted. Even the simple amendment to give the holder of a classification the right to nominate a business competitor for additional active membership was considered by three councils on legislation before it gained the two thirds majority required for a constitutional change. Again, the

Antipodeans were among the strongest advocates of change to the “classification principle”, arguing that the “principle” was effectively abandoned when additional active membership was introduced in 1915 and that, from that time, it had been a “system” subject to modification to meet changing circumstances.

Another dramatic change, which was achieved in the face of strong opposition, was the introduction, by resolution of the Council on Legislation in 1968, of the residential qualification for membership, which enabled a club to recruit people who lived within its territory but whose place of business was elsewhere. Thus “dormitory” suburbs with few businesses and professional practices were able to sustain a Rotary club. Subsequent modifications allowed for the election of up to five members representing one classification in clubs with a membership of 50 or fewer. A club of more than 50 may have 10% of its membership from one classification.¹⁹

In 2001 the four kinds of membership (active, senior active, past service and honorary) were finally abandoned by the Council on Legislation, after attempts dating back to 1974. There remain only active and honorary members; those who were “senior active” or “past service” members having their former classifications reinstated.²⁰

* * *

Within this complicated structure, Rotary carries out its various self-imposed tasks, principally at the level of the Rotary club but also with a growing number of activities at district, national, regional and international level.

Apart from the unique territorial unit known as R.I.B.I. (Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland) with a president, board of directors and general council (including all district governors) which has existed since 1914, there is no national or regional organisation. Rotary districts are merely “clusters” of clubs grouped for administrative purposes; and, though the district governor appointed various advisory committees to assist him, there was no formal district hierarchy: just a district governor; until, in 1996, he/she was relieved of some responsibilities by being given the authority to appoint assistant governors.²¹

There has been a European office of R.I. in Zurich since 1925 and regional offices in Asia and South West Pacific since 1982; but these are branch offices of the secretariat responsible to the general secretary and are not subject to local control.

Australia and New Zealand in 1965 established a regional council of R.I. officers as the governing body of the regional magazine; and this council, co-incidentally, has accepted responsibility for the administration of certain other regional Rotary activities

(to be discussed in later chapters) , but beyond these limits, it has – and pretends to – no other authority.

Thus, (apart from the clubs in Britain and Ireland), Rotary clubs, as member clubs of Rotary International, are in direct relationship to the R.I. board. Clubs may, without the authority of any intermediate body, make recommendations to the R.I. board; and may propose constitutional amendments or policy resolutions for consideration at the next council on legislation. The fact that a majority of Rotary clubs choose to submit proposed legislation or resolutions first to their own district conferences so that their proposals (if adopted by their conference) will be seen by the Council on Legislation to have been supported by a majority of clubs in their districts, in no way diminishes their right of direct access.

Avenues of Service

Five (formerly four) “Avenues of Service” are identified by Rotarians to classify each activity. They are Club Service, Vocational Service, Community Service, Youth Service and International Service.²²

Each of these broad classifications, with the exception of Youth Service, coincides with one of the four parts of the Object of Rotary (quoted at the beginning of this chapter).

The first part – “The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service”, is identified with all the activities under Club Service.

Second – “high ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations and the dignifying of each Rotarian’s occupation as an opportunity to serve society” is related to Vocational Service activities.

Third – “the application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian’s personal, business and community life” is accepted as the exhortation to practise Community Service.

Fourth – “The advancement of international understanding, good will and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service” provides the inspiration for International Service.

It is not always possible to work rigidly within this tidy arrangement. Many Rotary clubs during the 1990s appointed a separate Youth Service directorate – subsequently given official sanction in the constitutional amendment in 2000 – to be responsible for educational awards from The Rotary Foundation and student exchanges (International), Rotaract, Interact, RYLA (Community), careers guidance (Vocational). And obviously

some activities will seem to belong in two or more categories, such as volunteer programs in which professional people serve for a period in a developing country – Vocational and International. In most areas of service, however, the identification of each part of the Object of Rotary with one of the Avenues of Service is regarded as a useful means of allocating tasks to the various committees.

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The history of Rotary over 110 years, reflected in its structure and changing constitutional documents, shows a clear evolution from a small, local friendship and mutual support group of moderately affluent business and professional men dedicated to self interest, into an international fellowship of ostensibly altruistic men and women dedicated to the ideal of service to humankind.

As it evolved, Rotary partly reflected changes in business and professional practice; from ruthless competition and unethical behaviour to fair, responsible, ethical practices with service to society as a desirable by-product. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that all Rotarians, since the first clubs were established in this region in 1921, have lived up to the high ideals of their movement. Some entitled to senior active or past service status, for example, selfishly declined the honour, clinging to their classifications to exclude any competitor from election to membership – until promotion became mandatory. Some, no doubt, have blatantly used their membership, notwithstanding clear rules to the contrary, to gain a business advantage. Some, perhaps, have been guilty of xenophobia; but racists, bigots and chauvinists soon find that they are not welcome.

The more recent constitutional amendments have removed the perceived status and vocational leadership of members, opening the doors to anyone of good character who is genuinely interested in philanthropy through fellowship – and can afford the not inconsiderable subscription and regular expenses.

Chapter Three: Serious about Service

The formation of the Rotary Clubs of Melbourne, Sydney, Wellington and Auckland was soon followed by expansion to other major cities in the two countries; but the major preoccupation of the pioneer Rotarians was service. They had become members of an association with Service as its objective and “Service Above Self” as its motto; and they were impatient to begin.

Even as they learned the rules and the strange procedures of their new organisation, they sought ways of being useful: and they soon identified minor community needs which they decided that they could meet.

In July, the Rotary Club of Melbourne appointed a committee to survey the resources available to help underprivileged boys; but while this investigation was proceeding the members engaged in their first recorded community service activity, a picnic at Carrum for 200 children from the Queensberry Street State School. The children were transported by members in their own cars¹.

In Sydney, there was an outing for 120 children and their nurses from the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children on 9th November, 1921.² At the suggestion of the club president, Sir Henry Braddon, members decided to bring some Christmas cheer to war-orphans and soldiers’ widows in need. Three years after the end of the First World War government assistance to war widows and orphans was hardly adequate for their basic necessities and certainly could not be stretched to include such luxuries as Christmas gifts and victuals – far short of the rather more generous pension and support provided in later years. A list of names and addresses of war widows with the names and ages of their children was obtained from the Red Cross Society – a procedure that would be illegal under today’s privacy legislation – and the members made up a Christmas parcel for each family with the usual Yuletide fare and appropriate toys for the children. Each Rotarian then personally delivered half a dozen parcels to the families.³

At the same time, members began to consider a survey of their city to determine the needs of boys.

Across the Tasman, the Wellington Rotarians provided Christmas hampers for several needy families and the inmates of two orphanages, organised a Dominion Day week-end with entertainment for 3,000 boys at the Town Hall, arranged special church services and YMCA meetings and a monster sports carnival. They also began to consider a major project: provision of a Karitane hospital for the care of mothers and new-born infants following the principles of the Plunket Society (now the Royal New

Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children).⁴

In Auckland, meanwhile, Rotarians contributed £360 and raised a further £200 “to advertise the city” in what was to become known as the “Advance Auckland Campaign”. Some 15,000 copies of an *Advance Auckland* pamphlet, showing the attractions of the city, were distributed in Britain, America and Australia. The club also provided Christmas fare for “deserving” families, contributed £900 to the Boy Scouts, sponsored the visit of the Ponsonby Boys’ Band to Dunedin, staged monthly concerts at the Mt. Eden prison and held a huge picnic in the Waitakere Ranges, leading to the gift of 50 acres of native bush to the city by one of the members⁵.

These activities represented a small beginning to what was to become an impressive array of projects and programs in the early years. From the very beginning, Rotary began to advance on two fronts: extension and service; the latter, obviously, being dependent upon the former. As each new club was formed, its members attempted immediately to put their motto, “Service above Self”, into action.

The extension to other cities was accomplished by the appointment of local commissioners; and such was the enthusiasm of these early Rotarians for their movement that they gladly accepted the invitation to serve. This voluntary assignment involved a great deal of work, with preliminary arrangements made by correspondence (personally handwritten) and travel by ship, train and less-than-comfortable motor car over mainly gravel or dirt roads.

In 1922, two commissioners were appointed for Australia: the charter presidents of Melbourne and Sydney clubs, Professor Osborne (responsible for Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania); and Sir Henry Braddon (New South Wales and Queensland);⁶ and one in New Zealand, Sir George Fowlds⁷. Before their formal appointment, however, extension had begun. On the initiative of Fowlds, and by the joint action of Auckland and Wellington clubs, a Rotary club had been formed in Christchurch in April, 1922.

The commissioners set to work, establishing clubs in Dunedin, Hamilton, Brisbane, and Newcastle, (1923), Hobart, Launceston, Adelaide, Invercargill, Wanganui, Hastings, Napier and Palmerston North (1924).

In September, 1924, an Australasian Conference was held in Sydney. At that time New Zealand had twice as many clubs as Australia.

In 1925 clubs were formed in Hawera, New Plymouth, Oamaru and Whangerei in New Zealand and in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong in Australia.

With twelve Rotary clubs and 575 members, a conference convened by Fowlds in March, 1925, resolved to apply for District status for Rotary in New Zealand, which was granted at the 16th Annual Convention held in Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A. in June of the same year. Thus the 53rd District of Rotary International was created, the first in the Southern Hemisphere.⁸

The first district in Australia was established in 1927. Designated the 65th District, it covered the whole of Australia.

A detailed record of the growth of clubs and the formation of districts is not relevant to this study but, in general terms, growth was steady until 1940, when many Rotarians suddenly found themselves otherwise engaged, either in the armed forces or in essential war work, and were unable to devote so much time to Rotary extension. Rapid growth resumed immediately after the end of hostilities and clubs were formed in the larger suburbs and country towns; also in Papua-New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. Inevitably, extension slowed and, in the last decade of the 20th Century almost ceased, as some clubs either disbanded or amalgamated in response to declining membership. New clubs were still formed, however, when opportunity presented itself; and the charter presentation in 2002 to the Rotary Club of Dili, Timor Leste, was an occasion for rejoicing.⁹

During the early years – 1921-1940 – there had been a growth in service to match the recruitment of members; and the quality of this service had improved vastly with more sophisticated identification of needs and more efficient provision of help.

In 1922 the name of the “International Association of Rotary Clubs” had been shortened to “Rotary International” and the constitutional documents had been completely revised. In the following year the first guidelines for community service were adopted at the international convention. In effect: “find the need; find out if there is an established agency to meet that need, if there is, support and strengthen, do not duplicate; if no such agency exists, establish an appropriate agency, gain public support, ensure future effective management by a competent citizens’ committee; then withdraw.”¹⁰ This general policy has remained unchanged to the present day and is seen by Rotarians as the key to effective community service; ensuring that the Rotary club, having completed its project by establishing an agency or a service – a youth club, hospital, clinic, school, kindergarten, senior citizens’ centre or meals-on-wheels service – does not remain involved but hands it over to the community, leaving the Rotary club free to identify further needs.

With this policy as their brief, the early Rotary clubs began to identify community needs.

From their observations during a Christmas dinner for the children at the Neglected Children's Depot at Royal Park in Melbourne, Rotary members suspected that some serious problems existed. On subsequent visits their fears were confirmed. They were able to identify poor administration, inadequate services, a marked lack of compassion and a contemptuous attitude on the part of some staff members. The interest of the Rotarians – and representation to the appropriate authorities – resulted in a change in the attitude of those involved, a more efficient administration and, to express the new philosophy of care, a change of name to the Royal Park Children's Welfare Home.¹¹

In 1925 the Rotary Club of Melbourne received the report of the Boys' Work Committee and adopted its recommendation to raise funds for a Boy Scouts' Appeal. Nearly £1,400 was raised – a considerable sum at that time.¹²

The Rotary Club of Sydney began to plan its first major activity: Boys' Week. A popular slogan of the time was "Sound Manhood comes from Safe Boyhood" and the club adopted this as the theme for the project.

The enterprise began with a survey which was "intended to reveal what influences are affecting boy-life of Sydney and in what directions Rotary can best render effective service in aiding and encouraging boys to develop into good and useful men"... and "It is expected that, having obtained from the survey a clear knowledge of the actual conditions, we shall be able to suggest to our easy-going community proper remedies for those unfavourable conditions of boy-life which we vaguely believe to exist."

The city was divided into 12 zones, to each of which a team of Rotarians was assigned. The information was to be obtained by personal enquiries of social workers, teachers, police officers, clergy, inspectors of the State Children's Relief Department, employers, municipal authorities, parents and the boys themselves. A general instruction was not to record only what those engaged in them claimed for their organisations, but to make "a businessman's estimate of the real results. Is there waste of money or energy, want of correlation among several agencies and is efficient service being rendered?"¹³

The subjects of the enquiry were factories and apprenticeships, sports and playgrounds, technical and commercial schools, libraries, moving pictures, juvenile crime, State children's relief, Boy Scouts and Boys' Brigades; with additional lines of enquiry into the need for dental and optical clinics, treatment and training of

handicapped children, kindergarten training, library and debating societies, gambling among boys, effects of military training and camps, the drift into unskilled work. And under each heading were listed the subjects to be investigated.

The outcome of the survey and the highly successful and widely-publicised Boys' Week was the decision to use the funds raised (£1,200) to strengthen the Boys' Brigade by providing a building. Subsequently, the information gleaned from the survey was to prove useful in another major project: the founding of the Crippled Children's Society of N.S.W.¹⁴

In Wellington, the early consideration of the need for a Karitane Hospital had not been forgotten. The club was addressed by the famous New Zealand paediatrician and psychiatrist Sir Truby King (founder of the Plunket Society), who had persuaded Rotarians of the need for such hospitals in every community; so, after long and careful consideration of ways and means, the members set out on an ambitious project to build and equip the Hospital. Members contributed £4,000 and increased this to £40,000 by public subscription – a huge undertaking for a new Rotary club in a small city. The balance of the funds required was raised by loan and, in March, 1927, the hospital was opened. The club continued to raise funds but the debt was a heavy burden until it was finally discharged in 1930.¹⁵

The Rotary Club of Auckland, after its initial work in telling others about the attractions of the city, turned its attention to the apparent needs of the community. Arising from its early investigations the club threw its weight behind the formation of a Crippled Children's Society (already a traditional area of service in overseas Rotary clubs). Another recognised need was for the distribution of milk at primary schools to underprivileged children, resulting in a report to the Health Department with an offer of help, which was accepted and laid the foundation for the future government schools milk distribution. The club also took an early interest in the work of the Blind Institute, helping to fund its work and extend its buildings.¹⁶

These were the first small, tentative steps into the new world of service by the four infant service clubs born in Australasia in 1921 – small steps that were to be succeeded by giant strides and gigantic leaps in the coming years.

All Rotary clubs formed since are “descendants” through sponsorship of these four pioneers.

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Viewed from the 21st Century these early Rotarians might be seen as enthusiastic

amateurs, despite the thoroughly professional manner in which they identified community needs and set about meeting them. The success of their divergent projects may be attributed to their privileged positions in society (their business, professional, social and even political “clout”) and the absence of aggressive competition, in fund-raising, from the plethora of voluntary charitable organisations that were to mushroom in the second half of the 20th Century.

A historical study of the rise of professional social work has pointed out the impetus for social reform in the early twentieth century, when voluntary organisations still met most social wants. James Leiby has shown that religious motivations, still a strong organising principle at that time, combined with rational and planned initiatives which drew on the skills of the professional classes. The type of people who joined social organisations are described by him:

‘They focused empirical and concrete realities and relationships: there really people who needed help, others who felt a responsibility to help, natural and artificial arrangements for helping. A wise charity look beyond the immediate relief of need to long-run consequences; it would rest on statistics and other empirical evidence; it would involve community organization ...’¹⁷

Socialism, by no means a new social philosophy, had not been modified by some of its less doctrinaire adherents and engaged with equally modified capitalism to develop the concept of the Welfare State until the 1940s.¹⁸ Those who were to first advance modern ideas of a civil society and social capital had not been born.

The motivations of modern Rotarians are discussed in Chapter Twelve; but what motivated these high-status community leaders in the 1920s to invest so much time and treasure in a relatively unknown altruistic movement of foreign origin?

The explanation surely lies in their mainly British heritage and a class system that expected the privileged to accept responsibility for charitable enterprises. Historians have noted the growth of charitable institutions in Britain throughout the whole of modern history and have explained that, from the eighteenth century onwards, even in the middle classes:

“men and women congratulated themselves on their charitableness. They had just reason for pride. In the thirty years between 1740 and 1770 at least two dozen charities of miscellaneous sorts were founded in London and supported by concerned groups of private citizens, pooling their resources and contributing their time and effort to the management and direction of voluntary poor relief.”¹⁹

The Rotary clubs in twentieth century Australia developed out of this historical context. They had not inherited all the obligations of their privileged British counterparts of the previous century – e.g. to act as local magistrates and Parish councillors, to administer Poor Laws and make their own personal contributions to community welfare in the *noblesse oblige* tradition – but they had accepted the equivalent responsibility of the privileged on the other side of the globe. At the same time it is clear that they enjoyed the fellowship of like-minded people at their regular weekly luncheon or dinner meetings. As Harold Thomas, the first New Zealander to hold the office of Rotary International President (1959-60) said in a speech, “Rotary at its best is a judicious mixture of good works and good clean fun.”²⁰

The motivations of Australasians who joined Rotary in the 1920s are thus, in this thesis, determined to be the enactment of a cultural imperative which highly valued charity as an activity suited to the affluent. This was a socially cohesive response to inequality. In putting this argument, it is noted that studies into the role of charity in national cultures is still being developed as a field of history and that research is ongoing.

A recent study of Rotary club members in Sweden looked only at the advantages which club membership had for participants, without reference to altruistic aims for the rest of society. In effect, Gergei Farkas’ 2012 article simply examined Rotary from the perspective of an opportunity for business men to network. This narrow perspective is rather disappointing, as an assessment of charity and social obligations would be particularly interesting in the Nordic context, where the welfare state has been long established and accepted as a national tradition. Even Farkas’ study, however, showed that Rotary club members in contemporary Sweden:

... seem to have somewhat more structurally diverse personal networks than do non-Rotarians ... Interestingly enough, we also find that actors’ general volume of associational engagement, that is, the total number of voluntary associations they are actively involved in, is associated with significantly ($p = 1/4, 0.010$) lower levels of aggregate constraint, at least in the network of informal ties. This finding provides evidence that voluntary activities, in general, may have a structurally diversifying effect on the informal friendship networks of those involved—something that has rarely been empirically documented—and may be seen as being in line with the integrating hypothesis ...²¹

Rotary membership, therefore, in this study, indicates individuals with an interest in promoting contacts across class lines, and an inclination to reach out to marginalised members of society.

The research for this thesis suggests that such an impetus to promote social bonds and to recognise one's obligations to others who are less privileged is certainly marked in the history of Rotary in Australasia, and could also be expected to feature elsewhere.

A sociological research paper into Rotary Clubs in late 20th century New Guinea looked for motivations to join Rotary and found them to be both self-interested and altruistic. As people engaged in business, these motives were felt, by the New Guinea Rotarians, to be complimentary. From the post world war two era onward:

Clearly influenced by the ideals of the Progressive Era, Rotarians began to concern themselves with issues of social welfare, such as the need of underprivileged children for recreational facilities. Reflecting this social concern they coined the motto which persists today: 'Service above self. Yet, perhaps a more accurate motto might have been, 'Service and self.' Rotary as a 'service organization' could be regarded as a strategic expansion of its founder's vision of a community in which sociability and profit were equally legitimate and necessary ...'²²

These inclinations are found to be remarkably consistent throughout the history of Rotary Clubs. As early as 1919, an American Rotarian stated in *The Public Health Journal* that: 'truth and happiness come through service, and as we increase our ability and power to serve, we approach closer the certainty of happiness, affirming that the service of business is the science of serving, that "He Profits Most Who Serves Best". In other words, if unselfishness enables others to succeed, we ourselves make progress towards success, believing that to-day's greatest achievement of success should be founded upon the Golden Rule ...'²³

This equation of individual success and the betterment of society is a part of the social values of the late modern era, and has been an impetus toward many forms of charity, as well as many forms of sociability.

An interesting 1950 view of Rotary's social influence in the UK between the wars and into immediate post-war years, which does not appear to have been in any way reflected in egalitarian Australasia, was observed by C.R. Hewitt who found that the aspirations of some lower middle class men were enhanced by their association with upper middle to upper class fellows in Rotary clubs, with appropriate modifications of behaviour, dress and even speech patterns. On the other hand it was demonstrated that those who had chosen a bohemian lifestyle were beginning to cast aside the earlier identifiers of class and that what was becoming acceptable in an upper middle class Chelsea salon might have been frowned upon by the middle-class members of the Stourbridge Rotary Club, conscious of their hard-won status.²⁴

Chapter Four: Projects and Programs for Youth

As seen in the previous chapter, each of the first four Rotary clubs in the Antipodes began its service with youth-work; and the welfare of young people has remained a preoccupation of Rotary clubs throughout the years.

Following the successful Boys' Week activities in Sydney in 1924 and 1926 and the subsequent support of the Boys' Brigade, another need was identified: the education and training of crippled children.

The Crippled Children's Society

From the beginning, the Rotary Club of Sydney had taken an interest in handicapped children and had appointed a committee to consider ways of caring for them. Club members provided cars each month to convey children to the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital from their own homes and the Royleston Home (for crippled boys). Vocational training had been considered. Children were taken on picnics¹.

On 25th March, 1925, in an address to the Rotary club, Dr W.M. Vickers said that, in the dark ages, cripples were objects of hatred, later of mirth and now of charity. What ought to be done was to provide the best treatment available for the improvement of their health and vocational training to enable them to take their place in productive work. Their lot would be vastly improved if they were able to take part in society and no longer suffered the destroying trauma of isolation.²

Three years were to elapse before the club adopted, as its major activity for 1928-29, "the educational and vocational training of crippled children" and the community service committee was instructed to report on the best methods to be followed by the club to give effect to this decision.³

From the outset, the committee took the view that an educational program would be futile until the child was able to take advantage of the medical, surgical and other therapies available. Children first had to be discovered (for many were kept out of public view by their parents or guardians) then referred to the hospitals or institutions in which the best available treatment could be given.

Members of the club were able to introduce the committee to people in the medical, health, education and social welfare services. Early consultation was arranged with the orthopaedic section of the British Medical Association in Australia (now the Australian Medical Association), the N.S.W. Education Department, the Board of Health, the

Civilian Cripples' Association, the Far West Children's Health Scheme, the Problem Child Advancement League, all the major hospitals with orthopaedic equipment and selected nursing homes.

Literature was studied; all the standard text books available at the time: statistics, plans, treatments, results and other data from activities in Great Britain, U.S.A. and Canada and an extensive history of similar efforts elsewhere. Included was information provided by Edgar Allen, president of the International Society for Crippled Children, a member of the Rotary Club of Elyria, Ohio, U.S.A. ("Daddy" Allen is said to have joined his Rotary club for the express purpose of gaining Rotary support for his enterprise: the care, cure and education of crippled children – with remarkable success).⁴

At the conclusion of its enquiry the committee reported that there appeared to be no lack of facilities for the treatment of children; that the hospitals, clinics and nursing homes were coping adequately with the cases presented but that the full extent of the problem was still unknown; and that the provision of education for the handicapped was woefully inadequate.

The committee described its work as a preliminary enquiry and suggested a comprehensive survey. So, once again, the members of the club embarked on a survey of their city. As Sir Henry Braddon recalled in a talk to the club on 21 May, 1946: "Nobody knew whether there were 1,000 or 10,000 crippled children in Sydney. It is dreadful to think of the handicapped child that no one took any particular trouble about or cared about..."⁶

Overseas surveys, both in Britain and America, showed that there were 2.5 crippled people in every 1000, 50% being under 16 years old; suggesting that between 2,000 and 3,000 crippled children would be found in Sydney with its then population of about one million.

Recognising the reticence of many parents of handicapped children in those days and the shrinking of the children themselves from any kind of publicity that would expose them to public view and emphasise their separation from other children, the Rotarians were aware of the need to conduct their interviews with extreme sensitivity.

At the conclusion of the survey, the children were brought to clinics, conducted by the major hospitals, for assessment of their condition.

Up to this point, the costs of the survey, including the cost of an office with paid staff for a year, had been met by donations from the members. The club now decided that the

task of providing recreational and educational facilities would be beyond its own resources and that the public should be invited to contribute.

A public appeal was launched by the Premier of New South Wales (club member Thomas Bavin) at a public meeting convened by the Chief Civic Commissioner. The premier moved that the meeting resolve to enter upon a campaign to raise not less than £15,000 “to meet the need which Rotary's investigations have revealed.”⁵ The sum raised was £17,058-17-8.

Having ascertained the extent of the problem and charted a course of action for its solution, the club felt that, in accordance with Rotary’s general policy on community service, a permanent citizens’ body should be now formed to implement the program. At a public meeting in the Sydney Town Hall on 17th December, 1929, the Crippled Children’s Society was formed and the club formally handed over the funds raised by the citizens’ appeal together with an outstanding balance of £211-8-2 of funds raised within the club for the preliminary work. The society was admitted to honorary affiliation with the International Society for Crippled Children and on 6th August, 1930, the New South Wales Society for Crippled Children was duly registered with the Chief Secretary under the laws of the State.

Several members of the initial board of directors of what was to become one of the State’s most highly regarded charitable institutions were, of course, Rotarians, including Sir Henry Braddon, who was the first president, serving in that capacity until 1946. Others also served for many years and, indeed, Rotarians, as individuals, remain associated with the Society to the present time.⁶ In 1995, the name was changed to the Northcott Society to honour the service of Lieutenant General Sir John Northcott, former Governor of NSW, Rotarian and long-time Patron of the Society. In 2005 it became Northcott Disability Services.

This was the first of similar activities for the benefit of handicapped children throughout the Australia-New Zealand region. It was claimed that all societies or associations for the treatment and education of crippled children within the region have been initiated by the action of Rotary clubs. This probably is no longer so but Rotary’s leadership in the field is undisputed.

The Rotary Clubs in New Zealand were singularly fortunate when formation of a Crippled Children’s Society was completed in 1934. The event coincided with a visit by Lord Nuffield, the famous British industrialist responsible for the Morris family of motor cars, who immediately donated £50,000 to the Society⁷.

The word “cripple” in the 1920s, was not seen as a pejorative term; and though the names of the associations have been changed in recent years there is no evidence to suggest that these changes were made in response to later 20th Century sensibilities.

Cure Kids

Proposed by the Rotary Club of Auckland and adopted by the district, the National Child Health Research Foundation was established as a 50th anniversary project in 1971 with a \$250,000 endowment fund gift from Rotary clubs.⁸

A 75th anniversary project was initiated in 1996 to inject \$1,000,000 into the Foundation.⁹ The foundation has received continuing and strong support from Rotary clubs. The name was changed and the reach of the foundation was extended in 2011. It is now known as Cure Kids, a registered charity in New Zealand, Australia and Fiji.¹⁰

Polio Plus

The major world youth/health project in which all Rotary clubs take part is “Polio-Plus” launched in 1987. The aim was to eradicate poliomyelitis by the year 2005, Rotary’s centenary year; and, thereafter, the other infectious diseases of childhood.¹¹

Antipodean Rotarians claim this vast, international project, subsequently partnered by the World Health Organisation, as a “down under” initiative because it was first proposed by an Australian, former Rotary International President Sir Clem Renouf and made possible by the 3H (Health, Hunger, Humanity) program which he introduced during his presidential year.

With an initial target of \$US120 million, Rotary clubs raised more than \$240 million. The Australia-New Zealand region received strong public support for the campaign with extensive media coverage and government encouragement. Australian and New Zealand clubs raised more than \$8 million.

The objective was not achieved by the target date and the Rotary clubs of Australasia continue (2014), with those in the rest of the world, to work for the total elimination of the disease. In 2013 the campaign received the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, giving Rotarians the confidence that the goal would be soon reached.¹²

They were disappointed, however, because in remote communities in some of those countries in which the disease was thought to have been almost conquered, a sudden resurgence occurred, the result of fear based on the ignorance of villagers.¹³

The new target date for the total elimination of Polio was set at 2018. The Australian

Prime Minister pledged a further \$200 million in his speech to the 2014 Rotary International convention in Sydney; and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation pledged a further \$2 for every dollar spent by Rotary on Polio eradication up to \$35 million a year for five years.¹⁴

Support

Since its inception in Australasia, Rotary has offered support to existing youth organisations and agencies. This practice arises from the policy of “find the need; and if there is an agency equipped to meet the need, strengthen and support, don’t duplicate...” Because many local surveys by Rotary clubs identified recreational needs of young people which could be met by such organisations as Scouts, Guides, YMCA and YWCA, Boys’ Brigade, National Fitness camps, the Health Camp Association, Police & Citizens’ Youth Clubs, Church youth clubs, Young Farmers’ or Rural Youth Clubs, and a variety of other well-established but not necessarily thriving groups or agencies, Rotarians were called upon to strengthen and support these groups in preference to establishing new organisations or agencies. Thus it is found throughout the whole region that Rotary clubs have been responsible for building, extending, renovating, equipping and even painting buildings for these worthy organisations; helping with their special activities and often providing the work force at fund-raising events.

For example, in its first year, the Rotary Club of Auckland raised £900 for the Boy Scouts; and within the next few years assisted in the establishment of a training camp at Oratia, provided a hut at the Waitakere Ranges and a training camp for Cubs at Green Bay, a lodge for the YMCA camp at Hanua, accommodation headquarters for the Plunket Society and a kitchen at the Institute for Underdeveloped Children. The club also endowed the Junior Symphony Orchestra, a Maori Youth Centre at Freemans Bay and the Opportunity Youth Hostel at Te Atatu (a school and stay-in home for intellectually handicapped children).¹⁵

One of the most unusual support projects for Boy Scouts is the Scout Farm established by the Rotary Club of Dunedin. The club with the Scout committee raised £8,000 to buy a neglected 2,700 acre property adjacent to an afforestation area where the boys could learn practical scouting as well as practical farming. The farm was self-supporting from the beginning.¹⁶

This sort of support for existing organisations and agencies is so much a part of every Rotary club's activities that many give them only passing reference in their annual

reports, reserving their emphasis for new initiatives in youth service.

Some of these established organisations, like the Crippled Children's Societies in both Australia and New Zealand, were originally Rotary initiatives; such as the National Fitness Council (and camps) of New South Wales and the Police and Citizens Boys' (now Youth) Clubs, both early projects of the Rotary Club of Sydney; and the Victorian Young Farmers Clubs; and the Adventure Camps initiated by the Rotary Club of Collingwood.¹⁷ So effective was the policy of handing over to the community on the successful completion of any project however, that when the recently-chartered Rotary Club of Newtown, N.S.W., in 1962 adopted provision of equipment for the local Police and Citizens Youth Club as one of its projects for the year, the members were surprised to learn that the first such youth club had been established in 1935 by their own sponsor Rotary club, Sydney.¹⁸

Many Rotarians, as mentioned earlier, have continued their association with these organisations, as individuals, after the completion of the club project to assist. They are to be found serving in Scouts and Guides, YMCA/YWCA, youth clubs, National Fitness camps and the like and on the boards or committees of numerous charities.

Interact and Rotaract

As a means of instilling the "ideal of service" in young people, Rotary clubs have been encouraged to sponsor the formation of junior service clubs: Interact and Rotaract.

In 1960 a Rotary International committee, chaired by Charles Taylor of New Zealand, considered the possibility of devising a specific program of organised youth activity that could be recommended to Rotary clubs throughout the world. The object was to introduce youth to voluntary service and to develop international understanding among young people of secondary school age.¹⁹

In the course of the study, the committee learned of the Wheel clubs sponsored by the Rotary Club of Miami, Florida. While the deliberations of the committee were still in progress, the Rotary Club of Marrickville, N.S.W., sponsored a Wheel club at Newington College (within that club's territory) in 1961.²⁰

From the committee's final recommendation came Interact, (International action) a service club for boys in their last three years of secondary school. It was intended that Rotarians, having sponsored an Interact club, would act as counsellors, advising but not directing the members in the development of their community service and international service activities.

The Newington Wheel Club made the easy transition to become the first Interact club in the Antipodes in April, 1963.²¹ The movement spread rapidly. By mid 1966 there were some forty clubs in Australian and New Zealand schools and by 1970 the number had grown to 200.

Because Interact clubs were restricted to males, Rotary clubs in Australia met the demands of girls to be involved in similar service work by forming Code clubs (Charity Obedience Duty Endeavour) in 1966.²² In New Zealand, Servact (Service+Action) clubs began in 1967.²³

The Interact clubs and their female equivalents often worked together and held joint conferences and symposia until, in 1969, the board of Rotary International relaxed the rule restricting membership of Interact to males. Within a few years the Code and Servact clubs had either become Interact clubs in girls' schools or had amalgamated with existing Interact clubs in co-educational schools.

To sponsor an Interact club, a Rotary club needs the permission of the school principal – which is not always given, many arguing that their students have more than enough extra-curricula distractions. At least one teacher within the school, to act as co-ordinator, is also a requirement, which increases the difficulty. The role of the Rotarians on the club's Interact committee is to attend meetings of the Interact club to provide advice or information when requested.

The activities of an Interact club are many and varied. Some of them, listed at an Interact district conference, were painting houses and cleaning up gardens for elderly and disabled people, visiting handicapped children's homes and reading to the children or leading them in games, shopping for housebound elderly, making toys and kindergarten furniture, maintaining school gardens, tree-planting, participating in road safety campaigns, neighbourhood cleanups, raising funds for drought victims, collecting clothing and blankets for flood and bushfire victims, collecting and sorting books for distribution in developing countries, helping migrant children to learn English, entertaining exchange students, writing to overseas Interact clubs to advance international friendships.²⁴

The young people who had served in Interact clubs soon began to ask for similar clubs in tertiary educational institutions – at universities and colleges. The Australian Rotary Institute made recommendations to the Rotary International Board, initially with scant success.²⁵ Fortunately they persevered and a worldwide survey was agreed to, which resulted in approval to sponsor service clubs for young adults (aged 17 to 25) to

be known as Rotaract clubs.²⁶

The purpose of a Rotaract club was “to stimulate among its members acceptance of high ethical standards in all occupations, to develop leadership and responsible citizenship through service and to promote international understanding and peace.” Rotaract clubs could be university (or college) based or community-based.²⁷

The first Rotaract club in Australasia was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Brisbane West, on 22nd May, 1968 at International House in the University of Queensland. About half the members were students with the remainder from outside the University. Some were students from overseas who were residents of International House.²⁸

Growth was rapid; and when the first Rotaract district conference in the Antipodes was held at the University of Queensland in July, 1969, the ten clubs in that Rotary district (260) were represented and there were visitors from twenty two clubs in New South Wales and Victoria.²⁹

First in New Zealand was the Rotaract Club of Mount Albert, sponsored by the Rotary Club of the same name on 19th February, 1969, an occasion considered of such significance that the newly-inducted members received messages of congratulation from the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and Sir Edmund Hillary, conqueror of Mount Everest and president of New Zealand Volunteer Services Abroad.³⁰ With such encouragement, New Zealand Rotary clubs entered enthusiastically into this new partnership with youth and found no shortage of young adults willing to swell the numbers.

The rapid growth of the 1960s and 70s began to tail off in the 1980s and, by 1990, the number of clubs was almost static, with disbanding clubs almost equalling new formations, causing grave concern to Rotarian sponsors.³¹ A study revealed that part of the problem was the migration of youth from small towns to the larger cities in search of employment. Other factors included the lower level of youth employment, preoccupation of students with academic success to improve chances of vocational success, and “the encouragement of greed in an increasingly materialistic society”.³² Another suggested reason was the supposed reluctance of young people in the age group (since 1970 18-28) to be identified with a group which was “supervised” by Rotarians.

Rotaract continued to grow in the Antipodes with the formation of new clubs; but still very slowly compared with the earlier years. By the early 1990s there were 264 Rotaract clubs in the Australia-New Zealand region (213 in Australia and Papua-New Guinea and fifty one in New Zealand and Pacific Islands) suggesting a potential growth

(on the basis of one Rotaract club per Rotary club) of more than 1,100; but this potential was not realised. In 2013, according to Rotary district figures for that year, there were only 2,121 members of ninety two Rotaract clubs (seventy five in Australia and seventeen in New Zealand and the Pacific).

Despite a decline in membership, Rotaractors remain enthusiastic. Too numerous to be listed here are the varied and often highly imaginative projects devised and carried out by clubs. Just a few of them, reported in *Rotary Down Under* over the years are:-

Local clean-up campaigns in which members, assisted by other organisations (Scouts, Guides) collect litter and dumped rubbish from streets, parks and bushland; collecting funds for charitable organisations by pushing colleagues in wheelbarrows some 200 kilometres; Rent-a-Santa (for a small fee, members dress in Santa Claus costumes and call on specified families or appear at functions); fund-raising to build a stadium for disabled youth by rafting down the Darling River from Bourke to its confluence with the Murray, a distance of 1,600 kilometres; organising working bees to mow lawns, clean up gardens, clear gutters and paint houses for elderly pensioners; holding fetes, fairs, jumble sales, auctions for a variety of charitable institutions; chopping firewood for elderly and needy people; organising and participating in fun-runs, “walkathons”, “swimathons”, “workathons”, “sitathons” (sitting on a pole for an unconscionable time), “telethons”, “skateathons” and innumerable other variations on the marathon to raise funds; strengthening local voluntary emergency services, particularly fire-fighting units, with volunteer teams and fundraising activities; teaching English at an orphanage in Sri Lanka and, while there, establishing vegetable gardens, building a girls’ dormitory at a school, and providing sheets, towels, mattresses, shoes and hand-knitted teddies; taking disabled children on picnics and other outings; presenting pantomimes for disabled or underprivileged children; busking in streets and at fetes and fairs to raise funds; reading to frail-aged people in nursing homes; working with their sponsoring Rotary clubs on a variety of service projects, particularly those requiring physical effort; travelling in teams to Asia and the Pacific under the Global Village Program to build homes for disadvantaged families; participating in the “Relay for Life” raising funds for cancer research; exchanging information, audio and video tapes and group visits with Rotaract clubs in overseas countries to advance international friendship and understanding.³³

The work of Rotaract is featured at most Rotary district conferences and international conventions.

Rotaract clubs are supervised by their sponsoring Rotary clubs; but they are

responsible for arranging their own Rotaract District Conference and they have their own equivalent of a Rotary district governor. Originally known as Rotaract District Governor, the incumbent is now designated Rotaract Representative. He or she is a past president of a Rotaract club within the district, selected by a committee of senior Rotarians and Rotaract past officers. The Rotaract Representative visits each of the clubs in the district, discusses the program for the year (making helpful suggestions where indicated) and organises and presides at the district conference.

In 1977 the incumbent Rotary district governors in Australia and New Zealand, on the recommendation of the Australian Rotary Institute, established a Rotaract Representative Training Program, a miniature version of the Rotary International Assembly at which incoming Rotary governors are trained.³⁴ The two-day seminar is conducted annually by a committee appointed by the Institute and is attended by incoming Rotaract Representatives from all districts.

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)

The RYLA program exemplifies the genesis and development of a Rotary Program.

In 1959 the State of Queensland was celebrating the centenary of its proclamation as a separate colony. The Queen was represented at the festivities by her young cousin, the Princess Alexandra of Kent. The State Centenary Celebrations Committee, appointed by the Queensland Government, sought the assistance of the Rotary Club of Brisbane in arranging a program involving young people; and the idea that finally emerged was what became known as “Gundoo Week”, which involved not only Brisbane but also Rotary clubs from all parts of the State.

Rotary clubs selected young leaders, aged eighteen to twenty five, to visit Brisbane for ten days. There they would be accommodated in the homes of Rotarians of the Brisbane and suburban clubs. They would attend a grand ball with the Princess, a garden party at Government House with the Governor as host, an Australian Broadcasting Commission symphony concert, a special church service and a youth rally, visit State Parliament, go to the theatre and the ballet, visit the art gallery, museum, botanical gardens, the law courts, offices, institutions and factories. It was described as “a social, educational and cultural experience” intended to emphasise the importance of youth – and particularly of youth leaders – in this rapidly developing State.

So successful was Gundoo (said to be an Aboriginal word meaning youth gathering

or youth corroboree) that many Rotarians thought it should be repeated; and so it was, but in a modified and immeasurably more valuable form.

In 1960 the governor of the Rotary district centred on Brisbane (260) announced the inauguration of the Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA) program as an annual activity of that district³⁵.

Each Rotary club was asked to nominate two young leaders, one female and one male aged seventeen to twenty three to attend a RYLA Week in Brisbane with a similar format to Gundoo week but including a one-day seminar on youth leadership.

The first RYLA week began on 2nd May, 1960 and was pronounced a resounding success. One recommendation from the awardees, however, was that there should be more time devoted to the leadership seminar. The RYLA program in the next year incorporated a two-day residential seminar at a youth camp.

In the following year (1961) a visiting Rotarian from Newcastle, impressed by reports of the RYLA week, introduced the program to his own club. The district (267) adopted the plan but, adopting the recommendation of a professional youth worker member of the club, extended the seminar in camp to five days with only two days of “home hosting” and visits in the city. The first seminar in that district was held in February, 1962.

Rotarian Gordon Boag from Canowindra, a small town in the west of N.S.W., was “making up” at a Rotary club meeting at which the guest speaker, from Newcastle, described the RYLA program. He took the idea to his own club and district governor; and the result was that the first RYLA seminar in District 270 was held at Bathurst – a full seven days in camp with only one evening set aside for attendance at the weekly meeting of the host Rotary club.³⁶

The RYLA program, as it was conducted in District 270 was described in an article published in the regional magazine, *Rotary Down Under*, in March 1966, which concluded with an offer to share information with other districts. The offer was accepted by a member of the Sydney suburban Rotary Club of Newtown, who, having visited the second (1966) seminar of District 270 at a conference centre/camp near Canberra, persuaded his own club and district (275) to adopt the program. This was achieved by bringing the RYLA chairman from District 270 with a group of awardees to speak at the district conference.

After a successful seminar in District 275, a group from that district gave a similar presentation at the conference of the neighbouring Sydney district (268) which also

promptly adopted the program and began to arrange its first seminar. Two interested observers at the District 275 seminar were Royce Abbey, youth chairman of Victorian District 280 and John MacKay from Western Australian District 245, both of whom also introduced the RYLA program into their districts in the following year³⁷. Also from the District 275 seminar, one awardee was chosen to visit the Rotary district centred on Auckland (292), the governor of which was distinguished New Zealand educator A.R. (Bert) Dreaver, who had expressed interest in the RYLA program and had been provided with written material. The result was the appointment of a district RYLA committee for 1968-69 and the introduction of the program to New Zealand with the first seminar held at the University of Auckland in February, 1969.³⁸

With RYLA committees now appointed in eight districts, it was suggested to the governor of the district in which the program had begun (260 in Queensland) that he should convene a meeting of representatives of all committees to share information and prepare literature to help others contemplating the introduction of the program.³⁹ On 27th October, 1968, fifteen Rotarians representing nine districts (260, 267, 270, 275, 268, 270, 245, 290 and 265) met and among the recommendations of the meeting to all incumbent district governors were: "...that all districts adopt the RYLA program; that an identical statement of purposes be adopted by all; that an Australia-New Zealand Committee be appointed to co-ordinate the program and assist in extension work; and that the Australian and New Zealand Institutes be asked to submit a joint recommendation to the board of Rotary International that RYLA be adopted as a world Rotary youth program and that its adoption be announced, preferably at the international convention to be held in Sydney in 1971."⁴⁰

The governors authorised the formation of the committee and appointed their representatives who convened as the Australia-New Zealand Central RYLA Committee at the University of New South Wales, on 8th February, 1969. The committee appointed an information and extension sub-committee to gather all available literature on the subject from all Rotary districts in which the program was operating and, using this information, prepare a draft RYLA manual for the guidance of district governors, district RYLA committees, RYLA seminar staff and Rotary club youth committees.⁴¹ On 19th April, 1969 at a meeting in Canberra, the first draft was considered in general terms and an amended draft distributed to district committees for comment and suggestions. On 5th September, 1970 the committee considered the second draft in detail, paragraph by paragraph, and the RYLA Manual was then issued to all districts in

Australia and New Zealand with copies to the youth activities committee of Rotary International.⁴²

The sub-committee immediately began active promotion of the RYLA program in the regional Rotary magazine; and articles were provided for Rotary magazines in other countries, eliciting enquiries from many interested Rotarians. By 1970 RYLA was operating in every district in Australia and New Zealand (seventeen at that time).

The adoption of RYLA as a recommended youth program of Rotary International was announced at the 1971 international convention in Sydney to loud applause by Antipodean delegates.⁴³

RYLA was subsequently introduced to many parts of the world; and the manual prepared for Australia and New Zealand was completely revised and modified for international use by a committee appointed by the Australian and New Zealand Institutes in 1988.⁴⁴ However, notwithstanding recommendations by several R.I. Youth Committees, no action was ever taken to adopt standard procedures. Thus what is known as RYLA in some countries bears only superficial resemblance (and is considered of inferior quality by Down Under Rotarians) to the Antipodean program, while in other countries it is of particularly high standard; a situation found irksome by those responsible for the development of the program and jealous of its reputation as an effective and professionally-conducted youth leadership training scheme.⁴⁵

A typical RYLA seminar, as conducted in Australian and New Zealand Rotary districts, is a seven-day residential course held at an established camp, conference centre or college.

The program is devised by the district committee, which also selects the seminar staff and visiting lecturers and resource people, all of whom are volunteers who donate their time.

The staff usually includes a director, whose job is to implement the program, an administrator responsible for the physical aspects of the camp (meals, camp rules, first aid, canteen), one or two counsellors to assist the director and be available to talk with awardees who have problems, an activities co-ordinator to assist with the organisation of games, concert, camp newspaper (or news broadcast over the pa system) etc. and a secretary in charge of the office. Several members of staff are invariably former awardees.

Each Rotary club is invited to select (and pay for) a male and female awardee aged eighteen to twenty five years. The club is also responsible for transporting its awardees

to and from the seminar venue. Shortly after the seminar, the awardees attend a meeting of the sponsor club to receive their award certificates and describe their experiences of RYLA for the benefit of the Rotarians.

The curriculum varies but the handbook recommends that every RYLA syllabus include what are described as “core” subjects, including discussion leading, leadership, group dynamics, chairmanship, public speaking, communications, human behaviour, recognising emotional and behaviour problems, interpersonal relationships, moral and ethical questions, contemporary social problems, conflict resolution, community resources, world understanding, campcraft, survival and elementary first aid. Listed as optional subjects are physical education, games leading, health and hygiene, stress management, club administration, programming, fund-raising, arts and crafts, amateur theatre and dance, personal image, choosing a career and multi-cultural societies. Obviously there are many more options, the choice of subjects being dictated by the needs of the time and society and the availability of speakers.

Most sessions take the form of a short lecture or presentation of up to 20 minutes, study groups or workshops for twenty minutes and reports from groups and general discussion twenty minutes.

The awardees are expected to arrange their own social activities which almost always include a dance and a camp concert. They are also encouraged to publish a newsletter and organise sporting activities.⁴⁶

The RYLA program has been described in some detail in this study because it typifies the development of a Rotary program from its beginnings in a single club to its adoption by a district and its extension, first by a process of sharing information and later by planned promotion. It is also typical of the way in which Antipodeans demonstrate their talent for institutionalising an activity and devising the bureaucratic procedures to accompany it. This propensity will be further demonstrated in later chapters.

Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN)

A youth activity that grew out of RYLA is the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment, known by its acronym, RYPEN.

Devised by the Rotary Club of Canberra-Belconnen, A.C.T., in 1980, the program is a long week-end (three days) seminar for girls and boys aged fourteen to seventeen years. Awardees are sponsored and paid for by Rotary clubs in the same way as are

Rotary Youth Leadership Awardees and, similarly also, the seminar is organised and conducted by a district RYPEN committee.⁴⁷ Those selected to attend a RYPEN seminar are not the high achievers or outstanding youth leaders of the locality from which they are sponsored but average younger people who are likely to benefit from the learning experience. Thus the selection committee in each Rotary club has the unusual and potentially delicate task of choosing candidates who are not necessarily the “best” applicants; of trying to find the “average” student, who is never likely to gain one of the awards for academic achievement, athletic prowess or outstanding leadership potential; and to make such a selection without implying that the student is considered “just average”.

The RYPEN program’s stated aim is “to communicate to the young people involved a series of ideas, problems and social experiences which will assist them in forming their own values and moral standards.”⁴⁸

A typical agenda for a RYPEN seminar (after the introduction of the program and the usual “getting to know you” segment) includes communication, good manners, tolerance, drugs and alcohol, “Police, the Law and you”, physical fitness, job-seeking, recreational skills, religion and morals; while social skills are imparted at a formal dinner and a dance. A short, ecumenical religious service is usually arranged on the Sunday.⁴⁹

While no objective evaluation of the program has been attempted, anecdotal evidence suggests that the young participants have found the experience very valuable.⁵⁰ Indeed, some of the so-called “average” youngsters chosen have shown a marked improvement at school and have demonstrated leadership potential to the extent that they have been chosen for RYLA and some have been awarded Rotary Foundation scholarships.

Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA)

Initiated by the NSW Rotary district north of Sydney in 2001, following the tragic road death of four teenagers in a car driven by an inexperienced “P” plate driver, the RYDA program has been adopted by clubs in Australia and New Zealand. The objective, fairly obviously, is to reduce the road toll among young drivers aged 17 - 25 years, who represent 15% of the population but account for more than 25% of the deaths and serious injuries in road accidents.

A research-based program developed in consultation with road safety authorities,

departments of police and education and accredited driving instructors, RYDA is conducted in out-of-school venues and is presented to the students with the theme “My Life, My Choices”. Each one-day program of six sessions is designed for 150-180 students, allowing for class groups of 20-30. Because of the significance of peer pressure, an important aim is to influence “attitudes and behaviours” in young people as both drivers and passengers.

In 2012 more than 45,000 students attended classes; and it was estimated that more than 225,000 students had participated in the program since it began.⁵¹

Peer Support

Drug abuse is seen as a problem in Australian and New Zealand communities as it is in other countries; and to combat the problem with preventive measures in schools was the response supported by Rotary.

The Peer Support program began in 1971, the initiative of Mrs. Elizabeth Campbell, a health education officer in New South Wales. Initially confined to a few schools with some State Government funding, it was languishing for want of support when the modest funding was withdrawn. The Rotary Club of North Sydney, N.S.W., decided to support the program in the local high school and it was taken up with enthusiasm by clubs throughout the region with the official or unofficial support of governments.⁵²

The success of Peer Support was partly owing to the spirited leadership of Rotarian James (Jim) Dibble, a popular television broadcaster of the time, who contributed his considerable communication skills to its development and promotion.

In New Zealand it was adopted as a Rotary program by all six Rotary districts in 1987 and is officially supported by the Education Department and Police Department.

The program is based on the assumption that the transition from primary to high school can be an unhappy time for many children and that, without guidance, they can be easy targets for exploitation; that, at the same time, many senior students need the opportunity to develop leadership skills; and that helping young people to resist peer pressures by caring for each other and providing positive role models is a long-term solution to many social problems.

Under the Peer Support program, senior students are trained to assist the younger ones by providing personal contact and guidance. Thus the senior student is given an opportunity to develop leadership skills and the junior student is assured of a safe and friendly environment in which to develop her/his own individuality.

The method is simple but effective. Selected volunteer senior students are trained by teachers who have attended workshop seminars covering all aspects of the program. After training the selected leaders are assigned to small “family” groups of six junior students with the accent on friendship and support rather than authority.

An evaluation of the program by the Yanco Agricultural High School in N.S.W. provided evidence of its success, indicating that student drug abuse had been totally eliminated in that school over a two-year period.⁵³

The N.S.W. Deputy Premier and Minister for Education in 1985, Mr Ron Mulock, said, “I commend the Peer Support program to the people of N.S.W. with the suggestion that donations to it would be like buying shares in the future of our youth.”⁵⁴

J R McKenzie Youth Education Fund

The late Rotarian Sir John McKenzie established the J.R.McKenzie Youth Education Fund in 1940, specifying that it be administered by Rotary with a representative of each Rotary district in New Zealand serving as a Trustee.

The Fund makes grants to charitable organisations assisting young people who are physically or intellectually handicapped or who are disadvantaged. Grants may not be used for expenditure on land or buildings, to individuals, schools, nursing homes or hospitals. It does support innovative and creative projects.

Grants may be recommended by Rotary clubs but, for obvious reasons, may not be used “as a backstop for club community projects”.⁵⁵

Science Summer Schools – National Youth Science Forum

In January, 1984, the first Australian National Science Summer School, attended by 200 senior secondary school students, convened in Canberra – a joint initiative of two Rotary districts (968 covering Sydney’s northern suburbs and 971 based on Canberra) and the Canberra Development Board; and with the support of a large number of scientific institutions and Rotary clubs from around Australia.⁵⁶

The Rotary clubs nominated and sponsored the candidates; students who had shown outstanding performance in science subjects.

The purpose was to introduce the scientists of the future to Australia’s most distinguished scientists of the day and provide opportunities to participate with them in open and group discussions and forum sessions. The students were also able to visit some of the great national institutions.

Officially opened by the Governor General with a challenging address and also addressed by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Science, the Summer School was an immediate success.

In the following year the National Science Summer School was designated by the Rotary Institute as one of Rotary's contributions to International Youth Year, with all Rotary districts participating.⁵⁷

The National Science Summer School now became an annual event. All Rotary clubs are invited to nominate and sponsor outstanding students who live or attend school within their territories. The competition is keen and those who are finally selected are seen as having brought credit to their schools – and their sponsoring Rotary clubs. The nation's leading scientists, most of whom enjoy an international reputation, gladly give their time to encourage the aspiring scientists of the future.⁵⁸

From 1990 until 1995 the National Science Summer School was sponsored by CRA Limited and was known as The CRA National Science Summer School. With the end of sponsorship, another name was adopted: The National Youth Science Forum and further corporate sponsorship was sought.

Now a national not-for-profit organisation, the National Youth Science Forum is supported by nine universities and 13 major Australian companies as corporate partners and with the Chief Scientist as its president.

The “flagship” event is the January Forum but the activity continues with a series of programs in capital cities.⁵⁹

The Science Experience

A national program for younger students is The Science Experience. Initiated in 1990 by the Rotary Club of Doncaster, Vic., and Monash University, it is designed to encourage students in years 9 and 10 to consider a career in science.

Some 3,000 places are available to students for the non-selective three to four day courses conducted in thirty six universities each year. It is described as “hands-on science fun” with short lectures by prominent scientists and visits to research laboratories and sites of scientific interest. Information about careers and further study opportunities are given.

Brochures and application forms are sent to schools and Rotary clubs each year.⁶⁰

Club and district projects

Club, district and multi-district youth projects are so numerous that even a list of those initiated in the past year would occupy more space than is warranted; for it is certain that each of the 1,401 clubs will have included one or more attempts to meet the needs of youth among its projects for the year. The following few, therefore, have been selected as representative of the many thousands of projects, great and small, completed by Rotary clubs in Australia and New Zealand during the past 90 years:-

In Otumoetai, N.Z., playing equipment for a Maori school was bought and installed by Rotarians; and at Westfort, the Scout Lodge was built entirely by the voluntary labour of Rotary members; while as early as 1933 it had been resolved that the formation of a Crippled Children's Society with branches throughout the dominion would be a major activity of Rotary in New Zealand.⁶¹

Planning for a youth camp at Taroona near Hobart, Tas. began in 1927 when land was acquired and cleared; but the project was deferred during the worst days of the world depression that began in 1929. It was not finally completed until 1940 and was extensively used by many youth groups including Scouts, Guides and National Fitness Council.⁶²

In the immediate post World War II years, the Rotary Club of South Sydney, in a social survey conducted by the University Department of Social Studies and funded by the club, identified a large number of needs of youth in the area, including a need for assistance to the University Settlement, a voluntary social service organisation following the traditions and methods of university settlements in England. Its aim was to provide educational and recreational experiences after school and at week-ends for children in the depressed areas around the University of Sydney. It occupied some small terrace houses and was staffed by volunteers, all of whom were staff and students of the University. The buildings were in urgent need of repairs and equipment. The Rotary club, with donated materials and voluntary labour, was able to fully renovate the buildings and install the play and hobby equipment. The club then "adopted" the settlement, providing assistance over a period of several years.⁶³

A popular project in many Rotary clubs throughout the region is vocational guidance at schools, described periodically in *Rotary Down Under*. The program varies from attendance at a school by Rotary members who are able to assist young people in their choice of careers, or are willing to conduct simulated interviews with "applicants" for employment, to full scale careers "markets" at which representatives of a large number

of vocations set up stalls from which they offer printed material and provide information about their business, profession or industry. It is not unusual for the armed services, emergency services, police and public transport authorities to provide displays on such occasions.⁶⁴

Among the many huts, camps and adventure sites provided by Rotary clubs throughout the years – mainly for established youth organisations – are some that were built for the use of all youth groups in the community.

One such was the Borambola Camp created by the Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga, N.S.W. in 1950. The club acquired a twelve hectare site on the banks of a permanent stream thirty kilometres from the city. The members developed the site in stages. Using donated building materials and disused buildings and their own labour, they provided dormitories (two disused old school houses transported to the site on road trailers), toilet and shower blocks, kitchen and dining hall, recreation hut and lecture room. The camp is used regularly by many organisations, including the Rotary club for its annual camp for school children and the Rotary district for RYLA and RYPEN seminars and youth exchange briefings.⁶⁵

The Rotarians in the NSW– Victorian border city of Albury similarly built a chalet, fifteen kilometres from town on the shores of the Hume Weir, for use by local youth groups.⁶⁶

Until 1956 the University of Western Australia (founded 1913) did not have a medical school. Aspiring medical practitioners from the West had to attend universities in Eastern States, adding the cost of accommodation far from home to the already considerable expense of the six years course and also depriving the State of many medical graduates who often remained to practise in the States in which they had trained. In 1955 the Rotary Club of Perth mobilised the community, gained the support of the government, the British Medical Association, the Royal Perth Hospital, many community organisations – and every Rotary club in the State – and then set about raising the funds required for the project. The University appointed a committee in March 1955. The final accounts and full report with more than £500,000 were handed over to the University in March 1956. With a State Government grant of £75,000 and subsequent bequests generated as a result of the appeal, the University was able to establish its own medical school, which has since gained an enviable reputation.⁶⁷

The Otago Youth Adventure Trust was established in 1968 by the Rotary Club of Dunedin, New Zealand, to provide adventure camps for those underprivileged children

at risk by reason of their association with young delinquents. The purpose was to bring positive influences into their lives to counteract those influences likely to lead them into children's court and, possibly, institutional care. With the support of other community organisations, including Lions, Jaycees and Round Table clubs, and several church groups, a permanent camp was established in a forest area where young people were introduced to adventure training and care of the environment.⁶⁸

Realising that children attending State primary schools in very small rural communities (some with enrolments of fewer than 20 representing about a dozen families) were disadvantaged compared with their urban fellows because they lacked the extra equipment purchased by the efforts of large Parents and Citizens associations, the Rotary Club of Lismore West, on the N.S.W. North Coast, provided musical instruments which could be shared by the 36 schools that were regularly visited by the Education Department's area music teacher.⁶⁹

In 1992 the Rotary clubs of Silverwater/Homebush Bay in metropolitan Sydney and Bourke in the far north west of NSW developed OUTREDS – not a plan to expel communists as its name might imply but a program to provide Outback Rotary Education Scholarships for students from remote rural areas to be trained in educational institutions not available in their own communities. During training they are accommodated in Rotary homes. On completion of their training, they return to their communities with the necessary skills for local employment.⁷⁰

At the showground in Narromine, NSW, in 2010, the local Rotary club conducted the first of its highly successful Seed and Grain Camps for 29 students of agriculture from eight high schools in the region. They later became known as Rotary Youth Crops, Agronomy, Grain and Seed (RYCAGS) camps, the young participants reporting that they had gained valuable information from scientists and practical farmers to complement the theoretical knowledge imparted in their formal studies.⁷¹

Another program for rural youth, now known as Rotary Youth in Agriculture (RYAG) was developed by the Rotary Club of Coonabarabran, NSW, to encourage young people in the area's major industry, cattle-raising. At a four-day supervised camp, years 10 and 11 students are taught herd-management, feeding, nutrition, artificial insemination, marketing and transport. One beast is allocated to pairs of students who prepare it for stringent show-ring presentation. Similar RYAG programs were subsequently developed by the NSW Rotary Clubs of Moree (Cotton), Armidale (Sheep), Great Lakes (Aquaculture), Wingham (Dairy), and Tamworth (Equine).

Variations of this program were developed by the Rotary Clubs of Coffs Harbour, NSW, for students interested in marine studies or a marine career, naming it RYMARINE; and Narromine to introduce students to cereal and seed crops, weed control, farm machinery, management, and irrigation, called RYCAGS (Rotary Youth Crops, Agronomy, Grain and Seed).⁷² (Rotarians do love acronyms.)

One of many scholarships for talented young people from underprivileged families was established by the Rotary Club of Dunedin North, New Zealand, in 2009. Making the unarguable assertion that no society can afford to allow the special gifts and talents of its youth to wither, the club works with students and families to give gifted high school students the financial and social support they need to continue their education.⁷³

Many clubs throughout Australia and New Zealand have initiated projects and programs to benefit the indigenous people of these countries. In New Zealand, for example, the Riccarton club in suburban Christchurch “adopted” a nearby Anglican Church hostel for Maori apprentices, providing equipment, furnishings and even an ornately carved gateway of spiritual significance to the young residents.⁷⁴ Innumerable Maori children have been the beneficiaries of Rotary help to schools and colleges or to individuals through various scholarships.⁷⁵

Australian Rotary clubs have been equally active with scholarships for Indigenous children.⁷⁶ Leadership training for Aboriginal youth and apprenticeship schemes for young Aborigines are or have been provided by many clubs.⁷⁷

By providing work experience for secondary school children at the Pukekohe High School in New Zealand, Rotarians, in 1966, were able to place 97 school leavers in trades “from bricklaying to baking and from hairdressing to horse-shoeing”.⁷⁸

Giving little spina bifida victims a measure of mobility with an ingenious three-wheeled vehicle propelled by a rowing action was a project of the Rotary Club of Nunawading, Vic. The “Rocar” was designed and built by Rotarians who then arranged for a toy manufacturer to mass produce the little machine. Most of the units were purchased (at cost) by Rotary clubs for spina bifida victims in their own club areas.⁷⁹

A report in 2008 that New Zealand had the world’s highest recorded use of methamphetamines (known as the drug “P”) prompted the Rotary Club of Auckland East to establish the Stellar Trust with the theme, “Rise above P”. The Trust developed a plan encompassing liaison with government, funding drug education programs, conducting social awareness campaigns and establishing community coalitions to provide information about local availability of treatment.⁸⁰

“Give a kid a job” was the theme of a Youth Employment Scheme (Y.E.S.) launched by the Rotary clubs of Victoria in 1979. With the support of other service clubs (Lions, Apex, Jaycees and Kiwanis), employer organisations and the press, the campaign was reported to have resulted in some 20,000 new employment opportunities during its first year when all employers were invited to “Say ‘yes’ to a job-seeker.” The program was revived in the early 1990s under the name “Employ Australia” with strong community and government support.⁸¹

Some projects for youth are very simple and inexpensive (“minor” projects in the Rotary lexicon) but are no less appreciated. The Rotary Club of Takanini-Clivedon, New Zealand, received a letter in Braille from children at Homai College for the Blind, who wanted to express their appreciation for a launch trip and picnic organised by Rotarians, who manned the seven launches and cooked the barbecue luncheon.⁸²

Equipped with two-litre plastic containers, plastic bags, pieces of timber, small hinges, some screws, insulating tape, rubber tubing, glue and some marking pens, the Rotarians of Hamilton East, New Zealand, constructed 50 mannikins with which to train school children in mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Cost of the realistic dolls was almost nothing compared with about \$600 for professionally-made models. The idea was taken up by other clubs in the region. The students at one school, clearly devotees of a certain British television comedy series of the time, named their pair of mannikins “George and Mildred”.⁸³

Camps for handicapped children have been organised by several Rotary clubs. Among these is one known as Handicamp, a week-long camp to give handicapped young people aged 18-28 an opportunity to develop personal growth, relationships and teamwork skills by pairing them with able-bodied partners (or “buddies”). Handicamp was initiated by the Rotary clubs in Western Australia in 1981 and has been adopted by many districts both in Australia and overseas. Activities include abseiling, archery, ten-pin bowling, water sports and educational visits.⁸⁴

Another program to assist handicapped youth, aged sixteen to twenty four, is the NZ Challenge Camp, at which the campers with disabilities are paired with Rotary exchange students to enjoy a week of sailing, kayaking, power-boating, rock-climbing and archery. Both students and handicapped campers benefit from the experience.⁸⁵

Yet another is called Camp Breakaway, which has become an annual activity of the Rotary Club of Wyong, N.S.W. Volunteer carers attend the camp for two weeks with the handicapped children and attend to all their physical needs. A program of games,

education and entertainment with maximum participation is arranged. The purpose is to give the children and their parents or usual carers a holiday.

KidsKamp, an annual event organised by the Bellerive, Tasmania, Rotarians, is a camp for disadvantaged children nominated by social workers of the State Department of Community Welfare.⁸⁶

As suggested earlier – and as demonstrated in this chapter – most Antipodean Rotary clubs place youth service high on their priority lists and are zealous in their investigation of the needs of young people, often showing considerable ingenuity and imagination in planning to meet the needs identified.

Further youth activities are discussed in those chapters covering international service (World understanding and World community service).

Chapter Five: Projects and Programs for the Aged

Rotary's interest in the needs of the aged seems to have begun rather later than concerns with other members of the community, possibly because both Australia and New Zealand had introduced non-contributory age pensions in the first decade of the 20th Century and the need for further financial support was not apparent. Moreover, as noted in the previous chapter – the longest in this study – the early preoccupation clearly was with the needs of youth.

The next major community problem, as seen by the Rotarians of the time, was the disruption caused by the great depression of the 1930s, from which Australia did not recover until war brought prosperity to accompany its tragedy.

Throughout the period of the depression and the war, little thought seems to have been given to the needs of the aged; if, indeed, it occurred to anyone that the aged might have any needs beyond those that were met by government financial support and the personal support provided by families. And there was another reason for any needs of aged people remaining largely invisible: the economic and social benefits of the extended family, with one or possibly two live-in grandparents or even, perhaps, another unattached female relation such as a spinster or widowed aunt, whose admittedly slender pension still supplemented the family income and whose contribution to household chores was invaluable. Also, until more recent advances in medicine and nutrition, most people died before they turned seventy; it is only since the Second World War that living into their 80s has become a reasonable expectation for most people. It is not surprising, then, that reports of any significant Rotary projects for the aged in the years before World War Two do not appear in any of the available records or journals of the period. A picnic, a discussion of the needs of the aged, an occasional luncheon or outing or morning tea for pensioners seem to have been the modest services provided.

The earliest notable projects of Rotary clubs to assist aged people were concerned with the provision of meals-on-wheels. By the early 1950s, several clubs in the Sydney metropolitan area had initiated meals-on-wheels services for elderly people living alone, or had supported other community organisations in providing such services.¹

By this time the post-war full employment, the general acceptance of the “nuclear” family as the normal and most desirable family unit, the recruitment of spinster sisters or aunts into the workforce, rapid inflation that reduced the value of the old-age pension (later to be re-named the Age Pension) which always lagged behind the periodical cost-

of-living adjustments, the higher cost of housing, and steadily increasing longevity, had wrought changes in society for which few were prepared and to which older people found it difficult to adjust. Many elderly people were now living alone on inadequate incomes. Unable to economise on rent, power, heating and statutory charges, they often managed to do so on food, leading to serious malnutrition. Others, who were financially better off, were often undernourished because they just couldn't be bothered to cook adequate meals for themselves. Meals-on-wheels was a means of providing one proper meal a day; at a modest price for those who could afford it and free of charge for those who could not.

The need for meals-on-wheels services in the various communities was identified in a variety of ways. In the City of Sydney Rotary help was sought by the City Council; in some areas the "caretaker" groups brought the need to Rotary attention. The ways in which Rotary assisted also varied. In some areas the service was a Rotary initiative, in others the clubs provided either the organisation, the initial funds or the workforce.

Having discovered that there were now specific needs of aged people, Rotary clubs began to investigate further, resulting in a large number of projects.

In 1950 the Rotary Club of Melbourne initiated an investigation into the needs of the aged and, in 1951, arranged for British authority Dr. Bertram Hutchinson to come to Victoria, make a survey and publish a report. In the following year the club underwrote the cost of printing the report, undertaken by the University of Melbourne. The report resulted in the formation of the Old People's Welfare Council of Victoria.²

In 1955 the Rotary Club of Sydney appointed a committee to survey the needs of the aged, with the help and advice of the Sydney University Department of Social Studies. The committee reported that "steps should be taken to lessen the loneliness of the aged and infirm in the community". A club forum was held at which the needs of the aged were discussed. It was claimed that in Victoria, 30,000 old people had been found to be oppressed by loneliness while in New South Wales 30% of suicides were old people.³

In 1956 a member of the Sydney club visited Melbourne and attended a three-day conference of the Old People's Welfare Council, as a result of which, armed with the results of the survey and information provided by Melbourne club, Sydney club decided that an Old People's Welfare Council in New South Wales should be formed as a matter of urgency.⁴

With the co-operation of the Sydney City Council, the N.S.W. Council of Social Service and the State Government, the Council was established by the Rotary Club of

Sydney with an initial grant of £10,000 to cover the first two years of expenditure. By 1958 Old People's Welfare Associations had been established in many centres, mostly with Rotary support.

All States in Australia soon had their Old People's Welfare Councils and in 1965 a National Council on the Ageing was established with Federal Government funding to co-ordinate the work of the Old People's Welfare Councils and provide funds. In 1972 the State bodies were re-named "Councils on the Ageing" as State branches of the National Council.⁵

Operating later, without formal Rotary involvement, the Council on the Ageing became the major specialist organisation identifying needs of the aged for both voluntary and statutory agencies and maintaining liaison with governments.

Many individual club projects, both large and small, for the aged have been recorded since the 1950s.

In 1957 the Rotary Club of Sydney began its Christmas luncheons for senior citizens which were part of the club calendar for 16 years. Pensioners were brought to the lunch in buses, each was personally looked after by a Rotarian during the luncheon and entertainment and each went home with a small gift. When the lunches were discontinued, the "old folk" were not forgotten. Club members personally delivered hampers to pensioners before Christmas.⁶

In New Zealand a unit at Selwyn Village for the Aged was provided by the Rotary Club of Newmarket, and the Rotarians of Orewa initiated the formation of a Senior Citizens' Association; and a senior citizens' centre was built by the Rotary Club of Otahuhu. Hamilton club provided furnishings for an "old folks' hall" and Hamilton East gave regular Sunday outings to inmates of old people's homes. An old people's home was sponsored by the Opotiki club. The Windsor House project in Christchurch resulted in a fully-equipped home for 71 elderly people with an additional hospital block for a further 24 needing nursing care, set in four acres of gardens. Both Lyttleton and Greymouth clubs established similar though smaller homes.⁷

Australian clubs were similarly occupied with provision of nursing home care, sponsoring a unit in a hostel-care facility or a bed in a geriatric hospital or home, purchase of small buses for the transport of aged people from their institutions to shops or on outings and endowing research into aspects of geriatric medicine.⁸

There was an unusual background to the "Golden Years Club" built in Glenorchy, Tas. The wives of Rotarians had formed an auxiliary which they named "Mini-Wheel"

(as distinct from Inner Wheel discussed elsewhere), the members of which, in 1966, did their own survey of the needs of aged people and reached their own conclusions: that companionship, encouragement to remain ambulant and a daily hot meal were of the greatest importance. The Rotary club, responding to the needs, launched an appeal to build a club incorporating kitchen, dining room, craft rooms, games rooms and an auditorium. The total project, at that time, cost £20,000 (\$40,000), including a 25% government subsidy.⁹

Probably the most ambitious single club project was the provision in 1974, by Melbourne club, of a day care centre at an established home for the aged, with the subsequent participation in the project of the Rotary Clubs of Melbourne South, Port Melbourne, St. Kilda and Prahran. These clubs provided \$171,000 from their own resources without any appeal to the public. As well, Rotarians provided goods and services valued conservatively at \$25,000 for the construction. As a result of their involvement in this project, the need for renovation of some of the older buildings at the home became apparent; so further funds were provided which, with government subsidies, made it possible for restoration and renovations to the value of more than \$1 million. The final step in this endeavour was establishment of a modern out-patients and rehabilitation centre (under the control of the geriatric division of Caulfield Hospital).¹⁰

Before the advent of personal electronic alarm systems, a simple but effective device perfected by the Rotary Club of Padstow, N.S.W., in 1967 alerted neighbours to an emergency in the home of a frail elderly person. Known as the “Save-a-Life Buzzer Kit” it was made up of a battery, a flashing light, an electric bell “clacker” and a switch. The person in distress touched the switch; the red light flashed in the window and the clacker rattled against the window-pane which acted as an amplifier. The distinctive noise could be heard from a considerable distance. So successful was the alarm in its own community that the club mass-produced the device and sold it to other Rotary clubs and community groups for the modest sum of \$6.40.¹¹ Ten years later the club reported that it had supplied 1,385 buzzer kits to Rotary clubs.

The Rotary Club of St Kilda (Dunedin) regularly took elderly citizens on outings and picnics; while Ashburton, formed in 1937, established clubrooms for its seniors.¹² Listed in 1980 were twenty two Rotary projects for seniors – all involving outings, entertainment and provision of facilities for meetings, recreation and functions.¹³

A program to provide computer and internet training for seniors, was begun in 2009 by Rotary clubs in N.S.W. and evolved into a partnership with the Australian

Government and the University of the Third Age (U3A).¹⁴

In 1964 the Rotary Club of Salisbury, Qld., embarked on a major project to build and equip a senior citizens' hall. It was an ongoing effort for seven years with the involvement, in some capacity, of every member. Completed in 1972, it stands as a monument to the commitment of a comparatively small suburban club.¹⁵

Thus Rotary clubs continue to identify the needs of the aged and attempt to meet them; but these various projects notwithstanding, Rotarians could hardly claim to have shown remarkable imagination in their services to the elderly. Nor could they fairly claim to have given the needs of the aged high priority in their selection of community services. On the other hand, many elderly people are doubtless better off because of Rotary.

Probus

What may appear to be something of a paradox is that the elderly people who have gained most benefit from Rotary sponsorship are those who seem least likely to have needed it: retired business and professional men and women.

In 1965, a member of the Rotary Club of Welwyn Garden City, U.K., proposed that something be done for the growing number of retired business and professional men – former commuters to London – who seemed to be finding retirement far from satisfying. The result was the Campus Club (named for the part of the city in which it was formed) sponsored by the Rotary club to provide opportunities for retired men to enjoy the companionship of their peers and intellectual stimulation in an environment similar to that of a Rotary club but without the obligations of service and regular attendance. In the following year the Rotary Club of Caterham had a similar idea and formed the first Probus club (from the “pro” in professional and “bus” in business which made up the Latin “probus” – probity or virtue).

At about this time the Council of R.I.B.I. (Rotary International in Britain and Ireland) was considering the needs of retired executives following recent surveys suggesting that “the sense of isolation experienced by many people who formerly held positions of responsibility and challenge often leads to emotional stress that can actually lead to physical illness. One researcher asserts that one quarter of all British managers are dead within six months of retirement.” Therefore, when the success of the Campus and Probus clubs was brought to the attention of the Council, other Rotary clubs were encouraged to meet some of the needs of retired men by sponsoring similar clubs.

So began the steady development of Probus clubs in the U.K.¹⁶

In 1973 a member of the Rotary Club of Paraparaumu, N.Z., visiting relations in Helensburgh, Scotland, was told about the Dumbarton Probus club and how it had helped retired people. He brought the idea back to his own Rotary club which, aware of the problems faced by some retired people in its own area, sponsored the formation of the Probus Club of Kapiti Coast, the first Probus club in the Antipodes, on 5th November, 1974.

Two years later, the Rotary Club of Hunters Hill, N.S.W., learned about Probus, also from Rotary friends in Dumbarton, Scotland; and, with information supplied by the Scottish Rotarians, sponsored the first Probus club in Australia.¹⁷

Neither club, at that time, was aware of the existence of the other; but with a report in the Rotary regional magazine and sharing of information with district governors, more Rotary clubs began to sponsor Probus clubs.

By February, 1981, there were forty four clubs in the region; and once again the Antipodean need to establish appropriate guidelines for any group activity manifested itself when five Rotarians in the Sydney metropolitan area – all of whom had been involved in the formation of Probus clubs – met to share experiences. The object of the meeting was to consider the preparation of some basic information for Rotary clubs contemplating the sponsorship of Probus clubs. They concluded, after some discussion, that the growth of Probus could be “haphazard and spasmodic or planned and systematic, with a strong recommendation in favour of the latter”.¹⁸

The outcome was the Probus Information Committee and a Probus Information Centre, set up by these five Rotarians with the authority of the governors of the three districts covering metropolitan Sydney and country areas within about 200 kilometres. At this stage of its development, the information centre was no more extensive than any other district or multi-district committee. The committee members prepared literature for the guidance of Rotary clubs. The chairman (a retired business executive) conducted the centre from his own home, handling correspondence and telephone calls.¹⁹

In 1982 Probus clubs for women were formed in St. Heliers, N.Z. and Bateau Bay, N.S.W. and so began the proliferation of “Ladies’ Probus clubs” as they are always called.²⁰

In 1983 the Probus Information Centre committee cast its net wider, seeking the authority of the governors in Australia and New Zealand to provide the service for the whole region; and the governors, unable to perceive any good reason for rejecting the

offer of a free service to their districts, gladly complied and agreed to appoint district Probus committees to guide Rotary clubs in this program. Funding for the operation was obtained from the corporate sector by way of donations. A quarterly newsletter was distributed to all clubs.

The Probus Information Committee added to its number at will (there being no-one to say them nay), recruiting several more Rotarians and also members of Probus clubs; and, later in 1983, when the number of clubs had exceeded 150, a small office in Rotary House (the premises of *Rotary Down Under* Magazine, the Rotary Supplies Division and in which, at that time, was also located the regional office of the Rotary International Secretariat) was secured at a nominal rental and a part-time executive secretary was engaged. The newsletter to club officers was supplanted by a small (eight pages) quarterly magazine available to all members.²¹

In 1984, the Probus Information Centre name was changed to The Probus Centre - South Pacific, the name "Probus" and the emblem were registered under the Trade Marks Act and the Centre began to issue accreditation certificates to Probus clubs.²² The Rotary Supplies Division included Probus merchandise (lapel badges, presidents' collars, gavels and gongs and a variety of items bearing the Probus emblem) in its stock and agreed to use the term "Probus Supplies" when supplying Probus clubs.

The committee issued to all Rotary District Probus committee chairmen a recommended Probus Club Constitution containing certain mandatory clauses, without which the Probus club could not be accredited and was not entitled to use the name "Probus".²³

The Probus Centre - South Pacific issued a statement of its responsibilities:- "To promote the development of Probus in the region by disseminating information to the public and to district committees and Probus clubs; act as the custodian of the Probus name and emblem and protect them from improper use; approve accreditation as Probus clubs of those clubs that have been properly formed and sponsored in accordance with the constitution and have agreed to the conditions under which they may be accredited; maintain a register of accredited Probus clubs within the ANZO region of Rotary International and prepare and issue annually a Directory of Probus Clubs; and publish a Probus magazine or newsletter."²⁴

By June 1985, there were 435 Probus clubs with some 20,000 members and the Probus Centre - South Pacific was incorporated under the Associations Incorporations Act of New South Wales.²⁵

With active promotion, almost every Rotary club began to consider the formation of a Probus club. Some saw the need for mixed gender clubs and, despite initial discouragement from the Probus Centre committee, began to form such clubs; thus many Rotary clubs formed all male, all female and mixed or “combined” clubs in their territories.

By early 1990 there were more than 1,000 Probus clubs with some 68,000 members in Australia, New Zealand, Papua-New Guinea and the island nations of the South Pacific. Even Norfolk Island, with a total population of fewer than 1,600 souls, had an active Probus club of retired people.²⁶

Probus continued to flourish with more clubs being formed. The small secretariat at the Rotary office was now staffed by a full-time executive secretary with casual clerical staff employed as required. The various Probus leaflets, pamphlets and manuals for Rotary clubs and Probus clubs were constantly reviewed and revised. The magazine, *Probus News*, which published club news and items of interest and concern to its readers, continued to grow, strongly supported by advertising. Groups of clubs formed themselves into “Probus Associations” for the development of inter-club activities and some regional fellowship gatherings were organised.²⁷

Rotary districts in South Africa, U.S.A. and Canada sought information about the Probus Centre-South Pacific and its operations and have established their own information centres.

In 2010 the name of the Probus Centre South Pacific was changed to Probus South Pacific, in line with modern trends. The office, with a full-time staff of eight, was moved to larger premises, the simple magazine was replaced by a quality “glossy” *Active Retirees*, with a sophisticated design and extended advertising.²⁸

Probus statistics for the Rotary world are not completely reliable (for clubs are requested but not required to provide details to their information centres); but available information suggests that Australia and New Zealand, with only a little more than 5% of the world’s Rotary clubs, have almost 50% of the world’s Probus clubs. In June 2013 there were 2,186 clubs with 171,469 members, 52% being women.²⁹

The differences between Probus in the Antipodes and the operation of Probus in its birthplace (the U.K.) and the rest of the world are very obvious. In other Rotary regions Probus is recommended to Rotary clubs as a means of providing an opportunity for fellowship among retired people. There appears to have been no attempt to control, direct or promote its growth and development. In the U.K. the Rotary Club of

Bromford, Worcestershire, agreed, as long ago as 1979, to establish and operate a Probus Information Centre to serve Probus clubs and intending sponsor Rotary clubs in Britain and Ireland and has continued to provide this service; but no attempt has been made to do anything more than provide information and advice.³⁰

In Australasia, for good or ill, it has been highly organised with the usual machinery and controls and the legal authority to withhold or even withdraw accreditation if acceptable standards are not maintained. Again the antipodean propensity for establishing a bureaucracy asserted itself.

However, this seniors' movement has not been exempt from the general trend; for, though still attracting more retired people to its ranks than in any other region, Probus has experienced a membership decline of 10.45% since its peak year, 2009.³¹

Rotary's services to the frail aged and the disadvantaged elderly possibly will be expanded with an ageing population; but this is not necessarily certain. With an ageing population, there is a growing community awareness of the needs of older people; and many other community organisations, both statutory and voluntary, are providing services for this age group. If this trend continues, Rotary clubs may consider withdrawing from the field, at least in part, and identifying other needs in the community.

Chapter Six: Community Service

When the members of the two-year-old Rotary Club of Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. provided a public convenience in the City Hall in 1907, though almost certainly unaware of it at the time, they changed the original concept of their little Rotary club from a fellowship and mutual benefit group to a service club and established a tradition of community service that was to be followed by thousands of service clubs into the next century. Also it is almost certain that they ensured the future of Rotary; for it seems highly unlikely that in its original form, as suggested in Chapter One, the movement could have survived to become an international association, attracting business and professional leaders to its ranks.

Australian and New Zealand Rotary clubs, in common with most others, began their service work in the community. As seen in Chapter Four, the earliest needs they identified and attempted to meet were those of children; and it is fair to say that young people, whether physically or mentally handicapped, or otherwise disadvantaged, were the main concern of Rotarians for most of the first decade.

Some early attention was given to the problems of war widows and their children but a war veterans' service club movement (Legacy in Australia and Heritage in New Zealand) somewhat similar in structure to Rotary and formed only two years later, assumed responsibility for the widows and children of "fallen comrades"¹. Some enthusiastic men were members of both movements; and, despite Rotary's insistence that a Rotarian cannot serve concurrently in another "service" club and retain his Rotary membership, Legacy and Heritage seem to have been excluded from the list of service clubs, possibly because they were also war veterans' associations and are unique to Australia and New Zealand; and because their service was limited to the care of only one group in the community, the widows and dependent children of their comrades-in-arms.²

After 1929 the great depression of the 1930s brought more than enough community needs to the attention of Rotarians. Unfortunately the depression was no respecter of persons; many Rotarians' businesses were affected and Rotary suffered its share of losses, some clubs finding it difficult to remain viable.³

Attempts to provide some relief for the unemployed are recorded by the Rotary Clubs of both Sydney and Melbourne, and in a few rural areas in both Australia and New Zealand, the plight of the growing army of jobless was receiving attention; but the sheer

size of the problem and the speed with which it had occurred proved overwhelming to most clubs, especially those that were finding it difficult to retain members.⁴

In what was then (1930) the small town of Cairns – today a thriving city – in North Queensland, the first Rotary project was to raise £128 for the Benevolent Society by arranging picture shows⁵.

In the southern N.S.W. town of Wagga Wagga the Rotary club, within a year of its formation in 1929, carried out a minor resettlement program for selected families living in the “tent town” that had mushroomed nearby – a not uncommon phenomenon on the fringes of country towns during the depression years. The Rotarians built cottages for them in the area known as Gumley Gumley and the families all did so well as a result of their improved accommodation that the club built additional cottages in North Wagga.⁶

In other country towns Rotary clubs provided essential equipment for local hospitals, perennially short of funds and particularly so during the depression years. The Rotary Club of Tamworth, N.S.W., for example, formed in 1932, immediately launched an appeal for the base hospital, equipped the operating theatre and furnished the children’s ward.⁷

Available information about pre-war Rotary service is scanty, since the surviving records of the few clubs then existing show more about members, meetings and conferences than about their significant projects. However, every Rotary club was seeking out and meeting what were seen as community needs, such as providing small (and sometimes quite large) parks or bus-stop shelters or band rotundas or drinking fountains or trees and gardens in public places. It is important to remember that, at the outbreak of World War Two, there were only ninety two Rotary clubs in the two countries (sixty six in Australia and twenty six in New Zealand).

During the war years, 1940-45, the emphasis was on support for the armed forces and provision of comforts for the troops and, as the war progressed, food parcels for Britain. Despite the war, extension, on a limited scale, did continue (largely in response to an appeal from the Rotary International directors of the time who pointed out that, even in war-torn Britain, clubs were still being formed and were performing valuable work for the war effort and in planning for peace) so that by 1945 there were 148 clubs – ninety eight in Australia, forty nine in New Zealand and one in Fiji⁸

It was not until the early post-war years, when Rotary in the Antipodes began to expand rapidly, that the vast array of club projects in community service began to appear. Each new club chartered was eager to demonstrate its commitment to service

and most began with a community project; and each succeeding club president in every club seemed determined to emulate his predecessor in the value and extent of his club's community project during "his" year. By now the expectation that every club in the world would initiate and, if possible, complete at least one community project each year was universally accepted. Thus a decade after the war's end, during the 1955-56 year, with 371 clubs in the region, it is reasonable to conclude that at least 300 "major" community projects had been initiated and most of them completed. And during the 2013-2014 year it is certain that every one of the 1,407 Rotary clubs was involved in one or more community service projects of some kind, in addition to an activity under the heading of vocational service and at least one more described as an international service project – either to advance world understanding or in world community service or, most likely, both.

No attempt is made in this work to list the projects of even one club during its history or of a selection of clubs for any one year. To give some indication of the range of projects, some, selected at random from the vast store of club reports now being gathered in the archives and in the regional magazines (*The Pinion* 1924-1940 and *Rotary Down Under* 1965-2014) are described briefly at the end of this chapter; but some of those that have had wide influence or significance beyond the individual club's normal area of operation and others that have been organised at a national or regional level are worthy of attention.

Described elsewhere are some of the actions taken by the pioneer clubs (Melbourne, Sydney, Wellington, Auckland) in setting up organisations and institutions for youth and the elderly. These and others were equally diligent in their search for other areas of need in the community and equally resourceful in the development of strategies to meet them.

Health

In 1948 the New Zealand Rotary clubs launched the Cancer Campaign which resulted in the eventual formation of the New Zealand Cancer Council. In the same year, discerning the need for support of the struggling Tuberculosis Association, which had been initiated by the Rotary Club of New Plymouth, Rotary clubs organised local branches of the Association throughout the country.⁹

In Melbourne, arising from considerable public disquiet and unfavourable press reports of the plight of the mentally ill, the Rotary club not only financed a mental

health survey by a team of medical students under the supervision of the State Mental Hygiene Authority but also raised the funds (more than £40,000) and built a day-care centre for the patients of the Kew Mental Hospital. The outcome of the increased public awareness was a strengthened Mental Health Association in the State which facilitated the eventual federation of the various State associations into the Mental Health Association of Australia.¹⁰

Disasters

In January, 1974 disastrous floods inundated much of the Brisbane metropolitan area and many rural districts in South East Queensland. As they had done before and have done since when disaster strikes, the Rotary clubs responded swiftly and effectively to aid the victims. On Christmas morning of the same year, Darwin was destroyed by a cyclone named Tracey. Again the Rotary clubs – and, indeed almost every other organisation in Australia and many overseas – responded generously to appeals for help. In addition to the provision of immediate disaster relief, the Rotary clubs established a fund for the eventual re-building of community facilities and the re-settlement of families.¹¹ Two major disasters in the one year resulted in the appointment by the Australian Rotary Institute of an ad-hoc committee to draw up guidelines for co-ordinated Rotary action in the event of future disasters.¹² The report and guidelines were adopted at the next Institute and remain the blueprint for Rotary immediate action in the face of flood, fire, cyclone and earthquake. The guidelines were shared with the New Zealand Institute.

State and national emergency services, volunteer bushfire brigades and national organisations such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service have been supported and strengthened with funds and, more importantly, recruits to their voluntary workforce by Rotary clubs throughout the years, to the extent that few make more than passing reference to the regular support in their annual reports. Because almost all communities in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands have faced flood, fire, drought, cyclone and earthquake (and an occasional volcanic eruption in some areas), continuing support of local organisations to cope with natural disasters is taken for granted.

Indigenes

Many Australian and New Zealand clubs have devised projects and programs to help the indigenous people of both countries, mainly concerned with welfare, education and

youth employment.

In Kaikohe, N.Z., the plight of Maori families perennially in financial straits was brought to the attention of the Rotary club, which responded by providing financial counsellors to help them to get “out of the red”. The financially embarrassed householders who applied for help received weekly visits from the Rotary counsellors who helped them to prepare a household budget to cover all expenses, including payment of debts, showed them how to open a bank account, ensured that they made their payments on time and encouraged them to save. When debts were cleared and the family was able to handle its own financial affairs, the counsellor discreetly withdrew. Most rewarding to the Rotarians was that some of their “clients” were able to become counsellors, helping other families in similar difficulties.¹³

Concluding, after an extensive study, that education was the solution to the cycle of poverty in the indigenous community, the Rotary Club of South Sydney embarked on a project in 1965 to provide education aid to secondary school students. In the following year, realising that the provision of grants, books and uniforms was unlikely to be helpful when home conditions were not conducive to study, the club expanded the program to include financial help and guidance to the families, with excellent results.¹⁴

The Rotary Club of Blaxland-Springwood, N.S.W., attempted to tackle a more fundamental problem, the education of European-Australians. Accordingly the club recommended to the Australian Rotary Institute that a program of education for Rotarians be devised to ensure that future projects for Aboriginal welfare would be based on an understanding of their own culture, values and aspirations rather than on the goals and value-system of middle-class European-Australians¹⁵. The Institute adopted the recommendation and appointed an ad-hoc committee, under the leadership of Emeritus Professor A. G. Mitchell of Sydney, to study the problem and suggest solutions.¹⁶ The report and excellent guidelines adopted at the following Institute were commended to clubs but were couched in terms not readily comprehensible to busy and practical Rotarians and failed to gain significant currency.

Refusing to be discouraged, the Blaxland-Springwood club, led by Frank Totenhofer, a passionate advocate for indigenous advancement and assisted by “high-profile” indigenous leaders of the time, Margaret Valadian and Charlie Perkins, set about producing an audio-visual program, *International understanding begins at home*, to help Rotarians understand the unique culture of Aborigines, comparing their arts, religion, beliefs, values, land-use and way of life with those of Europeans. Too expensive for

mass production, the program was loaned by the club to local groups for some years until the popularity of video-tapes made reproduction simple and cheap, whereupon it was again submitted to the Institute which endorsed its use by clubs and suggested its distribution.¹⁷ Clubs in all districts made use of the program, many sharing it with other groups in the community. In New South Wales it was adopted by the State Education Department for use in secondary schools and copies were given by many clubs to their local schools. The program continued until, in the early years of the 21st Century, its message was taken up by the general media, indigenous studies at universities and governments.

Rotary clubs in the district centred on Wellington, New Zealand, enthusiastically led by William Carthew of Pahiatua, worked closely with Race Relations Conciliator Hiwi Tauroa in the mid 1980s to develop better understanding between the peoples who inhabit New Zealand. It proved to be a most fruitful partnership, resulting in greater focus on Maori-Pakeha relationships at Rotary club meetings, conferences and Institutes with positive outcomes. Several educational, social and cultural programs were initiated for the advancement of the Race Relations Commission's stated aims: "... to ensure that all New Zealanders, whatever their national or ethnic origin, are treated fairly, have the opportunity to express their culture and are encouraged to participate in New Zealand Society". The development of multi-cultural Maraes gave Rotarians more opportunities to extend their understanding of Maori culture and establish friendships. The Marae is central to Maori cultural identity – where values, language, oratory and social etiquette are given their fullest expression, fostering self-respect, pride and social control; and where all people are welcome as guests.¹⁸

Health Research and Education

In May, 1981 the 51st Congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) was held in Brisbane. One of the participants was Professor Alan Williams, Chief Pathologist at the Melbourne Royal Children's Hospital who, in an interview on the late-night program of a broadcasting station, repeated what he had been telling his ANZAAS colleagues about the tragic phenomenon known as "cot death" or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). A listener to the program was Ian Scott, a bank-manager member of the Rotary Club of Mornington, who was deeply moved – even distressed – by Alan Williams' assertion that the lives of many of these infants could be saved if research funds were available.

Feeling that something must be done about it, Ian Scott proposed that \$2million be raised by Rotary clubs in Australia for investment to finance health research¹⁹. In 1981, when the average weekly wage was around \$380, two million dollars was a considerable sum. Not unexpectedly, the suggestion met with strong opposition. However, the Rotary District 982 Conference adopted the proposal for submission to the Rotary Institute which, again in the face of strenuous opposition, adopted the proposal and appointed a steering committee.²⁰

The opposition to such proposals was traditional. Rotary clubs are expected to identify and meet local needs and should not become fund-raising agencies for grandiose schemes at district, state or national level. In fact, as previously noted, there are specific safeguards in Rotary International's policy to discourage the proliferation of multi-club and multi-district projects; including the requirement that all participating clubs (or districts) must agree to the proposal and that participation by any individual club must be voluntary.²¹

The steering committee asked all Australian districts to accept the concept of a health research fund in principle; which they did, having been assured that this would be a "one off" effort; and that the fund, once established, would generate enough interest from investments to finance one or more annual research projects. With the approval of all districts, the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund was duly established as an incorporated body and approved by the Rotary International Board of Directors as a multi-district activity.

Obviously the principal "selling point" was Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, more commonly known as "Cot Death", many incidences of which were widely reported in the media, with a strong emotional component in each story. So the first major research grant was for an investigation into the possible causes of this frightening phenomenon.²² However it was decided that, after the initial major grants, the Fund would support "a wider concept of health research... there (being) many aspects of community health that urgently require research and the Rotary fund was in a position to perform a valuable community service by sponsoring research into otherwise neglected areas".²³

By some mysterious means – and as so often happens – the suggestion of a "one off" project vanished from later literature and a donation to the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund became an annual commitment for almost all Australian clubs. By the early 1990s the fund had reached \$5 million. There were still a few complaints, particularly from some older Rotarians, who argued that this and the other major

activities for which annual support is demanded severely restricted the ability of many clubs to meet the needs of their local communities; but annual reports of the Fund, emphasising the value of the research being financed, combined with the absence of any credible evidence that clubs were failing to identify and meet local community needs, effectively countered these objections.

The stated objectives of the A.R.H.R.F were:- 1. To provide financial support to research projects which will enhance the health of the community; 2. To stimulate research activities within Australia by facilitating communication between participants; 3. To ensure continuity of research effort by making grants for up to three years where required; 4. To encourage research projects which may have a practical outcome capable of being applied to community groups.

Governed by a board of directors of ten past officers of Rotary International (past governors or directors) the Fund allocated grants on the advice of a Research Committee made up of eminent Australian medical professionals. The first committee included a leading psychiatrist and a specialist physician from N.S.W., a professor of psychiatry and a specialist paediatrician from Vic., a professor of paediatrics from Qld., a nurse-educator and health service administrator from S.A. and a specialist paediatrician and medical researcher from W.A.²²

Research grants in the Fund's first fifteen years (1986-1991) totalled \$1,800,000 and were for:-

Maturation of the brain and development of respiratory control; Investigation into causes and effects of nasal obstructions; Investigation of lung abnormalities; Studies on possible role of microbiology in Cot Death; Prospective study using computer data into higher incidence of Cot Death in Tasmania; Research into need for an appropriate form of counselling in Cot Death situations; Prevention of falls among elderly people; Life-style factors affecting blood pressure in elderly Australians; Health related behaviour in recently-widowed elderly men; Factors affecting re-admission of the elderly into the health care system; Measurement of skin cancer in people over forty years of age; Collection of data on living problems of the aged; Comparisons of environmental hazards facing elderly living at home versus in retirement villages; A longitudinal population study of depression in the elderly; Non-invasive measurement of brain function during short-term memory loss in early Alzheimers Disease; Sudden Infant Death Syndrome; Promotion of independence in the elderly; Safety for the elderly in public places; Investigation, control and prevention of parasitic diseases in aboriginal

communities; Identifying effective community education processes with the elderly; Diagnosis, management and outcome of dementia; Family reactions two years after Sudden Infant Death, stillbirth or neonatal; Prospective study into environmental hazards of the elderly; Health services study evaluating stress and strain in elderly co-resident carers of dementia and stroke sufferers; Feasibility and merit systematic consultative process in design of hostel accommodation; Preparing community groups to promote safer cities; Prevalence and prevention of musculoskeletal disorders and disability of elderly living independently; Study of risk factors for cardiovascular disease; Reducing passive smoking exposure among the aged; Falls in elderly women – an ecological approach; Diet and exercise in osteoporosis prevention; Preventing accidents in the aged; Reduction of medication use in the elderly; The use of brain imaging technologies to study memory; Predictors of stress in stroke carers; The human ageing process – a newly-recognised cause of progressive energy loss; A memory therapy program; Quality of life of ageing Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. It is a matter of public record that the incidence of cot death in Tasmania, following the findings by Professor Terry Dwyer, fell from an annual average of twenty seven to three, while in all of Australia the number had fallen from 500 per year to just over 100.²⁴ The emphasis, as seen, was first on infants and second on the elderly. In the third triennium the main focus was on adolescent health.

In 2001 Mental Health was adopted as the principal area of research for the next triennium; and on this it has remained.²⁵ Not only did it become the major focus but also it resulted in an expansion of the Fund's objectives and eventually to a change of name.

In association with **beyondblue**, the initiative of the Victorian and Australian Governments, the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund embarked on an ambitious program of public awareness by organising mental health forums in local government areas (cities, municipalities and shires) throughout Australia. In 2002, two forums were organised for Members of Parliament in Canberra and Sydney; and in 2003, at the request of the Department of Community Services National office, a forum was arranged for members of its staff. These were followed by other state and federal government departments, business associations and trade unions.

Community forums, with Australian Government encouragement and some financial support, continued until 2009, by which time it was estimated that more than 100,000 Australians had learned a little more about mental illness and the steps that might be taken to help sufferers.²⁶

As well as extending its services beyond research to public awareness, the Fund decided, in 1998, to award a PhD scholarship in the name of its founder, Ian Scott. Then, convinced of the value of such a post-graduate scholarships, the board awarded three more to honour the first three chairmen: Royce Abbey, Geoffrey Betts and Colin Dodds.

It was a short step to a further expansion and the introduction of more scholarships and more programs: Rural Health Scholarships to encourage young doctors to enter practice in the country; Rural Nursing Scholarships, Indigenous Health Scholarships; and special grants for health programs in remote areas. Funding partnerships were introduced, whereby Rotary clubs and the Fund jointly finance a nominated research project, or award a scholarship. Active promotion of some programs began through Rotary and general media – such as Mental Health First Aid developed by Professor Anthony Jorm and his wife, Dr Betty Kitchener, which became a recognised international program with training manuals produced in twenty two languages – also Knowledge Dissemination Awards.²⁷

The name Australian Rotary Health Research Fund, as well as being considered too long, was clearly no longer appropriate. In 2008, when a new constitution was adopted to provide for the further activities of the charity, the name was changed to Australian Rotary Health.²⁸

In 2014 community awareness forums were re-introduced in a modified form. Organised by local Rotary clubs or districts, the Prevention Forums help citizens to understand what they can do, personally, to prevent or reduce the risk of mental illness in their families and workplaces.²⁹

Australian Rotary Health approaches promotion and fund-raising in a highly professional manner, sponsoring annual State seminars for Rotary's incoming district officers, issuing a newsletter after each board meeting (six a year), arranging for television commercials as "community service announcements", providing speakers for Rotary clubs, publishing a promotional report in *Rotary Down Under* each year, distributing audio and video CDs, producing promotional brochures and offering inducements such as trophies and special plaques; and even naming "Friends" and "Companions" (at various levels) for generous donations of from \$100 to \$100,000.³⁰ A recent innovation was an invitation to employers to encourage and recognise outstanding employees (for a donation of \$2,500) with the "Golden Microscope Award".³¹ The Round Australia Rotary Health Safari in 2005 (in a Winnebago)

combined fund-raising with mental health awareness; as did the Great Australian Bike-Ride” in 2007.³²

From an idea of one Rotarian in one Rotary club, Australian Rotary Health has become the largest privately funded research foundation in Australia – *supporting healthier minds, bodies and communities through research, awareness and education.*

In addition to the nationally-supported Australian Rotary Health, many individual clubs have become involved in health research on a more limited scale. The Rotary Club of Milton in New Zealand in 1975, 1978 and 1980 participated in a community health survey conducted by the Otago Medical School, based on health questionnaires, blood tests, measurement of height and weight, blood pressure and lung function. The club members, with members of their Interact club, did what they described as the “leg work”, contacting the residents, delivering the questionnaires and explaining the procedures and purposes of the survey. The study of salt restriction with a selected group was also undertaken, aimed at the restriction of hypertension.³³

The child health research fund (The National Children’s Health Foundation) proposed by the Auckland club, adopted by the Rotary district in 1971 and given an injection of funds in 1996, is described in Chapter four (Cure Kids, page 33).³⁴

Other research organisations established by Rotary were the New Zealand National Kidney Foundation, an initiative of the Rotary Club of Terrace End in 1976, and the New Zealand Asthma Society, formed by the Rotary Club of Eastern Hutt.³⁵

The Environment

Environmental projects and programs have become increasingly popular with Rotary clubs since the early 1970s when world attention began to be focused on the fragility of the planet by concerned scientists and others who recognised the damage being caused by homo sapiens.

To protect the albatross and penguin colonies on the Otago Peninsula, the Rotary Club of Dunedin, N.Z., created a public trust and also developed a park with an outlook on both the harbour and the open sea. Trees were planted and gates were erected. The object was to encourage people to visit the area and view the birds from a safe distance, without disturbing their habitat. The park, when completed by the voluntary labour of Rotarians, was handed over to the City Council as a public amenity.³⁶

Numerous clubs have reported tree-planting projects, cleanup days, wildlife

protection programs, soil-conservation schemes and air-pollution control measures as community service activities. Tree planting has been particularly popular in recent years, with projects ranging from a few trees planted in a local park to avenues of 500 native and exotic species.

At an Australian and later New Zealand national level a project known as Trees for Survival captured the imagination of many clubs. As usually happens, the idea was germinated in one club, Turramurra, in an upper North Shore suburb of Sydney. Responding to appeals from the environmental movements to plant more trees, the members developed a shade house in which to germinate and grow native trees and nurture them until they were ready for planting in areas of the country that had been denuded of vegetation. The club sought the co-operation of the nearby State school at Wahroonga. The object was to have a shade house built by the Rotarians in the school grounds and give the children the task of raising the seedlings until they were mature enough to plant out in country areas west of the Great Dividing Range. The shade-house was a demountable structure of steel pipes, covered with shade cloth.

The Rotarians enjoyed the experience of working on the shade house and the children were delighted with their involvement and immediately gained a better appreciation of the value of trees, learned a great deal about native trees and the vulnerability of certain species to plant diseases and also became increasingly aware of the total environment.

The project was described at the 1988 Institute and was recommended to other clubs as a useful community service idea of environmental and educational value.

By 1990 there were so many enquiries that the member of the Turramurra club who had volunteered to respond to them was overloaded. A part time secretary was engaged with a small office in the Rotary Down Under building and the project was approved by all incumbent governors as a multi-district program. Trees for Survival was incorporated in 1991.³⁷

A major manufacturer of steel products agreed to provide the shade house superstructure at cost and manufacturers of garden supplies provided shade-cloth. Rotary clubs were encouraged to seek local sponsorship of the shade houses. Thus they were erected by the voluntary labour of Rotarians at no cost to the Rotary club. The sponsors and suppliers were rewarded with a discreet but obvious display of their names on the completed shade house.

Some 200 shade houses had been completed by 1991 and at least 100 more Rotary clubs had agreed to add Trees for Survival to their minor community service projects

within the next year.

In 1991 the project crossed the Tasman and was taken up with equal enthusiasm in New Zealand. The program grew so rapidly that Rotarians found it expedient to form the Trees for Survival Trust with wider community involvement, though still supported by Rotary clubs.³⁸

Though the emphasis is mainly on primary schools because of the obvious educational value to young children, shade houses have been erected at other institutions, including a university, a school for the intellectually handicapped, a juvenile detention centre and a low security adult correctional establishment (the modern and politically correct euphemism for a prison farm).³⁹

Other community projects

The few projects here listed are examples only of the vast range of activities undertaken by Rotary clubs to fulfill their community service obligations.

A community swimming pool, for which \$50,000 was raised over a period of three years was provided by the Rotary Club of Johnsonville, N.Z.⁴⁰ Lower Blue Mountains, N.S.W. (with funds and voluntary labour) provided a swimming pool with hydrotherapy facility at a local youth camp/conference centre.⁴¹

When Massey College in New Zealand was no more than a proposal being considered by government in the early 1930s, the Rotary Club of Palmerston North acquired and donated the land for the proposed agricultural college. Since it was established the club has maintained a continuing interest and, when it became the Massey University, the club, with the help of the whole Rotary district, provided the Rotary Halls of Residence comprising seventy six bedrooms for students.⁴²

The Australian Administrative Staff College, now an institution with an enviable reputation, was established in 1954 by the Rotary Club of Sydney. Modelled on the Administrative Staff College at Henley-on-Thames, U.K., the Principal of which was generous with information and advice, the college was incorporated in 1955 with the twenty eight distinguished signatories to its Articles coming from every State and Territory of Australia.⁴³

Because it had become almost impossible for children to continue their education while in hospital, a classroom attached to the children's ward in the local hospital was built and equipped by the Rotary Club of West Wollongong, N.S.W.⁴⁴

Regarded as one of the most significant club projects was the formation of a service

club movement for young business men. In 1930 the first Apex club was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Geelong, Vic. Initially known as the Geelong Young Businessmen's Club, for young business and professional men between the ages of eighteen and thirty five years with aims similar to those of the sponsoring Rotary club, the name was changed to Apex in March, 1931. Other Rotary clubs soon began to sponsor the formation of Apex clubs; and Apex clubs were doing their own extension until, by the mid 1950s, Rotary's help was no longer needed. By 1980 there were more than 800 Apex clubs with 16,000 members⁴⁵. Unhappily, there was a serious decline of Apex membership after the late 1980s and many clubs were forced to surrender their charters or to amalgamate with others. By 1991 the number of clubs was down to 700 and membership had dropped to 10,000. The principal reason given is the lack of compassion engendered by the "greedy 1980s", but many Apexians were convinced that failure to admit women to Apex was an important factor. Further attempts were being made in the early 1990s to have the constitution amended to give clubs the option of admitting young women. This was finally achieved in 1997 but, despite vigorous membership drives, there were no hopeful signs of an Apex resurgence. In 2006 the constitution was again changed to provide for the admission of women to all clubs; but by now the membership had fallen to an all-time low of 1,500 members of 143 clubs.

Though the age limit for recruitment was thirty five, Apexians retained their membership until they reached forty. This has been raised to forty five, when they are given an honourable discharge and are usually snapped up by Rotary or Lions clubs. (See also Chapter thirteen).⁴⁶

In 1970 a lodge was built at Royal North Shore Hospital by the Rotary Club of Lane Cove, N.S.W. The lodge consisted of two motel-type units with bed-sitting room and en-suite bathroom for short-term occupation by close family members of critically ill or badly injured patients. Such was the demand for this emergency accommodation that, in 1972, the club added two more units to Rotary Lodge. The lodge was closed in 2006 when the hospital was rebuilt, but alternative accommodation was provided by NSW Health.⁴⁷

Two New Zealand clubs, Howick and Half Moon Bay jointly organized a spectacular yacht regatta in 1986 to raise funds for charity. So successful was it that it became an annual event, benefiting a different organisation each year including the Down Syndrome Association, Child Cancer Foundation, The Stella Trust, Salvation Army, Life Education Trust and New Zealand Coastguard.⁴⁸

A talk about blood pressure as a risk factor in heart disease by a professor of medicine prompted the Rotary Club of Greensborough, Vic. to conduct a blood pressure survey. With the co-operation of the local council, hospitals, medical practitioners and nurses, the blood pressure of more than 700 people was checked in one day. It was found that 10% of the population had elevated blood pressure and were unaware of it. The information was widely used through the media to encourage people to have periodical blood pressure checks.⁴⁹

Commended many years later, by Rotary International Director Kenneth A. Scheller who saw the annual report for 1941-42, was the Rotary Club of Traralgon, Vic., which, in its first year of service and with only nineteen members, launched an appeal to provide a community hospital, collected waste paper for patriotic funds, planted a circle of trees in Victory Park, provided tree guards, dug 600 yards of air-raid trenches at the local school, renovated and painted the town swimming pool, financially supported the local branch of the Returned Services League and the Air Training Corps, assisted the wives and families of men on active service and began plans for post-war reconstruction in the town⁵⁰.

In 1965 in the city of Broken Hill, NSW, the Rotarians were moved to take action by the near death of a child who had raided the family first-aid box and had swallowed a number pills or capsules, believing them to be sweets. Realising that there must be many partly used bottles of prescription drugs in the medicine cabinets of the citizens, the Rotarians organised a door-to-door collection on one Sunday with local Scouts and Guides to swell the work force and with the support of local media to alert the public. They collected pills and potions weighed more than two tons, from which a team of pharmacists salvaged 12.5 cwt of usable material, which was handed over to the Red Cross. The story appeared in *Rotary Down Under* and the idea was taken up by many clubs throughout the region. Operation Cleanout (sometimes called Operation Drug Take) was seen as a very useful community service project, alerting the public to the danger of keeping prescription medicines within the reach of children and reminding them to dispose of unused drugs; with a “fringe benefit” to the Red Cross which could use some of the materials in developing countries.⁵¹

The Rotary District covering the western suburbs of Sydney and near country areas rallied the support of thirty four Rotary clubs and twenty three Rotaract clubs to build a sports stadium for the disabled at Blacktown, in which there are facilities for wheelchair games and other recreational activities.⁵²

To beautify a Maori Marae (traditional meeting-house and surrounding compound) the Rotary Club of Bulls, N.Z. transplanted thirteen fully-grown Pohutukawa trees which they had removed from the nearby Ohakea Air Force base. Rotarians with picks and shovels prepared the trees for removal and prepared the ground for their new home at the Marae. The removal was effected with a large mobile crane. Of special significance to the Maori people was the flowering of trees shortly after they were transplanted.⁵³

After hearing a news broadcast at the site of a serious road accident and the comment by a doctor that all vehicles should be equipped with some sort of emergency facility so that those first on the scene could render assistance, a traffic accident emergency kit to be kept in the car was devised and marketed by the Rotary Club of Riverwood, N.S.W.⁵⁴

In 1980, to mark the sesqui-centenary of European settlement in Western Australia and the 75th anniversary of Rotary's foundation, the Rotary Club of Scarborough, a beach-side suburb, presented the community with a memorial clock atop a twelve metre tower bearing the Rotary emblem and the State Coat of Arms. Visible to the surfers and sun-worshippers on the beach, the clock was given into the care of the surf-lifesaving club. With due ceremony the clock was unveiled by the State Governor.⁵⁵

The internationally-known Medic Alert Foundation was introduced to Australia by Northern NSW District Governor James Small in 1966. After adoption by the Institute it became an Australia-wide project co-ordinated by the clubs in South Australia in co-operation with the St. John Ambulance Brigade, the Australian Medical Association and The Pharmacy Guild of Australia. More than 300,000 people with health problems now wear the readily-recognisable "dog tags" that promptly bring them the appropriate treatment.⁵⁶

Rotarian and former Olympian Peter Nelson died of Leukemia in 1977. His grieving widow, former Olympian Marjorie Jackson (the "Lithgow Flash"), with strong Rotary support, established the Peter Nelson Leukemia Research Foundation, bringing to the task of fund-raising the same determination that had won her three gold medals. With talented Rotarians on her committee and her own dedication, she was able to see the first Peter Nelson Research Fellowship awarded to Dr Leonie Ashman in 1978. She achieved her goal of \$1 million by 1986 and was given a Civic Reception by the Lord Mayor of Adelaide. Under her leadership the Foundation went on to raise a further \$2 million before her appointment as Governor of South Australia in 2001.⁵⁷ The work continues.

“Paint your Heart Out” was a project of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, aided by Bendigo, in February, 1992. Members painted the homes – with paint donated by a paint company – of 120 elderly and needy people in one day. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm by clubs throughout the country and continues in some districts as an annual project.⁵⁸

In 1975 the Rotary Club of Norfolk Island – unique in that it is in an Australian External Territory but in a New Zealand Rotary district – adopted a project proposed and led by Edmund (Ned) Lenthall (later to serve as a district governor) to provide an operating theatre and essential medical equipment for the Norfolk Island hospital. Sister (RN in modern language) Bonnie Quintal, wife of a Rotarian, flew a light aeroplane around Australia, visiting Rotary clubs and collecting donations on the way, raising \$17,000 of the \$25,000 needed.⁵⁹

When Hurricane Amy struck Fiji in 2003, immediate Rotary aid was flown to the disaster area by the RNZAF for distribution by Rotarians. This was followed up by voluntary work teams to help re-build, as well as crates of books and school equipment. Because Fiji is part of District 9920, based in New Zealand, this was listed as a community service project, not an overseas aid (or world community service) effort.⁶⁰

The devastating earthquake that destroyed most of Christchurch, NZ, in 2011 and the subsequent demolition of unsafe buildings left fifteen vacant lots in the business district, bleak and dismal reminders of the past. To lift the spirits of the citizens the Rotary Club of Ashburton transformed the vacant lots into brilliant flower gardens.⁶¹

The tiny North West NSW Rotary Club of Moree, with not more than a dozen members, took on a major project to build a heli-pad at the local hospital which was completed in 2003, earning the gratitude of the medical staff and patients.⁶²

To provide a hospital for the intellectually handicapped, Rotarians in Pukekohe, NZ, set out to build a house in one day, completing the task, including landscaping, in seventeen hours and twenty minutes. The dwelling was raffled, yielding \$100,000.⁶³

The examples above, selected at random, represent a very small sample of the many thousands of projects, great and small, undertaken by Rotary clubs in the Oceania region. As observed elsewhere, every one of the 1,400 clubs adopts at least one community service project each year and most provide ongoing support to district, national and regional projects and programs.

To raise funds for their various projects, Rotary clubs show remarkable ingenuity. Indeed some of their activities have become famous. In Mount Isa, Qld., for example, an

annual rodeo attracts huge crowds and raises large sums of money; while the Henley-on-Todd regatta in Alice Springs, NT, receives nation-wide news coverage each year as teams compete in the various “aquatic” events on the dry bed of the Todd River. An actual aquatic event in Pakuranga, N.Z. occurred when fifty five boats set off to catch the biggest fish and raised more than \$10,000 for the Volunteer Coast Guard. To provide a diversion for children at its Australia Day Fair, the Lower Blue Mountains Rotarians invited them to bring their garden gnomes to the first Gnome Convention in 2004. This proved to be so successful that, a decade later, thousands of gnomes were “registered” and it had become the principal attraction of the fair, receiving national and international media attention. Clubs run fairs and garden fetes, barbecues and sausage sizzles, art shows and flower shows, concerts, plays and fireworks displays, air pageants, race-days, art unions and raffles. They hold jumble sales, junk auctions, market days, car rallies and fun-runs. With the help of television and radio stations they conduct “telethons” and “radiothons” which, despite the anguish of English purists at the assault on our language, yield huge sums as listeners or viewers telephone their pledges which are acknowledged by well known identities. They build houses with voluntary labour and sell them at a handsome profit or offer them as art union prizes. They raise livestock for sale. One club on the Blue Mountains of N.S.W. planted a pine forest and used the thinnings each year for sale as Christmas trees, finally selling the lumber. An enterprising New Zealand club collected sheep manure from under shearing sheds, had it processed and sold as fertilizer. “A nice little earner!” confided the club president.⁶⁴

The means of raising funds are as varied as the community projects they support. But even as they devise bigger and better schemes, Rotarians are reminded that fund-raising is not, or should not be their major preoccupation; that the main task of every club in its community service program is to identify genuine needs and show community leadership in meeting them; mobilising local resources of talent, labour and money to complete their task.

Regrettably this reminder is not always heeded. While many clubs do identify community needs, an increasing number is taking the easier option of raising funds for existing organisations; or raising funds for no specific purpose and then, at the end of the year, making an allocation to a number of local, national or international causes. As former Rotary International President Glen Kinross commented, “Too many charities that should be raising their own funds want Rotarians to be their arms and legs; and too

many Rotary clubs are agreeing.”⁶⁵

Certainly the policy adopted in 1923 does suggest that, having identified a community need, before creating a new agency the Rotary club should first find out if there is an existing agency that could, with the necessary resources, meet that need and, if there is, to support and strengthen that agency; it does not imply that the Rotary club should raise funds for charities that are not called upon to meet newly-identified and unmet needs. Probably more Rotary clubs would do well to follow the example set by the first clubs – Melbourne in supporting and strengthening existing agencies to meet the needs of the mentally ill; Sydney in creating an agency to meet the needs of crippled children; Wellington in providing a hospital for mothers and babies.

Also, Rotary leadership might profitably consider the methods adopted in identifying needs. Again, those first Rotary clubs surveyed their communities, doing the “leg-work” themselves, to identify genuine needs before deciding how they should be met. The Rotary Club of South Sydney, in 1946 (as mentioned in Chapter four) commissioned the Sydney University Department of Social Studies to conduct a comprehensive social survey of its area, which identified a large number of needs and resulted in the provision of amenities and support for the University Settlement, a recreational facility for underprivileged children.⁶⁶

In the past half century, no Rotary clubs in the region are known to have conducted an evidence-based community survey. In a 2013 survey 100% of responses indicated that clubs relied on “local knowledge” to identify community needs.⁶⁷ No doubt the Rotarians’ own familiarity with their communities were reliable in finding obvious needs; but one wonders how many genuine needs remain unidentified and, therefore, unmet.

With the rapid development of the Welfare State ideas in both countries, reflecting attitudes in UK, it was often suggested by Rotarians in the 1960s that governments were assuming responsibility for so many aspects of social service that service clubs were finding fewer unmet needs in their communities. The comparison with attitudes in America was recorded by Harold Thomas of Auckland (Rotary International President 1959-60) after a Rotary visit to the USA:

To our American friends a Welfare State was a Socialised State and as such it was the antithesis of a state with an economy based on free or private enterprise; but (we) saw our Welfare State as something different which could and should be based on private enterprise.⁶⁸

The further development of the hoped-for Welfare State, however, was soon to be abandoned (or at least deferred) in both countries; and those Rotarians who predicted that community service would wither on the vine for lack of a purpose soon found more than enough community needs to keep them occupied.

Chapter Seven: International Understanding

The fourth part of the Object of Rotary – “The advancement of international understanding, good will and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service” – is given expression in what is known as International Service. This covers two main areas: (a) “International Understanding” and (b) “World Community Service” which will be dealt with in Chapter Eight.

To advance international understanding, Rotary – at club, district, regional and international levels – has devised a number of what are regarded as highly successful programs, the two most notable being the scholarship and group study exchange programs of The Rotary Foundation and the Youth Exchange Program.

The Rotary Foundation

In 1917, Arch Klumph, president of what was then the International Association of Rotary Clubs, successfully proposed to the convention the creation of “...an endowment fund ... for the purpose of doing good in the world in charitable, educational and other avenues of community progress”.¹ The fund mounted very slowly, but by 1928 it had grown to \$5,709.07 and the convention of that year re-named it The Rotary Foundation and authorised the appointment of five trustees to “hold, invest, manage and administer” its property and, with the approval of the board of directors, “...expend the corpus of the income therefrom as a single trust for the purposes of R.I.”²

In 1931 The Rotary Foundation Declaration of Trust was executed, which, after citing the 1928 amendments, declared that “All property received and held by said Trustees shall be received and held in Trust to expend the principal and/or the income therefrom, as a single trust, for and only for philanthropic, charitable, educational or other eleemosynary purposes, objects, movements or institutions of RI...”³

Throughout the 1930s the R.I. board encouraged clubs to donate to the Foundation with the object of raising \$2 million; but the great depression inhibited any spectacular response. In 1939 the R.I. president concluded that “the apparent lack of interest on the part of Rotarians generally was attributable to the fact that the most appealing objects had not been selected nor developed on an inspirational basis”.⁴ Then came World War Two and the Rotary movement was preoccupied with more urgent considerations.

In January 1947 Paul Harris, Rotary’s Founder and President Emeritus, died and,

through the “Paul Harris Memorial Fund” donations poured into The Rotary Foundation as a tribute to the man who had founded the movement forty two years earlier. More than \$1 million (US), almost twice as much as had been contributed in the previous 30 years, poured into the coffers, enabling the trustees to send some 12,000 packages of food and clothing to needy families who had suffered grievously in war-ravaged countries. It also enabled them to plan for a more significant program of education and world understanding.

In 1948, The Rotary Foundation chose eighteen outstanding graduates from seven countries, including Australia and New Zealand, as the first “Rotary Foundation Fellows for International Understanding” (later to be known as Rotary Foundation Graduate Fellows and, later still, Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholars). Each fellow/scholar was given a year of post-graduate study in an overseas country with fares, tuition fees and accommodation paid for.⁵

Since then, the annual scholarships have been extended to include vocational scholarships for technical trainees; journalism scholarships to enable young journalists to pursue further study at an overseas university, teachers of the handicapped scholarships (self explanatory); all based on a full academic year of study in another country – preference being given to those willing to study in a country with a language other than their own. Scholars are nominated by Rotary clubs and selected by the Rotary districts, which are awarded one scholarship each year. A Rotarian counsellor is appointed in the host district. During their scholarship year, scholars are expected to talk to Rotary clubs and other groups in the host districts about their own countries; and, on their return, are expected to attend Rotary club meetings and district conferences so that they can share their experiences of another culture.⁶

In 1965 the program was further diversified with the introduction of Group Study Exchange under which five or six young business and professional people with a Rotarian leader undertook a two months study tour in an overseas country with a selected Rotary district as hosts. In the next year, a reciprocal visit was made by a similar team.⁷ This aspect of Foundation activity was pioneered by New Zealand as long ago as 1955 when one of the districts (there were then only two) established Rotary Overseas Travel Awards (ROTA), selecting six young men and a Rotarian leader to make an overseas study tour. The first tour in 1955 was to Great Britain. In 1957 a team visited the Pacific states of U.S.A.; and then followed biennial tours to India and Ceylon, Japan via Australia and Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. In the even-

numbered years, teams from these countries made reciprocal visits until Group Study Exchange became a Rotary Foundation activity in 1965.⁸

Each year, since 2002, The Rotary Foundation has funded 100 Rotary Peace Scholars to study at Rotary Peace Centres established at major universities in six countries [the University of Queensland in Oceania region]; District Grant Scholarships for undergraduates or senior secondary students; Global Grant Scholarships for graduate students already studying abroad; and Packaged Grant Scholarships for study at UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education.⁹

The purpose of all of these scholarships and group exchanges is to give future leaders – people who are likely to be in positions of influence in their own communities – an understanding and appreciation of different cultures, customs and religious beliefs as a means of advancing “international understanding, good will and peace”.

Antipodeans have participated enthusiastically in all the educational programs of The Rotary Foundation and are able to point to some distinguished citizens of both countries who have been Foundation scholars in their youth: churchmen, jurists, scientists, academics, business leaders, a sprinkling of cabinet ministers and at least one Governor General.¹⁰

Particular pride is taken in the briefing of scholars before they depart for overseas to ensure that the information they impart about their own countries is accurate and that their general knowledge is extensive. This is particularly so with Group Study Exchange and was instituted shortly after the scheme began when Dr R.H.K. McKerihan, a former district governor from East Maitland, NSW, reported to the Institute that he was “appalled at a visiting team’s ignorance of their own country...” and proposed a mandatory briefing program for all outgoing group study teams to ensure that they would be better informed about their homelands.¹¹ The proposal was adopted and a “crash” course was devised covering Australian history, geography, economy, commerce and industry, politics, culture, lifestyle, sports and any other aspect that occurred to the mentors. The program was an immediate success and was quickly implemented in both Australia and New Zealand. Resulting from articles in Rotary magazines and action by the Institutes, the idea was taken up by the Rotary International Board and recommended to all districts around the world.¹²

Each year, with the current number of districts, twenty seven young men and women from Australia and New Zealand enter universities in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia; an equal number of young people from around the world are welcomed by

Antipodean Rotarians. Also, each year, twenty seven Group Study Exchange teams are sent out and twenty seven received; and a varying number of scholars under the other programs will come and go. Rotarians hope that the friendships made by these talented young people during their months or years abroad will endure and that the cumulative effect of the international friendships will help to advance understanding and peace.

In addition to its educational grants, The Rotary Foundation is responsible for special grants to enable clubs to undertake individual projects, mainly but not exclusively in developing countries – provision of an operating theatre, for example, or a clinic or a school. And, as has been previously mentioned, the massive Polio-Plus campaign also operates under the Foundation umbrella. It seems likely and highly desirable that these aid programs will be expanded as needs are identified in future years.

The Rotary Foundation is funded by the voluntary contributions of Rotary clubs and many individual Rotarians.

An ingenious means of encouraging support is the Paul Harris Fellow award. Any person who donates or in whose name is contributed \$1,000 (US) to The Rotary Foundation is named a “Paul Harris Fellow” and receives a medal, a lapel pin and a handsome certificate.

It is no surprise to anyone in British Commonwealth countries that comparatively few Rotarians contribute to their own Paul Harris Fellow recognition (feeling that it is the equivalent of “buying” an award), whereas most Americans and virtually all Japanese Rotarians do so. In Australia and New Zealand (as in Britain and Canada) the award is very frequently conferred upon a Rotarian (or a non-member citizen) by a Rotary club or district as an award for distinguished service; a worthy practice that, regrettably, reinforces the perception that it is, in fact, an honour bestowed. By 2005 the number of Paul Harris Fellows throughout the world exceeded one million, (including several Popes, Kings and Crown Princes, the Duke of Edinburgh, Mother Teresa, several Presidents of the United States, State Governors and Governors General of Australia, sporting identities, actors, singers, comedians and distinguished citizens). For each additional \$1,000 (up to five) contributed in the name of an individual, a sapphire is added to the insignia of a Paul Harris Fellow. More generous benefactors receive recognition of a higher order for gifts of \$100,000 to \$1 million. Despite earlier misgivings, the Paul Harris Fellow recognition is now fully supported as an effective fund-raiser.

The Youth Exchange program

There is a remarkable lack of agreement about the origins of the Youth Exchange program (also often known as Student Exchange) for secondary school students. Australians claim it as their own; but Americans and Europeans are wont to make counter claims. It is probably fair to say that none of the claims is supported by any conclusive evidence extant. A proposal by the Rotary Club of Copenhagen in 1929 was recorded and an exchange between U.S. and Latin-American clubs in 1939 is reported without specific details¹³. It is stated that Rotary clubs in European countries had been arranging short-term exchanges of students during school vacations many years before the program was initiated in Australia and there is no reason to doubt it. Certainly regular two-way exchanges of the sons and daughters of Rotarians between Britain and Ireland and the European countries was well established by 1955 because, in that year, the General Council of R.I.B.I. appointed a youth exchange officer to co-ordinate the activity¹⁴.

The first recorded exchange of students in the Antipodes was arranged between the Rotary Clubs of Myrtleford, Vic. and Scottsbluff, Nebraska, U.S.A. in 1958 by the governors of the two districts in which those clubs were located. The two governors-elect had met and planned the exchange at the International Assembly (the “school” for incoming governors) at Lake Placid, N.Y., U.S.A. There were no guidelines at that time. The parents paid the travel expenses and the host clubs arranged schooling at local secondary schools and free accommodation in the homes of Rotarians.¹⁵

The exchange was seen as successful and the succeeding district governor appointed a District Student Exchange Committee to promote the idea and provide some general guidelines. The committee obviously discharged its duties with considerable zeal, for in the 1959-60 year, clubs in the district exchanged seventeen students – thirteen with Asia, one with Philippines and three with U.S.A.¹⁶

The idea was quickly adopted by other districts and within a decade the Antipodean talent for bureaucracy had asserted itself. An Australian conference of youth exchange chairmen was convened to share information and ideas.¹⁷ A booklet soon appeared and by 1975 the mass exodus and influx of exchange students was being co-ordinated nationally. Special deals were struck with airlines and insurance companies to ensure that the best possible prices were negotiated.

Outgoing students were nominated by clubs but, with very few exceptions, were selected by the district committee and allocated to the offering host clubs overseas.

Before departing they were given two intensive week-end briefings. The exceptions were the very rare club-to-club exchanges, arranged without reference to the district committee and usually looked upon with disfavour by self-appointed “experts” (who resent their inability to stop the practice by the constitutional guarantee of club autonomy).

In New Zealand the Youth Exchange program has been not quite so popular as in Australia, probably because of other conflicting programs, particularly in the Pacific Islands. However, the district organisation is of similar structure and the insistence on high standards no less rigid. After 1970, every district governor appointed a district youth exchange committee.¹⁸

The Youth Exchange Program Information Leaflet recorded that the number of Australian and New Zealand students exchanged under the program in 2011-12 was 1041. The exchange countries were Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain & Ireland, Greece, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, U.S.A. and Zimbabwe.

Youth exchange guidelines for districts, sponsoring and host clubs, host parents and students are issued now by the secretariat of Rotary International but many regions, including Oceania, continue to publish and issue their own local and more detailed guidebooks.¹⁹

A modified form of student exchange is the Matched Twin exchange between some New Zealand and Australian clubs, under which a student travels from an Australian town to live for a school term with a New Zealand family in which there is a student in the same age group and the same school year. The two attend school together for the full term; then both travel to Australia to attend school and live with the other exchange family. The scheme began operating in the early 1960s but has been confined to a few clubs in N.S.W. and Auckland Province.²⁰

A third local variation is a program known as PACE: Pacific Australia Cultural Exchange. Secondary school students are exchanged between an Australian district and one of the Pacific Island nations (Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Tonga, Samoa) during a school vacation where they participate fully in the family life and learn about the culture of the host country; and share their knowledge with their fellow students when they return. Though the numbers

are still small (not more than about 12 each way) the program is, at the time of writing, attracting considerable attention and many enquiries.²¹

Vocational exchanges

From time to time, Rotary clubs have arranged exchanges of young employed people to give them a broader understanding of how their trades or crafts are practised in other countries. Most of these have been arranged by individual clubs and have not been extended beyond a few years. Two continuing programs, both devised in New Zealand, are Rota-Pacific and Rotary Overseas Vocational Exchange (ROVE).

Under Rota-Pacific, which began in 1974 in the Rotary district covering the north of the North Island and the Pacific Islands, teams of young Pacific Islanders (mainly Polynesian but some Melanesian and Micronesian people) are brought to New Zealand to study their own vocations. Arrangements are made for them to inspect and, sometimes, work in the appropriate establishments (offices, schools, shops, factories, farms) during their stay, which culminates in attendance at the District RYLA seminar.²²

ROVE, which has been operating in New Zealand since 1969 and in Australia since 1973, is another program of limited appeal but considered valuable by those participating. A young apprentice or trainee is exchanged with another in the same trade in another country.²³ Statistics have not been kept by the districts in which the program has been adopted because it has not been appropriated by district or national hierarchies, probably because of the relatively small numbers involved and the highly specialised and individual nature of each exchange. A wine-maker in New Zealand, for example, exchanged his trainee with one from Germany; and a Swedish furniture manufacturer exchanged a second year apprentice with an Australian manufacturer. The arrangements are usually made by the individuals concerned with the help of their Rotary clubs, which usually make the initial contact and arrange accommodation, but frequently also with assistance from the trade associations. An information booklet was prepared by a district committee of the district that devised the plan and remains available to interested clubs from the Rotary offices in New Zealand and Australia.²⁴

International Houses

In 1961 plans were drawn up for Rotary-sponsored International Houses to be located at the University of Sydney (founded 1850) and the then recently-established

University of New South Wales; an ambitious project of the Rotary clubs in the district covering the Sydney metropolitan and nearby country areas. This was the first major district project undertaken in the area; and before it was completed, as a result of “re-districting” (the Rotary term for changing the boundaries of a district by a re-allocation of clubs), it had become a project of the clubs in two districts.

International Houses are university halls of residence in which both Australian and foreign students are accommodated in approximately even numbers. They are fully equipped with dining halls, common rooms, libraries and recreation rooms as well as attractive and adequate, if far from luxurious, bedroom-studies. Meals are wholesome but plain and fees are modest. Academic, administrative and domestic staff, under the control of a director, provide for the needs of the students. The houses are self-supporting and are run by boards of management.

The purpose of these facilities is to advance international understanding by enabling young people of different cultures to live and work together as they pursue higher education.²⁵

The concept was not original. The first International House was established in New York City, U.S.A., with a grant from John D. Rockefeller. By the time the first Rotary-sponsored houses were built there were twenty five in U.S.A., thirteen in the U.K., ten in Germany and one in Australia (in Melbourne).²⁶

In the interwar era, the aim of creating this type of building, which is a residence, meeting hall and place of study, was “to promote international scholarship and the exchange of ideas and fellowship.” This is very much in harmony with the ideals of Rotary and it is not surprising that, in later decades, Rotary clubs were to establish International Houses at Universities with considerable numbers of foreign students. As one former R.I. director claimed, the efforts made to found International Houses were part of Rotary’s contribution to the expansion of tertiary education, which was such a strong trend in Australia from the 1960s onwards.²⁷

The Sydney venture resulted from a recommendation in the 1957 Report of the Committee on Australian Universities (The Murray Report) set up by the Australian Government to investigate the activities of Australian universities:

We would particularly stress the importance of university residences for overseas students. Australia is assuming responsibilities of the highest order in South East Asia. There is already a large flow of students, increasing every year. It is important that they should learn not only the particular academic specialism that the universities have to offer but that they should go home with an intimate knowledge

of Australians – of Australian thought and of Australian ideals. These students represent the highest ability these overseas countries possess and they are the potential leaders in their particular walk of life. It is indeed unfortunate that they spend much of the day in isolation from those with kindred interests.

The Chancellor of the University of Sydney, Sir Charles Bickerton-Blackburn, invited some senior Rotarians to dinner and put before them the suggestion that the local Rotary clubs launch an appeal for £200,000, which would be matched by equal contributions from both State and Federal Governments, to provide international houses. The Universities would provide the land. The senior Rotarians, exceeding their authority, accepted the challenge and committed the clubs in the district to raise the funds.²⁸

Over the next four years the clubs did raise the funds, claiming to have utilised every fund-raising activity known to mankind – and not forgetting to remind those who had committed them to this daunting task that they were far from content and would neither welcome nor support any future multi-club, multi-district fund-raising venture initiated without their consent.

Nevertheless, when the International Houses were finally opened and the first students were installed, Rotarians appeared to be united in their satisfaction with the result of their labours.²⁹ The Sydney University International House, with accommodation for 130 students, opened in 1967; the House at University of New South Wales, for 120 students, opened in 1968.

The Rotary Club of Brisbane, in 1955, initiated an appeal resulting in establishment of the International House at the University of Queensland which finally opened in 1965 with sixty four students (thirty two from Australia and thirty two from eleven overseas countries). This was achieved after a decade of fund-raising, both in Australia and Asia, and a grant of land from the Queensland Government. The club continued its interest and supported its subsequent expansions. By 1969 International House was accommodating 153 students representing eighteen countries.

In Western Australia a proposal in 1975 to establish an International House was not pursued but Rotarians offered support and friendship to international students at the University of Western Australia's University Hall.³⁰

The aim of providing communal ties through a college which houses both local and foreign students is now recognised as most important. International Houses continue to be established at many universities. In 1995 the University of Toledo, in Ohio USA,

established an International House and: ‘officials say the facility represents a big step toward solving an old problem here and at many campuses – the lack of interaction between U.S. and foreign students’.³¹ In the mid-1990s, it was reported that: “Interest in international houses does seem to be picking up,” said Jeanne-Marie Duval, senior director of educational programs at NAFSA: Association of International Educators.³² However, most institutions “cannot afford to erect a new building in this time of tight budgets ...” Outside funding, therefore, is needed. It is fortunate that the Rotary clubs of Australia took up the initiative of foundation of International Houses when they did – in the 1960s – as since then the costs of real estate and development have hugely increased.

Contrary to general belief, Rotary was not involved in the beginnings of the International House at the University of Melbourne.³³ Confusion probably arose from the involvement of some individual Rotarians as members of the Council and in the presentation to the University, by the Rotary District, of the Angus Mitchell Memorial Library at International House (in memory of Melbourne Rotarian and past president of Rotary International Sir Angus Mitchell).³⁴

Some Rotary clubs in the districts in which international houses are located take a continuing interest in the overseas students in residence, often taking them on picnics with other young people or giving them short tours to places of interest in the surrounding countryside.³⁵ The Rotary Club of Newtown, N.S.W. established an Australiana Section in the library of nearby Sydney University International House. Beginning with the donation of a book by each member and club gifts of relief-maps and celestial and terrestrial globes in 1970, the club added to the collection with donations of further books each year until it amalgamated with another club to be designated Sydney Inner West in 2003.³⁶

Neither of the International Houses in New Zealand (Auckland and AUT) was founded with Rotary support.

Model United Nations Assemblies (MUNA)

In 1980 the Rotary Club of Lake Cargelligo, a small town in south-western New South Wales, introduced the Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) program to the secondary schools in the Rotary district.

Every Rotary club in the district was asked to invite each secondary school in its territory to send a team of two delegates to the Model United Nations Assembly. Each

school team would represent a different nation at the assembly which would be conducted, on the lines of the U.N. General Assembly, by experienced Rotarians. At the first MUNA only seven schools in the district (covering 200,000 sq.km.) responded, providing 12 delegations (some obviously sending two teams).³⁷

The number of participants increased each year and by 1983 the small Lake Cargelligo club, in an isolated part of the district, was finding its resources, both human and accommodation, severely strained; and the larger and more conveniently situated Rotary Club of Forbes assumed the responsibility of mounting MUNA for the district. This club, in 1986, began to promote the program, sharing the idea with others; and by 1987 MUNA was beginning in other districts, including Western Australia.³⁸ In 1991 it was adopted in New Zealand.³⁹

The purpose of MUNA is to encourage young people to learn about other nations and to understand and appreciate the workings of the United Nations while they develop debating skills and gain self-confidence in public speaking. Before the debate begins, a delegate from each nation delivers a brief address setting out the most important facts about the country he or she represents. The proposals to be debated are selected from those actually debated by the U.N. as well as a number of motions proposed by the teams. The debates reproduce genuine U.N. debates, often with a fine flow of rhetoric, points of order, motions of dissent, table-banging and bloc walk-outs. Teachers and Rotarian counsellors show evidence of enjoying the experience as much as the students.⁴⁰

No central authority has been set up to issue rules for the proper conduct of MUNA, but the Australian and New Zealand Institutes commended the program to clubs in the region and the Rotary Club of Forbes published a small advisory booklet and a video program.⁴¹

The Antipodean Rotary clubs do not claim to have originated MUNA, which was first presented as an International project by the Rotary Club of Winnipeg, Mb, Canada, in 1955, with more than 100 schools participating.⁴² Similar programs called “Into Their Shoes” were being encouraged throughout the Rotary world in the 1960s and, while popular in Australasia, were usually events arranged singly by individual clubs.⁴³

In Australia and New Zealand, MUNA has become an annual event in all districts, in most of which a different host club is selected each year by the incumbent governor from those volunteering their services; and the organisation of the program is the responsibility of the District MUNA Committee.⁴⁴

Peace Cities (Peace Communities)

With the stated intention “of bringing together all peoples of the world in the promotion of lasting peace through fellowship, international understanding and goodwill” the Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga Koorringal adopted a “peace community” concept introduced by Tony Quinlivan, a former club president, in 1991. A working committee chaired by Dr Henry Gardiner (later to serve as district governor) raised funds from all five Wagga Wagga Rotary clubs and erected a Peace City Monument which was officially opened by Wagga Wagga Mayor, Councillor Brassil, and former Rotary International President Royce Abbey on 23rd February 1993 when the Wagga Wagga City Council officially declared Wagga Wagga to be the world’s first Rotary Peace City.

In 1994, through the efforts of the Rotary Club of Manila, the City of Manila, Philippines, was declared the world’s second Rotary Peace City. In 1995, District 9700 (in N.S.W.) adopted the Peace City/Community concept as a District Project, supported by all Clubs in the District. In that Rotary year Port Washington, Wisconsin, USA, Kobe and Ibaraki, Japan; East London, South Africa; Honolulu, Hawaii; East Hiroshima, Japan; Cannes, France; and Los Angeles City and County USA were all declared Rotary Peace Cities.⁴⁵

By 2014 there were more than 100 Rotary Peace Cities/Peace Communities, deriving ultimately from the 1995-1996 D9700 District Peace Cities/Communities project.

The project continues under the District 9700 Peace Communities Standing Committee, which encourages the declaration of further Peace Communities and also hosts, usually in Wagga Wagga, an international Rotary Peace Conference.⁴⁶

The promotion of peace through service clubs is outside political action and looks, instead, at community relations and individual initiatives for avoiding violence, injustice and conflict. A typical instance of this is the hosting of victims of school bullying, who have spoken to Rotary clubs about their experiences of this damaging ordeal, and ways that it should be exposed and prevented. The message of peace, as fostered through Rotary, led to the establishment of the Canadian Centres for Teaching Peace. Scholars engaged in studies of peace promotion are increasingly pointing out the value of non-political and community-based initiatives, which are uniquely helpful in developing social capital and promoting values inimical to violence.⁴⁷

International Fellowships of Rotarians

Rotary Fellowships are groups of Rotary members who share a common interest in recreational activities, sports, hobbies or professions. They are intended to promote friendships between Rotarians in different countries and of divergent cultures, thus advancing international understanding.

Each fellowship functions independently of Rotary International, establishes its own rules, membership qualifications, dues and administrative structure. Fellowships must have an international scope with members in a minimum of three countries.

Beginning in 1963 with the International Yachting Fellowship of Rotarians, there are now sixty four registered fellowships, including Amateur Radio “hams”, Authors, Brewers, Bird-Watchers, Book-lovers, Bowlers, Caravanners, Chessplayers, Cricketers, Cyclists, Doctors, Fishers, Flyers, Geologists, Golfers, Historians, Magicians, Musicians, Philatelists, Photographers, Quilters, Sporting Shooters, Skiers, Winemakers – and fifty more.⁴⁸

Popular in Australasia, many raise funds for Rotary projects and programs; and they lose no opportunity to publicise their activities in booths at conferences, institutes and conventions.

Other programs for international understanding

Friendship Exchanges are often arranged between Australasian districts or groups of districts and districts in other countries. The visiting team (usually of Rotarians and spouses) attends meetings and, if the visit is at the appropriate time, the district conference in the host district; shows films, videos or power-point presentations and describes as many aspects of life at home as possible. Team members are billeted in the homes of host district Rotarians. In the following year the other half of the exchange takes place. This is not an “official” program and, as the team members are responsible for their own travelling expenses and accommodation (when not billeted), and since it is assumed that adult Rotarians are capable of making their own arrangements, no guidelines have been prepared apart from those that might be helpful to the people arranging the group travel. There is a subtle reminder, however, that they, no less than Foundation scholars and exchange students, are Rotary “ambassadors of good will” and that the objective of a Rotary Friendship Exchange is “the advancement of international understanding, good will and peace”.⁴⁹

Each year, in the week in which 23rd February (the anniversary of the world’s first

Rotary club meeting) occurs, Rotary celebrates World Understanding Week, during which all clubs are asked to organise some activity to emphasise world understanding and peace. As may be imagined, the means adopted vary widely – from inviting a foreign diplomat to speak at the club meeting to organising an international day in a local park with residents encouraged to wear the national costumes of their countries of origin.⁴⁶ With a large immigrant population in the Antipodean countries, particularly in the large city and suburban areas, such fairs or festivals are seen as a valuable means of accentuating the positive aspects of a multi-cultural society.

Rotary's ideal of co-operation between nations and community support between individuals long predated the notion of multiculturalism, which is a social policy of post-1960s political thought. However, Rotary's ideals are very compatible with the recognition that all societies today are increasingly and inescapably becoming multicultural and the organisation of community festivals is part of a larger Australasian movement which celebrates ethnic diversity. Rotary clubs play a role in the exercise of multiculturalism in social rights – visibility, access to education and community contacts. The Rotary clubs themselves have always been open to membership of people from all backgrounds, and considerable ethnic diversity can now be seen in casual observation of the membership. However, no records are kept of Rotary members' national or religious backgrounds, and it is not possible to accurately correlate Rotary membership with the changes in population structures in New Zealand and Australia. It is possible to discern a consistent interest in promoting respect for communities who have recently introduced their cultures to Australia and New Zealand; and this reflects the consciousness of multiculturalism which has been a part of government policy in Australasia since the 1970s.

Many clubs establish local projects to meet an identified need and promote international friendships. In 1983 the Rotary Club of Ballina, N.S.W., for example, discovered that foreign students at the local campus of the University of New England were experiencing extreme loneliness during vacations, especially in the Christmas season. Mobilising its own members and the local community, the club began what it called "ROSA" – Rotary Overseas Student Action, to invite students to their homes as guests during vacations. The response was immediate and gratifying, so that forty students from twenty countries enjoyed one or two weeks of home hospitality during their vacation. At the same time, this continuing program has laid the foundation for bridges of cultural understanding and many lasting friendships.⁵⁰

Some clubs choose an overseas club or clubs with which to correspond or exchange audio or video discs; others toast an overseas club at each meeting and send a greeting card or e-card to the club so honoured. Some write a letter enclosing leaflets or brochures to a club in a different country each week or each month. All of this is in the name of world understanding; and if some Rotarians question the value of such activities – and even go so far as to suggest that “it’s all a bit futile” – others declare that these simple measures have brought them friendships through which their own understanding of others is enhanced and from which they derive great pleasure.⁵¹

As contributions to international understanding and peace, Rotary’s International Service projects and programs are impossible to evaluate in a limited study such as this. There can be no doubt, however, that many hundreds of thousands of warm friendships between individuals of widely different cultures exist today – and many cross-cultural marriages have been solemnised as a direct result of these programs.

Whether Rotary’s long-term ambition – to advance international friendship and world peace through the education of those who will eventually hold positions of influence in their own countries – ever will be realised cannot be foreseen.

Chapter Eight: World Community Service

In their efforts to advance world understanding, Rotarians soon found that there were many overseas communities in desperate need of help.

The earliest response to the plight of fellow-humans in another land was the financial assistance that accompanied an outpouring of sympathy and concern for the victims of the great Tokyo earthquake of 1923. Thousands of dollars from Rotary clubs around the world (there were by then more than 1,000 of them) poured in to the Rotary Club of Tokyo which distributed the funds to the areas of greatest need. This major earthquake took place at midday: "...huge fires occurred after the quake and over 450,000 houses were burnt down, and about 105,000 people were dead or missing. It was known as the worst natural disaster in the history of Japan. The Japanese government decided to reconstruct the economic and political centre in accordance with a five-year plan and a budget of 600 million yen."¹

Rotarians everywhere have responded similarly to every major disaster of which they have become aware, sometimes resulting from general appeals by the board of Rotary International but often from their own governments or agencies.

It is not possible to pinpoint so precisely the beginnings of Rotary's attempts to meet less dramatic but equally devastating social needs abroad. Antipodean clubs do not appear to have embarked on any such activities until the 1950s, if we exclude food parcels for Britain which was a regular commitment of Rotary clubs on both sides of the Tasman during and immediately after World War Two; and the relief packages sent to war victims in Europe; and the extensive Rotary assistance to refugees and "stateless persons" in the immediate post-war years.²

During the 1950s and 60s a number of Rotary clubs in Australia "adopted" some 30 orphan children in Hong Kong by paying their living expenses and school fees. The scheme was administered by the Rotary Club of Hong Kong and had been brought to the attention of local clubs by an Australian Rotarian visitor to that club. New Zealand and Australian clubs also began to respond to appeals from Rotary clubs in Asia and the Pacific Islands by sending materials for schools, some of which lacked even pencils and paper.³

In the 1960s several clubs brought young women from Asian countries to be trained as nurses in Australian hospitals so that, on completion of their training, they could serve in their own communities.⁴

When the first Rotary club was formed in the Territory of Papua-New Guinea (then a United Nations Trusteeship under Australian administration), some needs of the people were soon identified and brought to the attention of Australian Rotary clubs.⁵ Relatively small projects – provision of medical equipment, books and school supplies for the various Christian missions and scholarships for secondary education – were begun.⁶

The New Zealand clubs were finding needs among their neighbours in the Pacific Islands and in Asian countries. A “hunger walk” by the Foxton club raised funds for the Alafua College in Samoa; and a consignment of milk biscuits was sent to Raratonga. Books were sent to Tonga and the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) and a modest donation was made to the new University of the South Pacific in Fiji. Levin club established a pig and poultry unit in Samoa and also sent two rice thresher-winnowers to Malaysia and an irrigation unit to Thailand.⁷

The governor of the then District 294 (southern North Island) listed twenty six recent world community service projects by clubs in his district, including Taradale: gift of technical books for island schools; Wairoa: veterinary and microbiological equipment for Alafua College; Napier West: biological equipment for Alafua; Otaki: cultivators and irrigation equipment to Samoa and sponsorship of a Rotary Volunteer Abroad; Levin: rice-threshing machine and water-pumping for Thailand; Palmerston North: education program for underprivileged children in Malaysia, pig-raising scheme for Thailand, medical aid for Samoa; Terrace End: scholarships for Fiji children and help for Alafua College; New Plymouth: consignment of drugs and medicines to island territories, training of a Tongan youth as a linotype apprentice and typewriter mechanic; Fitzroy: milk biscuits to islands, brick-making machine and sponsorship of trade training; Waitara: education for Thai students, scholarship for poor students in Singapore, operating theatre equipment for Tonga; Wellington North: contributed to the expenses of an architect to plan buildings for low-cost housing project in Fiji, educational scholarship for Fijian youth and 200 spectacle frames to Peru; Wellington South: education of twelve Thai students, technical books for islands, work benches for vocational school in Fiji; Bulls: milk powder and milk biscuits to Malaysia, a chain-saw to Tokelaws and many more.⁸ These, from one Rotary district in one year, were among the many hundreds of projects for the assistance of overseas communities that began to expand in Australasia during the late 1950s and 60s.

In 1962 the name “World Community Service” was officially adopted to describe this aspect of International Service.⁹ The stated aim of this community service abroad

was “to improve education, food production, health and social services”.¹⁰

Fourth Avenue In Motion (FAIM)

In 1963 a group of forty seven people, recruited by Rotary clubs in five Australian districts and under the leadership of Keith Hopper, a former district governor from Inverell, N.S.W., embarked on a “goodwill tour” of Indonesia, in which Rotary was then an illegal organisation. There they discovered many areas in which practical help could be given to the village people. They travelled as members of a hastily-constituted body known as FAIM. When they returned the leaders pondered the problem of bringing practical help to small village communities in developing countries such as Papua-New Guinea, Indonesia and the small island nations of the South Pacific. From their deliberations they developed a new Rotary instrumentality to which they gave the name under which they had travelled to Indonesia: FAIM – the object of which was to recruit volunteer work teams with a variety of skills to carry out projects in developing countries.¹¹

International Service is known in Rotary as the “Fourth Avenue of Service” giving expression to the fourth part of the Object of Rotary.¹² The reason for the speedy formation of FAIM was severely practical: to gain group travel concessions on aircraft. Rotarians, even when travelling together as a group, did not qualify for affinity group travel concessions unless they were all members of the same club; so FAIM – the Fourth Avenue In Motion – was born out of the need to save money – an important consideration to people who were paying their own fares and expenses to work abroad as volunteers.¹³

In 1964 the first FAIM team of seven volunteers went to Indonesia where they built an orphanage, teaching local people a variety of building techniques as they did so.¹⁴

The first FAIM project in Papua-New Guinea was construction of a wharf at Wasu in 1967.

The first request for Rotary aid to this area was for additional accommodation at a nearby leper hospital but further investigation revealed that the future of the hospital was in some doubt. The investigating team also discovered that the hospital and the 30,000 people in the surrounding areas were seriously disadvantaged because of isolation and inaccessibility. The only access to the area was by small aircraft via a tiny airstrip perched on a ridge; or by sea. Cargo was loaded or unloaded from ships 100 yards off shore and conveyed on small outrigger craft to and from the beach; a

hazardous operation taking considerable time and possible only in calm weather.

The Administration had plans for a wharf but there were no funds available. The cost was estimated at \$65,000 and construction was expected to take seven months. Three FAIM teams, each of twenty volunteers, assisted by the local indigenous people who enthusiastically provided the labour, completed the wharf in six weeks at a total cost of \$12,000. While doing so they also built a schoolhouse, a small nursing home and covered concrete paths between the hospital wards.¹⁵

The next year, in response to an appeal for a new building – office and meeting hall – another small team of two volunteers went to Indonesia with a set of cement brick moulds and a cement tile-making machine. They taught the locals at the Salvation Army Mission to make cement bricks, set up a small “factory” in which to manufacture them, began construction of the building, trained several young men in the building trades and left them to complete the job. A team returned in 1972 to build living quarters for the mission and in 1974 a team of four Rotarians and a Rotaract member built a hostel, a residence for a doctor and extensions to the mission hospital, again using cement bricks.¹⁶

Since those early projects FAIM teams from Australian Rotary clubs in all States have built hospitals, clinics, medical centres, a cultural centre, schools, dormitories, small dwellings, water tanks and training centres and have installed irrigation plants, wells, water-pumps, electricity generating plants, sewerage treatment works, methane gas converters and solar collectors. They have worked in Papua-New Guinea, Timor Leste, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, and the Philippines.¹⁷

In the Solomons in 1986-7, for example, 280 volunteers, assisted by local workers, built ninety three school buildings in 18 months.¹⁸ In one year (1990-91) 326 volunteers were sent out in twenty three teams.¹⁹

As the number of FAIM projects increased in its early days, it was inevitable that someone would find it necessary to develop an administrative structure. In 1966 FAIM was adopted by the Australian Rotary Institute and declared to be “the operative arm of IPAC” (International Projects Advisory Committee).²⁰ Every district governor was asked to appoint a district FAIM chairman and a committee of management was elected by the Institute. All Rotarians were invited to become members of FAIM for fifty cents a year or life members for \$10.

In 1971 a new constitution was adopted and four regions were established (Northern,

Southern, Eastern and Western) each of which was represented on the National Co-ordinating Council. The role of the co-ordinating council was to consider the requests or applications for FAIM assistance, decide how many teams would be required, ensure that satisfactory arrangements could be made with the country receiving the aid; and then allocate the tasks to the regional councils. The regional councils recruited teams from the Rotary districts within their regions and made travel arrangements.

Despite the extent of the operation, FAIM had no paid staff. Every aspect of the work, from administration to work in the field was performed by volunteers. The co-ordinating council met annually, for convenience and economy on the day before and at the same location as the Institute.²¹

In 1987 the Australian co-ordinating body known as Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS – described later in this chapter) took over the work of FAIM, which was re-named the Project Volunteers Program.²²

International Projects Advisory Committee (IPAC)

At the 1965 conference of incumbent, incoming and past officers of Rotary International in Australia it was decided that an advisory committee should be formed to co-ordinate the work of clubs embarking on projects abroad. Concern was expressed at the duplication of effort when more than one club responded to a request for help from an overseas organisation, the uncertainty that aid would reach its intended destination, and the credentials of some of the groups seeking the aid.²³

In the following year this annual conference was granted official status by the board of Rotary International as a Rotary Regional Institute (see Chapter Ten) and the International Projects Advisory Committee (IPAC) became the first Institute standing committee. Its brief was to investigate the many appeals for help from agencies, missions and other organisations in developing countries, to verify the credentials of those seeking the aid, to ensure that the aid would reach its intended destination – protected from the demands of corrupt officials – and to help solve transport and customs problems.²⁴

By 1969 the committee reported to the Institute that it had listed forty nine projects and that there had been a “good response” from Rotary clubs. Completed projects included six hospital wards for a mission clinic, eight head of cattle as the nucleus of a cattle industry, wells sunk in New Guinea villages and ninety scholarships for underprivileged children in Hong Kong and Thailand. The Director of the Papua-New

Guinea Administration Central Secretariat attended the Institute to convey the appreciation of the Administration for Rotary's continuing contribution to the welfare of the indigenous people of the Territory.²⁵

At the 1974 Institute it was reported that 300 Rotary clubs and some 40 Interact and Rotaract clubs had completed projects valued at more than \$30,000.²⁶

Each year the number of projects listed grew and clubs responded to the appeal for help. At first listed in *Rotary Down Under*, the list was later published as a booklet, issued each year to all Rotary clubs. With each project listed was the name of the liaison member of the International Projects Advisory Committee responsible for that project. A club selecting a project from the list initially contacted the liaison member of the committee whose first duty was to ensure that no other club had undertaken the project. If another club had taken it up, he suggested others of similar extent. He was also required to give the club advice about transportation, official documents required and any government regulations or special conditions to be met. He then maintained liaison with the club and the recipient agency until completion of the project.

Three members of the six-member committee retired each year and three new members were elected by the Institute for a two year term to ensure continuity as well as the injection of new ideas.

Each district made a financial contribution to cover the costs of postage, telephone calls and the printing and distribution of the IPAC list.²⁷

The 25th anniversary report of IPAC showed that 106 projects were completed in twenty one countries with a total value of \$379,500.²⁸

In 1978 the New Zealand Institute adopted a similar plan, the Rotary Overseas Aid Program (ROAP) for listing projects for the information of Rotary clubs.²⁹

With other Rotary Institute committees responsible for the co-ordination of World Community Service activities, the functions of IPAC were fully incorporated into RAWCS.³⁰

The 2012-2013 RAWCS Annual Report recorded that Rotarians were engaged in 385 active world community service projects.

Safe Water and Sanitation Saves Lives (formerly Save water, save lives)

In 1991 a single Rotary district activity that had been operating for a decade was adopted by the Australian Rotary Institute as a national program to provide contributions and volunteers to improve methods of water catchment, reticulation and

storage tank construction in developing countries.

As with other national programs, each district governor was asked to appoint a district chairman to represent the district as a member of one of the five regional committees. The operation was co-ordinated by a national co-ordinating committee.³⁰

In its first year, "Save Water Save Lives" was able to report the construction of two tanks in Solomon Islands, twenty in Papua New Guinea, forty in Thailand and sixty eight in India.³¹

The program grew from year to year until it was subsumed into the total World Community Service instrumentality, RAWCS, with the added responsibility of education in hygiene, sanitation and water reticulation; leading to a name change to Safe Sanitation & Water Saves Lives (SSWSL).³²

Donations in Kind

Another world community service innovation is Donations-in-Kind, arising from the recognition that many members of Rotary clubs have access to items that are considered obsolescent or surplus to local requirements but that are likely to serve needs in the developing world.

The two main categories of goods sought through the Donations-in-Kind committee are for education and health: school books, classroom equipment, paper, pencils, teaching aids, tools, computers, sewing machines; and for health: medication, bandages, tapes, stethoscopes and other surgery equipment, large and small hospital equipment from bed pans and kidney-dishes to beds, trolleys, x-ray plants, operating tables and air conditioners. Equipment is stored in State capital cities and is sorted and packed by Rotarian volunteers.

Goods were shipped in 1991-92 to Bangladesh, Nepal, Papua-New Guinea, Philippines, Fiji, Natal, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe. Donations-in-Kind Committee members attempted to estimate the value of goods shipped and produced what was described as a conservative estimate of \$5 million based on replacement value.

Donations-in-Kind is another of those activities that had been operating under a variety of names in several districts for many years and was then adopted by all districts (per medium of the Institute) under a co-ordinated plan for greater efficiency and more equitable distribution to the agencies applying for aid.

Now a RAWCS program, the estimated value of Donations in Kind received in 2012

-2013 was \$11 million.³³

Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS)

In 1987 a company was registered as a legal entity and a “national voice” for the various World Community Service activities operating under the several committees of the Rotary Institute: IPAC, FAIM, Save Water Save Lives and now Donations in Kind.³⁴

To most Australian Rotary clubs the need for a super-organisation to “co-ordinate the co-ordinators” was not immediately apparent. The proposed new body would have no authority to direct or in any way influence the decisions of the various committees formed by resolution of and therefore accountable only to the Institute. Its purpose, however, was not to be one of co-ordination of activities but to be the unified mouthpiece for all in dealings with Officialdom.

One of the government instrumentalities to which all groups applied for support from time to time was the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB), responsible for funding or subsidising projects of Non Government Organisations (NGOs). [Originally known as ADAB, AIDAB later became AusAID and then, in 2013, was incorporated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.] As committees of the Australian Rotary Institute, FAIM, IPAC, SWSL and DiK had no legal status and were dependent upon the goodwill of officials to recognise them as NGOs or as representing Rotary as a NGO. Unlike Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland, Rotary in neither Australia nor New Zealand has a legally constituted national body (apart from the Council of Rotary Down Under Inc.).³⁵ As a legally constituted registered company, RAWCS Limited was able to meet the requirements for a fully recognised NGO, authorised to negotiate with government instrumentalities on behalf of Rotary’s World Community Service agencies. Moreover the new national body has been able to provide national press releases, issue a periodical newsletter to advise all clubs of world community service activities and opportunities for service as team-members, or by adopting a suitable project.

As its chairman claimed in a report to “shareholders”, the company had a turnover in excess of \$8 million, plus \$400,000 from AIDAB subsidies and humanitarian matching grants from The Rotary Foundation; and 500 unpaid employees, 350 of whom would be travelling overseas as volunteers.

The Company was completely re-structured in 2011, when all of the constituent

groups and committees were fully incorporated into RAWCS. Thus FAIM (now Project Volunteers), IPAC (now Project Funding) Donations in Kind (DiK), Rotarians Against Malaria (RAM) are now operated by five regional committees (Northern, Eastern, Western, Southern and Central) which accept responsibility for the projects registered in their areas. To reduce the chance of a need being unmet by a club in the region in which it is registered, a national data-base is maintained; so that a listed project can be adopted by a club in another region.

RAWCS Limited also registered two charities – the Rotary Overseas Aid Fund and the Rotary Australia Benevolent Society – partly to gain tax concessions for corporate sector and private donations and also to attract travel, freight, accommodation and other concessions available to benevolent associations.³⁶

Rotary New Zealand World Community Service (RNZWCS)

The New Zealand equivalent of Rotary Australia World Community Service was originally called the Rotary Overseas Aid Program (ROAP) which, in effect, combined the functions of Australia's International Projects Advisory Committee and RAWCS. Differently structured, the work teams in New Zealand were nationally co-ordinated by Volunteer Services Abroad.³⁷

Because the Pacific Islands Rotary clubs are members of New Zealand districts, much of the world community service work in those small nations was carried out within districts – or within the “family” – and not co-ordinated nationally. However, there was an increasing number of applications for aid from other countries which needed to be investigated and it was seen as desirable that lists, similar to Australia's IPAC lists, be distributed.

Hence the decision to establish ROAP, which made the lists available to clubs, provided the liaison between clubs and recipient agencies and advised on transportation and official requirements. At the same time, the committee advised and assisted Rotary clubs or district committees in any other world community service activity.³⁸

In 1997 the New Zealand Rotary districts, for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the increasing number of overseas aid projects being undertaken by Australian and New Zealand Rotary clubs in partnership, decided to establish RNZWCS with similar aims and a similar structure to its Australian counterpart. A suggestion that a single body be formed to meet the requirements in both countries was soon abandoned because of the problems of dealing with the departments and statutory agencies of two

Governments, each with its own regulations.

RAWCS and RNZWCS may be described as the co-ordinators and facilitators of a series of Rotary aid programs – smoothing diplomatic, legal, transportation, customs and other paths to ensure that aid reaches its intended recipients as soon as possible.

These two Rotary instrumentalities also demonstrate, again, the Antipodean propensity to initiate new projects and programs to meet needs, to nurture their growth and development and, eventually, to create a bureaucratic organisation for their more efficient management and more effective results.

Good Neighbour Teams

In 1962 the districts in New Zealand (at that time three) adopted a plan to sponsor Good Neighbour Teams to work in developing countries. Because of the experience and professionalism of New Zealand's Volunteer Services Abroad (the local equivalent of Britain's Voluntary Service Overseas and Australia's Australian Volunteers Abroad), the Good Neighbour Teams were sponsored by Rotary but administered by V.S.A.

By the end of the 1960s the work teams had been completely merged into the V.S.A. program. Rotary's involvement was mainly in sponsorship of a V.S.A. volunteer or a team of volunteers by an individual club.³⁹

A scheme reminiscent of the Good Neighbour Teams was instituted in the 1970s by the clubs in the Hamilton area when teams of Rotarians went to Tonga, where they lived in the villages and worked with the local people on a series of projects, imparting their knowledge and teaching their skills as they did so. The work they shared produced houses, kitchens, toilet blocks, water pumps and other village amenities. Teams from Otaki established what was described as a "Mini-Polytechnic" for the YWCA in Fiji, an irrigation scheme also in Fiji; and a breeding piggery, a poultry-breeding unit and a women's hostel for a college in Samoa.⁴⁰

Rota Homes

In 1985 a disastrous cyclone struck Fiji, causing damage estimated at \$80 million in Lautoka and surrounding villages and leaving more than 10,000 people homeless. Many of those who had lost their homes were the very poor, some verging on destitution; and the dwellings they had lost had been no more than sub-standard shacks made of scrap materials. As an immediate response Peter Drysdale, an Australian temporary resident of Fiji who had become a member of the Rotary club of Lautoka, developed the

Rotahomes project: the construction of small (4 x 3 metres), light-weight, cyclone-proof, galvanised iron and timber dwellings. No bigger than a small bedroom in a modern house, they were far from luxurious – except when compared with the structures they were designed to replace. Total cost of each dwelling was \$1,600.36

New Zealand clubs in the same Rotary district quickly offered support to meet the immediate need and their assistance was soon supplemented by help from the other districts in New Zealand and then from Australia.

Having re-housed the cyclone victims, the Rotarians decided to set about eliminating all sub-standard housing in the area. By 1991 the initial objective of 250 Rotahomes had been achieved and a long-term goal of 1,000 had been set. By 2013, 816 had been built and a fully-serviced model village of 220 homes had been created a few kilometres from Lautoka. It includes a shop, community hall, kindergarten, computer-school and plant nurseries.⁴¹

In addition to the construction of new dwellings, the program includes provision of basic necessities and finding employment for people in Rotahome families.

The Australian and New Zealand Governments have provided financial assistance under their respective overseas aid programs and the special needs of many families have been brought to the attention of the Red Cross and the U.N. Save the Children Fund.⁴²

Shelterbox

As they had done since 1923, Rotary clubs around the world have responded generously to appeals for assistance when disaster strikes a community. Often their efforts are co-ordinated within districts or regions; sometimes individual clubs act independently, sending aid direct to clubs in or near the disaster area or to international aid agencies. They have sent food, clothing, blankets, tents, water purification kits, small cooking utensils, medical supplies and money – the last always preferred by most agencies.

In 1999 the Rotary Club of Helston Lizard, Cornwall, UK, deciding that there must be a better way of distributing aid than by handing out food and blankets from the back of a truck, decided to develop a family aid package providing shelter, warmth and food in a single, portable, easily-transportable container. They called it Shelter Box.

Measuring 84 x 61 x 56 cm, weighing only 55kg and looking like an oversized portable ice-box (“Esky” in Australia, “Chilly Bin” in New Zealand), each Shelter Box

provides survival equipment for 10 people for six months. It contains a dome tent, thermal blankets or sleeping bags, mosquito nets, ponchos, water purification tablets, multi-fuel cooking stove, cooking and eating utensils, a basic tool kit and even a small packet of children's school supplies.

A charity was formed and by the end of 2004, more than 26,000 people had been helped by Shelter Box. The idea was exported and taken up with enthusiasm by Rotary clubs in many countries around the world. Shelter Box has been operating in Australia and New Zealand since 2003.

In both countries, Shelter Box also sends response-teams – volunteers who accompany the boxes to their disaster zones, ensuring duty-free importation, maintaining liaison with local Rotary clubs and assisting with the distribution.

By 2014 Shelter Box had responded to 200 disasters in ninety six countries, assisting more than 140,000 families.⁴³

Emergency Response Kits

A more modest disaster-relief package is the Emergency Response Kit, first developed in New Zealand in 1983. Modified periodically in the light of experience, the kit was standardized in 2010. Since 2005 the project has been substantially supported by the New Zealand Government.

The Emergency Response kit was designed specifically to meet the immediate needs of disaster victims in South West Pacific nations after earthquakes, cyclones and tsunamis and, occasionally, volcanic eruptions. The 76-litre plastic box contains clothing, blankets, water purification tablets, stove, cooking and eating utensils, tools and all the personal hygiene and everyday household items imaginable – from balls of string and ropes to clothes pegs and safety pins, from soap and tooth-paste to disinfectants and small first-aid kits. Unexpectedly but sensibly, it also contains a basic birthing kit; for babies on Pacific Islands are no less likely to arrive at inconvenient times than anywhere else in the world.

The kits are kept in strategic locations in New Zealand and Fiji for immediate dispatch by air to the disaster area, where they are distributed by Rotarians assisted by local volunteers. The aim is to deliver them within twelve to seventy two hours.⁴⁵

Eye Camps

Rotary first began sponsoring the camps established in India to perform delicate eye

operations in 1961. Since then, hundreds of Rotary teams of surgeons have gone from Australia and New Zealand to India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Papua-New Guinea and other developing countries to save or restore the sight of many thousands of people.⁴⁶

Becoming aware of the amazing work being done by Professor Fred Hollows to restore the sight of blind people in the world's poorest communities, many Rotary clubs also provided support for his program. In January, 1993, the president of Rotary International announced that Fred Hollows was the recipient of the 1992-93 Rotary International World Understanding Award.⁴⁷ This annual award entitles the recipient to select 10 Rotary Foundation Scholars for the following year. Professor Hollows died a few weeks after the announcement and the award was accepted at the 2003 Rotary International Convention in Melbourne by his wife, Gabi.⁴⁸ Rotary clubs continue to support the work of the Fred Hollows Foundation.⁴⁹

Literacy

Many programs to promote literacy in overseas countries have been developed by Rotary in Australia and New Zealand. Gifts of books and teaching aids for schools have been a part of world community service activities since the 1950s but it was not until 1979 that widespread work for world literacy began as a unified Rotary program.⁵⁰

The major campaign in Australia was led by Dr R (Dick) Walker, retired educationist, former principal of a Teachers' College (now part of Griffith University) and head of the Reading Research Centre in Queensland, who had developed teaching methods that proved effective in all languages. The advancement of literacy through sponsorship of teachers and by the use of volunteers has become another of the world community service activities supported regularly by a large number of clubs.⁵¹

An interesting development in 1986 was the sponsorship by the Rotary Club of Sydney of the Ranfurly Library Service in Australia.

Founded in the U.K. in the 1950s by the Earl and Countess of Ranfurly as a result of their discovery, during vice-regal service in The Bahamas, of widespread illiteracy in developing Commonwealth countries simply because young people, though taught to read and write at elementary school, had no books with which to practise their skills. The Ranfurly Library Service of Great Britain had sent some nineteen million second-hand books to the West Indies, Africa, Asia and the Pacific Islands. The Rotary clubs in Britain and Ireland had been keen supporters of the program, collecting most of the

books and recruiting many Rotary and Inner Wheel members for Lady Ranfurly's team of volunteers.

When she asked an Australian friend to help by establishing a similar service in Australasia to cover the Pacific and South East Asian area, he sought the assistance of the Rotary Club of Sydney, which promptly appointed a committee to establish the service.

The Ranfurly Library Service (Australia) was incorporated in 1986 as an independent charitable organisation but strongly supported by Rotary clubs. By the beginning of 1991 it had shipped more than 300,000 books to Papua-New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. A decade later this figure had exceeded two million and by 2013 more than three million books had been dispatched.⁵² Now incorporated into Donations in Kind, the work continues.

Rotary Oceania Medical Aid to Children (ROMAC)

In 1985 an "Outreach" team of Australian volunteer surgeons, with backup staff, was treating children with cleft palates in Fiji. During this tour one Rotarian surgeon from Bendigo, Vic., discovered that there were hundreds of children with gross deformities, too complicated to be treated by their local or visiting surgeons.

Further investigation revealed that this had become a problem throughout the developing countries of South East Asia and the Pacific Islands. It was soon realised that many of these children, living with disfigurement resulting from accidental or congenital causes, had life-threatening conditions; while others were kept hidden from the community because of their ugly deformities.

To provide remedial treatment for at least some of these children, a Rotary program was established in 1988 to bring selected children to Australia for treatment by leading surgeons in major hospitals. New Zealand Rotary districts joined the program in 1991. First known as Rotary Overseas Medical Aid to Children it is now registered as Rotary Oceania Medical Aid to Children (conveniently retaining the same acronym), as an approved multi-district program of Rotary in Australia and New Zealand.⁵³

Since its small beginnings, ROMAC has brought more than 350 children from developing countries for treatment. In 2012–13, forty nine children were treated – sixteen in New Zealand and thirty two in Australia – by forty eight ROMAC volunteer surgical teams.⁵⁴

Interplast

Interplast Australia began as the project of Victorian Rotary District 980 in partnership with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in 1983, when the first team of volunteer surgeons, nurses and back-up staff visited Samoa. The purpose was to operate on disadvantaged children with a variety of facial disfigurements, mainly cleft palate/hare-lip. The activity was fully funded by Rotarians.

So successful was the project that the sponsors decided to establish a permanent program (Interplast) with surgical teams regularly visiting developing countries in the Asia-Pacific area. Soon other conditions were being treated and the work expanded to include training and mentoring of locals. New Zealand Rotary districts began to send teams and formally joined the program in 2007.

Interplast teams often identify children whose conditions cannot be treated locally but could benefit from treatment in major hospitals. These are referred to ROMAC for assessment.

In 2014 Interplast reported that, since 1983, 600 volunteers had treated patients in 25 countries, held 32,000 consultations and had performed more than 20,000 operations. Like ROMAC, and most Rotary programs, Interplast proudly boasts that it has no office and no paid staff.⁵⁵

Individual projects and support

Though in the foregoing the major nationally or regionally-organised or co-ordinated world community service projects and programs have been briefly described, many more are supported by individual clubs, groups of clubs or districts with “one off” or ongoing projects. Assistance, either casually or regularly, is also given to non-Rotary agencies or charities by clubs.

One example is the School St Jude, founded in 2002 by Gemma Rice, an Australian exchange teacher barely out of her teens who, having worked as a volunteer in Uganda, identified a need for a school in a very poor community in Tanzania. With the help of her Rotarian father and his club, she established a very small school which, within a decade and with continuing Rotary and community support, was teaching and accommodating 1,500 students on three campuses. A secondary school began in 2014. Gemma Rice (now Sisia) has told her story at Rotary conferences, institutes and conventions and the program receives ongoing financial support from many Australian Rotary clubs.⁵⁶

One volume of twelve issues of the regional magazine, *Rotary Down Under*, chosen at random, described sixty two large and small world community service projects.⁵⁷ A further twelve issues randomly selected between 2005 and 2014 described sixty five club projects, indicating that, on average, eight world community service projects are recorded each month.⁵⁸

These, of course, are only those reported – probably a small fraction of the total number undertaken. Those referred to in this study, therefore, can be regarded only as representative of the many to suggest the scope and extent of Australasian Rotary’s world community service. It is reasonable to assume that every Rotary club in the region is involved in at least one such project each year.

Chapter Nine: Vocational Service

The most misunderstood “avenue” of service in Rotary and the one about which there is little agreement is what is known as Vocational Service.

Intended to give practical expression to the second part of the Object of Rotary (to encourage and foster) “High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations and the dignifying of each Rotarian’s occupation as an opportunity to serve society”, vocational service has proved to be a stumbling block for those who prefer clear-cut instructions to philosophical considerations.

There is little argument about the need for high ethical standards in all business and professions, or about the desirability of recognising the worthiness of useful occupations. The problem arises when the Rotary club seeks to undertake practical projects in vocational service. Because a vocational service committee is one of the “major” committees of each Rotary club, under the leadership of a club director, most clubs feel that the committee should be required to undertake particular projects in vocational service in the manner of community and international service committees; but others see vocational service as the responsibility of every member of the club and the task of the vocational service committee as the promotion, within the club and its own community, of vocational excellence and high ethical standards.

Vocational service as an ideal began quite early in the history of Rotary International with the election to membership of the Rotary Club of Chicago of one Arthur Frederick (Fred) Sheldon in 1908. Sheldon was the founder of a school of salesmanship and a promoter of business relations whose personal mission was to persuade the world that business should not be motivated by greed and practised in an atmosphere of hostility and ruthless competition but should be seen as an opportunity to serve society.¹

Soon after he became a member, Sheldon was given the chairmanship of a Committee on Business Methods to encourage and assist in implementing the idea that each Rotarian’s business methods must warrant the confidence not only of his fellow Rotarians but also of the general public². As other clubs were formed they also gave attention to this aspect of Rotary. And when the first convention (at which the National Association of Rotary Clubs was formed) was held in 1910, Sheldon emphasised the importance of business ethics and made it clear that corruption and unfair practices were unacceptable and must be eliminated.

“The distinguishing mark of the commercialism of the 19th Century,” he said, “was competition – ‘do others before they do you’. In this 20th Century the human race is approaching wisdom. The distinguishing mark of this century is to be co-operation. As man comes into the light of wisdom he comes to see that right conduct towards others pays, that business is the science of human service and that he profits most who serves his fellows best.”³ It is admitted that not all Rotarians fully understood what Sheldon meant by “profit”.

Next year at the convention in Portland, Oregon, Benjamin F. Collins proposed that the proper way to organise a club was through the principle of “service not self”.⁴

The two mottoes, slightly modified to “Service above Self” and “He profits most who serves best” thus came into general use in 1911, though they were not officially adopted until 1950.⁵ At the 1912 convention, of the five “goals” adopted, two referred to business ethics: “the promotion and recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations” and “high ethical standards in business and professions”.⁶ Both are now enshrined in The Object of Rotary.

By the 1920s fair business practice had been adopted by many trade and professional associations in America and Europe, for which Rotary claims some credit.

British Rotarians, however, were not particularly happy with the terminology and sought an alternative to “business methods”; but it was not easy to condense into simple words the concept of service to society through business and professional activity. When Rotary finally arrived at its four fields (later called avenues) of service for a Rotarian: in his club, in his community, internationally and through his profession, business, calling, trade, craft or other occupation, someone suggested “vocation” to cover the lot; so that, in 1927, “Vocational Service” officially replaced “Business Methods” as the description for this avenue of service.⁷

When Rotary arrived in Australia and New Zealand in 1921, the newly recruited Rotarians found no difficulty in accepting the idea of ethical practice in their various occupations. The first Antipodean Rotarians were all men of distinction whose integrity was considered to be beyond question; and their standards were imposed, probably without conscious effort on their part, on those who followed them. One did not (and does not now) propose a person for Rotary membership unless one is sure of that person’s character; and the fact that a few have been found to be less than honourable in no way diminishes the responsibility of every member.

In New Zealand, Harold T. Thomas – who joined the Rotary Club of Auckland in

1923 and was later (1959-60) to serve as president of Rotary International – was particularly impressed by the “crusade” of Fred Sheldon and was largely instrumental in promoting his ideas in the Dominion and subsequently throughout the region and throughout the world.⁸

From their early days, Rotary clubs included discussions of business and professional ethics in their club programs.⁹ They made “business practice” and “ethics” the subject of innumerable “fireside chats”; and “case studies” (in which a hypothetical case is outlined to a group and the ethical implications are discussed) were popular vocational service exercises in clubs.¹⁰ However, the idea of practical vocational service projects did not emerge under that heading until the 1950s when clubs began to conduct careers advisory programs at secondary schools.¹¹

This was when the widespread discussions began about what was or was not a vocational service project. Was the provision of vocational information to young people really vocational service or was it community service? Similarly, was a booklet listing all the employers and the qualifications they expected of prospective employees in the club area vocational or community service? Was the sponsorship of an immigrant family with an offer of accommodation and employment classified as international, community or vocational service? The discussions continued; and continue to this day.

Meanwhile, clubs began to consider a different kind of vocational service project: awards for vocational excellence to local firms, or to employees of local firms, who had demonstrated a high standard of service to the public. These awards are usually presented at a luncheon or dinner meeting of the club to which the recipients, their employers and families and, sometimes, civic dignitaries are invited.¹²

Encouragement of vocational excellence takes many forms. One district issued metal plaques to be displayed in thousands of business houses and professional practices. The plaque bore the legend “Pride of Workmanship: Do it Once — Do it Well — Build a Better Australia”. This was taken up by other districts and was modified (“..Build a Better New Zealand”) for use on the other side of the Tasman.¹³ It is said that the appearance of the plaque in the waiting room of a prominent Sydney obstetrician gave rise to considerable amusement.

An interesting aspect of vocational service was the adoption of “The Four Way Test”; a series of simple questions which one is expected to ask oneself when entering into any business transaction. The Four Way Test was devised by Herbert J. Taylor, who assumed control of a bankrupt company during the depression years. He later said

that he had been able to bring the company back to profitability simply by introducing his Four Way Test to all the company's staff. It reads (in full) "The Four Way Test – of the things we think, say and do: 1. Is it the Truth? 2. Is it Fair to All Concerned? 3. Will it Build Goodwill and Better Friendships? 4. Will it be Beneficial to All Concerned?"

The Four Way Test was introduced to Rotary as a vocational service criterion in the 1940s and was being widely used by the early 1950s. When Herbert Taylor served as president of Rotary International (1954-55) he authorised Rotary to use it officially but retained the copyright which is held by The Four Way Test Inc. in the USA. Proposals to change it by many who believe that the wording could be improved, therefore, were forestalled.

An anonymous staff writer at the Rotary International Secretariat describes it thus:-

The Four Way Test is not a code or a creed but a stimulus to self-appraisal. It is not a pledge, but rather a springboard to voluntary self-improvement. It is not a sermon, although any number of sermons have been preached on it. It aims to encourage the ethical instincts in every person and constitutes a simple and practical guide for people of all cultures.¹⁴

The Four Way Test was adopted with enthusiasm and promoted with vigour by American Rotarians and was generally accepted in other parts of the world, sometimes under a slightly modified title (the French refer to it as "Les Quatre Questions"). The British demonstrated their reservations by quietly allowing it to remain in the literature but appear to have done little to promote its use – in fact it has been described as "...a piece of homespun morality with which R.I.B.I. Rotarians were never unanimously comfortable."¹⁵ In Australia and New Zealand it has been the subject of almost constant debate (in a highly civilized manner, of course) sometimes at meetings and conferences and frequently in the correspondence pages of the regional magazine.¹⁶ Those who favour it defend it stoutly and those who find it an embarrassment advance their reasons for opposing its use. It is reasonable to say that, for the past fifty years, the same arguments have been advanced by both sides of the debate from year to year and that no new reasons for or against have been introduced. On one point most Australasian Rotarians are agreed: if one does keep a framed copy of the Four Way Test or a plaque on which it is engraved in one's office, it should face the Rotarian, not his client or customer. Many have proposed that it be amended; but, as explained above, this is not possible as the copyright is held by The Four Way Test Inc. and its use by Rotary is licensed by that organisation. Others have paraphrased it, one by issuing an exhortation to "Be True. Be Fair. Be Friendly. Be Helpful".¹⁷ (Some Australian Rotarians assert

that it can be summed up very simply – “Be Fair dinkum!”). However nothing, it seems, is likely to replace “The Test” in the affection of its faithful adherents who cannot agree with those who claim that it is absurd because it is not universally applicable to everything “we think, say and do” and that it is ungrammatical, simplistic and philosophically untenable. It is certain that the debate will continue.

To complement The Four Way Test, Rotary International also adopted a Rotary Code of Conduct, which all Rotarians are expected to follow. In summary, Rotarians affirm that they will exemplify the core value of integrity; use their vocational talents to serve society; conduct all business, professional and personal affairs ethically; be fair in all dealings with others; promote recognition and respect for all useful occupations; offer their vocational talents to help young people, the disadvantaged and the community; honour the trust implicit in Rotary membership; and seek no special privilege or advantage from a fellow Rotarian in a business or professional relationship.¹⁸ In effect the “Code” appears to add little to The Four Way Test – or, indeed, to the Golden Rule – as a guide to business and professional behaviour.

In 2012 an eight-page booklet, *An Introduction to Vocational Service* was issued by the Rotary International Board, covering all the previously-adopted projects in vocational service: talks to clubs, debates on ethical issues, promotion of high ethical standards and vocational excellence in the workplace and the community, presentation of ethics awards, debates in the club and in schools and school essay competitions on The Four Way Test. Only one innovation was included: the selection of Vocational Training Teams in which groups of professionals from one country visit another to train the locals. All examples given of vocational training teams appear to qualify as very useful world community service projects.¹⁹

It may be fairly said that Rotary clubs in Australasia have done their best with vocational service, the “Cinderella” of their avenues of service, trying to inculcate the idea that “honesty is the best policy” not only because it is morally right but also because it is good business; and that, likewise, efficient, willing and friendly service is desirable for the advancement of good will and is also good business. It became fashionable to refer to “enlightened self-interest”. At the same time they continued to devise a large number of projects, some quite clearly valuable community projects having a tenuous relationship with employment.

In 1970 the Australian Rotary Institute pondered the problem faced by clubs in their

understanding of vocational service and appointed a small committee to investigate and report.²⁰ At the following Institute gathering (1971) the ad hoc committee recommended the election of an Institute standing committee on vocational service: and the Australian Vocational Advisory Committee (AVAC) came into existence.²¹ Its brief was to issue an advisory handbook for the benefit of all club vocational service committees, setting out the basic responsibilities in vocational service of Rotarians in general and vocational committee chairmen in particular. The handbook was to be issued each year and regularly revised with the addition of vocational service projects and programs found by other clubs to have been successful.

The handbook, subsequently re-named “The Vocational Service Director’s Guide”, was issued annually to all clubs in Australia after 1973.²²

As long ago as 1935, at an Australian Rotary Conference in Melbourne, Newcastle newspaper editor Eric Lingard delivered a memorable address on Vocational Service. In conclusion he said,

The subject is difficult and unpopular and has been sidestepped by nearly all Rotary clubs in the world... The Vocational Service Committee has appeared ... to be the club’s Cinderella. This committee cannot do the members’ job. It is purely propaganda directed towards each member. It has to guide, to assist, to enthuse and encourage members in the exercise of their personal opportunity to serve in their vocations. There is plenty to do.”²³

In its 1992 report to the Institute, the Australian Vocational Advisory Committee commented: “From our observation, Rotary is crying out for firm and positive direction in vocational service. It seems vague or even misunderstood by many Rotarians and should be promoted and explained at every opportunity.”²⁴

Plus sa change...

Chapter Ten: Meetings

Rotary meetings are many, with a variety of purposes. They range from the weekly meeting of the smallest Rotary club, with an attendance of perhaps fifteen, to the annual convention of Rotary International in a major city with an attendance of 16,000 to 25,000 or more.

Clubs

The weekly meeting of the Rotary club is the least imposing but most important in the Rotary movement; for it is at the club meetings that fellowship begins; and it is on fellowship that the development of Rotary service depends.

The club meeting follows a broadly similar format throughout the world (with a few minor differences apparent in different regions). The members meet for luncheon or dinner – or breakfast, gathering for fellowship fifteen to thirty minutes before the scheduled time. The club president usually, but in a few clubs a “chairman for the day” or the sergeant-at-arms, presides. Luncheon meetings are usually strictly of one hour’s duration. Most dinner meetings are more relaxed, lasting one and a half to two hours. The meal is served as the meeting begins, visiting Rotarians and guests of members are introduced; and, especially in luncheon and breakfast clubs, while the victuals are consumed reports from directors and announcements from the president and secretary are given. Each of the directors (club, vocational, community, international and youth service) is invited to report on progress of projects or any activities of the committees within that directorate. In most antipodean clubs, the sergeant-at-arms is usually called upon to extract modest fines from members for real or imagined misdemeanours, an occasion for sparkling or laboured wit depending on the personality of the incumbent and a simple way of raising a few dollars for a club project – or for The Rotary Foundation. Next the guest speaker is introduced; and after her or his address to members and question time (in all limited to half an hour at luncheons but often from 40 minutes to an hour at evening meetings) a vote of thanks is proposed and the meeting is closed. It is obvious to anyone attending a Rotary club meeting that the work of the club is not done at its weekly meetings; which are occasions for fellowship, exchange of Rotary information and education (sometimes entertainment) provided by the guest speaker.

The real business of the club is transacted at monthly meetings of the board of

directors; and the projects, programs and activities are planned at committee meetings; and, as every member of the club is a member of one or more committees, everyone is involved in the decision-making – and, equally importantly, the work.

From time to time the club holds a club assembly, a meeting of the club board and all committee chairmen; but as this includes a majority of members, most club assemblies are attended by all members. Club assemblies are planning meetings at which any or all of the proposed projects and programs are discussed in detail and plans made for the implementation of decisions. In recent years many clubs have preferred the term “club forum” to imply that it is open to all members and that all are invited to contribute ideas.

E-clubs, of course, hold their meetings on line and their proceedings remain a mystery to those for whom cyber-meetings, webinars and electronic networking are not part of their business and social lives. Their projects are chosen and their various duties are performed as determined by their members but, with so few clubs chartered by 2014, no reliable assessment of their methods or their effectiveness can be ventured.

Satellite clubs follow the same meeting procedures as their parent clubs.

Districts

The Rotary district has one formal meeting a year to which all members of all constituent clubs (and their families) are invited. This is the district conference; usually, though not always, held over a week-end from Friday to Sunday afternoon.² Traditionally it is a mixture of information, inspiration and entertainment in the form of addresses on Rotary topics or on subjects of general interest; introduction of and talks by visiting Rotary Foundation scholars and group study exchange teams, Rotary exchange students and/or those from the district who have completed their overseas studies; presentations on chosen Rotary activities, the district governor's report, an address by the R.I. president's personal representative (a senior Rotarian such as a past district governor or past director of Rotary International chosen by the RI president); a business session for debate of proposals from clubs for submission to the next council on legislation, or district “housekeeping” resolutions; workshops or “breakout” sessions on chosen topics and reports back to plenary sessions; a banquet with entertainment and a good deal of fellowship. At the concluding plenary session the president's representative gives an evaluation of the conference and the euphoria is allowed to dissipate as members go on their way rejoicing. World-wide, the average attendance at

district conferences is between five and six percent. In Australasia it ranges from 20 to 35 percent of Rotarians, most of whom are accompanied by spouses³.

A smaller but more significant district gathering is the district assembly.⁴ This is a short (one day but sometimes a week-end) training course for incoming club officers. Held before the beginning of the new Rotary year (1st July), it takes the form of lectures by senior Rotarians and so-called study groups (actually classes) for incoming presidents, vice presidents, secretaries, treasurers, and directors of club, vocational, community, international and youth service from every club in the district. The incoming district governor (often assisted by the incumbent governor) presides at the presidents' group. Other groups are led by Rotarians with special experience in the area of service or administration being covered. Most districts also convene special Presidents Elect Training Sessions (PETS) to ensure that incoming presidents are fully briefed.

District governors sometimes convene one-day institutes⁵ for club chairmen of, for example, The Rotary Foundation, or public relations or youth exchange or membership development, at which the leaders of that particular activity from all clubs in the district are invited to exchange ideas. Some also arrange training seminars for "future leaders".

District committees, in common with club committees, meet as determined by the members.⁶ Those charged with the responsibility of arranging a particular activity, such as the RYLA seminar or the Youth Exchange briefing or the selection of a Group Study Exchange team, meet regularly to plan the activity. Those whose function is advisory will not necessarily meet at all (unless they are arranging a one-day institute) after the initial meeting for the year at which they agree on the nature of the advice they will give if called upon by club committees for help.

Regions and Zones

A gathering beyond district level is the occasional regional conference, convened, for no obvious reason, by the board of Rotary International within a defined area that does not necessarily coincide with Rotary's regional boundaries. It is held, officially, "for the purpose of developing and promoting acquaintance and understanding and providing a forum for the exchange of ideas".⁷ It is conducted on the lines of a large district conference (with a minimum attendance of 2,000) or a small international convention, with guest speakers, sometimes workshop sessions and always a major "entertainment feature". Regional conferences are occasions for fellowship and are intended to advance

international understanding by facilitating friendly discussion and social intercourse between people of many different cultures. Pacific regional conferences were held in Honolulu in 1926, Sydney 1930, Manila 1935, Sydney 1956, Melbourne 1981 and Adelaide, 1986.

Apart from in Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (RIBI), unique in having a territorial administration and therefore the opportunity and the administrative machinery to convene regular meetings and conferences officially, the only other annual meeting beyond district but below international level is the zone or regional institute, which was devised in Australia in 1955 and adopted internationally in the 1960s.⁸

The precursor was an annual conference of incoming, incumbent and past officers of Rotary International which began as a meeting of thirty one past district governors in Melbourne in 1955 to discuss matters of common interest and concern, including problems associated with “re-districting”, a classification outline using Australian terminology, representation on the Rotary International Board, a central distribution point for Rotary literature, a co-ordinated effort to establish closer understanding with Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines, and ways to better utilise the experience and knowledge of past governors.⁹

Participants felt that the conference was of sufficient value to arrange a similar gathering the following year in conjunction with the Pacific Regional Conference in Sydney, on which occasion they invited New Zealand colleagues to join them. The 38 past officers present again found value in the gathering but there was no decision to hold a further conference.

It was not until 1959 that the third conference was held in Canberra with only two governors and 14 past governors present (there were 50 apologies). Despite the poor attendance, however, which was attributed to unexpected organisational problems, it was resolved that a further meeting be held in 1961 at which a permanent organisation would be established. And it so transpired. At the 1961 conference thirty three attended and approved the basic machinery for convening an annual conference. An honorary secretary/convener, Brian Maguire from Leeton, was elected (actually he volunteered) and simple guidelines were agreed upon. It was emphasised that the conference had no official status and any resolutions could be no more than recommendations to clubs through incumbent governors, or to the board of Rotary International. By 1965 attendance at the annual conference by all governors and governors nominee was taken for granted; and the numbers were enhanced by at least twice as many past officers.

New Zealand began to hold similar conferences every second year.

Deliberations of the conference by now had become of some consequence and had impressed the R.I. board to such an extent that the president of Rotary International (Dr.C. P. H. Teenstra of The Netherlands) decided to attend so that he could assess the value of the conference. The result was the granting of “official” status as Regional Rotary Institutes and the encouragement of other regions (or zones within regions) to convene similar meetings.¹⁰

The annual Institutes (in both Australia and New Zealand) are now firmly established. Convened by the incumbent director of Rotary International, they occupy five days and include annual general meetings of RAWCS, RNZWCS and their constituent bodies, Rotary Down Under Council and Australian Rotary Health. There are workshop sessions for incumbent governors and governors nominee and meetings of various standing and ad hoc committees of the institute, as well as reports to plenary sessions from all these groups, discussion of matters suggested by members and of subjects introduced by the board of Rotary International for consideration by all institutes. Inviting interested Rotarians who are not Institute members as observers is the most recent innovation.

On five occasions combined Australian and New Zealand Institutes have been held: Melbourne in 1981, Christchurch 1984, Auckland 1994, Christchurch 2008, Wellington 2014. Another is scheduled for 2016-17. With twenty one districts in Australia and six in New Zealand represented by their governors and nominees and a number of past officers, a combined institute assumes the proportions of a district conference with a total registration (including spouses) of more than 500.¹¹

Despite their influence, Institutes still have no authority and appear to be content with their status as advisory bodies, with the additional prerogative of appointing standing and ad hoc committees which are able to perform useful functions. Also, of course, they are occasions for fellowship and reunions of past officers who trained together at their international assemblies and worked together during their years of office; in this they bear some resemblance to alumni associations. Many consider that their most important function is to provide the opportunity for national and regional Rotary action (through standing committees and programs) such as was only available, before the development of institutes, to Rotary’s one territorial unit, Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (RIBI).¹²

Rotary International

The Rotary International Convention is the huge annual gathering, planned at least eight years in advance and held in a different country each year, attracting large numbers, some in excess of 20,000 (the all-time record was Tokyo in 1978 with 39,834).¹³ Originally responsible for determining policy and amending the constitutional documents, its legislative functions were delegated, in 1974, to the Council on Legislation, Rotary's "parliament". The Convention still formally elects the officers of Rotary International: the president, directors and district governors, who have been already selected by nominating committee procedures. Apart from that it is an occasion for addresses by world-famous people, reports on aspects of Rotary, lavish entertainment, fellowship which includes host-club home hospitality of overseas guests, and a measure of self-congratulation. The convention provides an opportunity to "showcase" the work of Rotary to the host city and country through local media and to the world through thousands of registrants. Also it gives some commercial interests, as well as the hundreds of Rotary program leaders, a once-a-year opportunity of displaying their wares and their projects at their booths in the vast market known as the "House of Friendship".

The House of Friendship has some elements of a huge bazaar with hundreds of activities on display. There are club, district, regional and international projects for which support is solicited; the Rotary International Fellowships show their attractions and sign up new members (the musicians being heard as well as seen); *The Rotarian* and all the regional magazines invite interest; major and minor programs issue their literature and seek support; the host club of next year's convention is busy showing the attractions of its city and country. Then there are commercial interests, offering visiting Rotarians a range of goods and services. In addition to all these there are take-away or eat-in cafes and bars; and clusters of tables and chairs where friends, old and new, can gather for refreshments – or just for a chat.

There have been only four international conventions in Australia; Sydney in 1971 with 16,646 registrants, Melbourne in 1993 with 22,083, Brisbane in 2003 with 14,147 and Sydney, 2014, which attracted 18,603. New Zealand is yet to host a convention.

The immeasurably more important annual international meeting is the International Assembly, at which all incoming district governors are instructed in their duties.¹⁴ Inspirational addresses, study groups guided by carefully-trained leaders, on-stage presentations, with all the elements of motivation common to American sales promotion

programs in evidence, the assembly is none-the-less an interesting, instructive and enjoyable experience for the participants; even those who, like most Antipodeans and other British Commonwealth Rotarians, look upon some of the more exuberant aspects of the program with indulgent amusement. And there can be no doubt that the district governors embark upon their year of service with an extensive knowledge of their movement, a comprehensive understanding of their duties and a great deal of enthusiasm. For some of them, perhaps, the leadership training also proves useful in their careers; for others the demands upon their time and finances constitute a significant drain on their resources.

Suggestions, over many decades, that the assembly should be replaced by regional assemblies have been strongly resisted because, it is asserted, any financial savings would be more than offset by loss of the international friendships, understanding of other cultures, exchange of ideas, project partnerships and co-operation resulting from the close association of 537 Rotary leaders from 220 countries.

The “parliament” of Rotary International is the Council on Legislation which convenes for a three to four days session every three years to debate proposed enactments (to amend the constitutional documents) and resolutions (to make policy decisions).¹⁵ While policy decisions are adopted by a simple majority, a constitutional amendment requires a two thirds majority. Constitutional documents of Rotary are the Constitution and By-Laws of Rotary International and the Standard Rotary club Constitution.

Each district elects one delegate to the council and one “alternate” delegate. Only officers or past officers of Rotary International are eligible to serve. All proposed legislation is submitted to all Rotary clubs before the council convenes so that they will have ample opportunity to advise their delegates of their views. Antipodean delegates to the council take their duties very seriously and attempt to gain an expression of opinion from clubs in their districts. They also hold special sessions in conjunction with their Institutes to discuss proposed legislation and its implications.¹⁶ The council, originally held at the venue of the convention, is now held in a different country each triennium, quite separately from the convention. Much proposed legislation is very hotly debated and some items appear at every council for many years before they are finally disposed of by a decisive vote.

Legislation enacted by the council may be overturned – and submitted to the next Convention for determination – by a vote of 5% (originally 10%) of all clubs. This

never has occurred and, in the opinion of most, is unlikely to occur in the future.

Meetings of the 19-member board of directors of Rotary International, at which the general business of the movement is conducted, are held as required but at least twice a year with a preliminary meeting before the new board takes office.¹⁷ Members serve a two-year term with half retiring each year.

Rotary International committees meet, usually for two to three days, as determined by the board, always at the secretariat in Evanston so that they have access to the appropriate staff members and translation facilities. Much of the preliminary work and study by committees will have been done by email or correspondence between the chairman and members in the months before the meetings take place; thus the meetings are usually discussions of substance leading to positive recommendations to the board; which are not necessarily adopted.

An international meeting, not strongly supported by Rotarians from Australasia, is the International Institute, held in conjunction with the international assembly and open to all past officers of R.I.¹⁹ The stated purpose is “...to afford present and past officers an opportunity to improve their knowledge of Rotary plans and programs and therefore to enhance their value as resource persons for their clubs and districts.” A secondary purpose is “to provide help to the current and incoming leadership of Rotary by giving the leaders the benefit of the views of the present and past international officers.” In fact, in the experience of Antipodeans, fewer than 200 past officers, mostly Americans, attended and only a few (five to seven) countries were represented. One mildly cynical Australian described the international institute as “...an opportunity for self-promotion by PDGs hoping to gain preferment by impressing the current or incoming president with their wit and wisdom” (referring to the president’s prerogative of choosing R.I. committee members and personal representatives at district conferences, often involving free overseas travel).²⁰

This Institute seems to have been largely superseded by the Past Officers’ Reunion, held annually since 2004 in Sandiego, Cal., USA. Attracting a few hundred eligible Rotarians (past governors and above) who discuss a wide range of subjects and publish their findings for the benefit of any who might be interested, the meeting has no official standing in Rotary International.²¹

The value of each of Rotary’s gatherings (apart from club meetings and training assemblies) has been questioned from time to time. Critics claim that some are a waste

of time, others a waste of money, some a waste of both. No evidence can be found that any “cost benefit analysis” has been commissioned, or attempted by any individual or group. In the absence of any credible evidence that any of the criticisms is valid, it seems highly probable that all Rotarians will continue to attend their club breakfast, luncheon or dinner meetings; and many will continue to attend – or not to attend – the conferences, institutes and conventions as they have done within living memory. As one senior Rotarian sagely put it many years ago, “They might not do much good but they certainly do no harm – and any money or time wasted by Rotarians who attend them is their own.”²²

Chapter Eleven: Communications

Communications within Rotary encompass a range of publications from club bulletins to a sophisticated international magazine and an array of newsletters, leaflets, pamphlets, handbooks, guide books and manuals, on paper and on line; and a battery of audiovisual programs available in various forms.

The basic regular publication for every member of every club is the weekly bulletin, which can be anything from a duplicated single A4 sheet to an expensive printed publication of four to eight pages.¹ The quality of the production often reflects the size of the club: those with a membership of twenty five to forty operating on a small budget compared with the clubs of more than 100 members. Bulletins, issued under many odd names (Wheel, Spoke, Cogs, Keyway, Rotator, Roundabout) as hard copy or electronically or both, contain announcements, reports of last meeting, details of next week's program, duty rosters, calls for volunteers for any projects requiring personal effort, sometimes an item of "Rotary Information", reports and information from president and directors, extracts from the district governor's newsletter and anything else the bulletin editor chooses.

Every month the district governor issues a newsletter to all club presidents and secretaries and his district committees.² Many clubs print enough additional copies for all club directors. Again, the form of the newsletter varies from a simple duplicated letter to a small magazine or newspaper; by early in the 21st Century, most governors were sending their newsletters to clubs electronically; and many clubs were forwarding them to all members. Essentially the newsletter is to remind clubs of coming events: "February is World Understanding Month during which we celebrate the anniversary of Rotary on 23rd" followed by a series of suggestions about how the club might mark this occasion; or "November is The Rotary Foundation Month..." and so on for all the designated months in the Rotary calendar. In addition the clubs are reminded that semi-annual returns are due; that capitation fees to District and to Rotary International are payable; and the dates and venue of the district conference or assembly with the usual promotion. Any decisions of the R.I. board that might be of interest to clubs are also included, as is the attendance report for the month, in which every club in the district is listed with its attendance percentage. Some governors include an inspirational message but most resist this temptation.

Next in the hierarchy of regular publications is the official regional magazine, which

publishes material provided by the secretariat, concurrently with the official magazine of R.I. and the other twenty eight regional magazines around the world published in twenty one languages.³ It also publishes regional material, with a strong emphasis on the description of successful projects and programs of Rotary clubs in the region, with the object of sharing ideas and information with other clubs that might be attempting to meet similar needs.

The regional magazine for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands has an unusual history.⁴ *Rotary Down Under*, was established in 1965 by two Rotary clubs, Newtown in inner suburban Sydney, N.S.W. and Bayswater, a semi-rural outer suburb of Melbourne. Against the advice of most senior Rotarians of the time, including almost all past governors, these two relatively small and quite young clubs (Bayswater 1961; Newtown 1962) secured the permission of all eleven Australian district governors of the day to invite subscriptions to three issues of a magazine as a “pilot” program and then to hold a ballot of all members. The understanding was that, if a clear majority of Rotarians was in favour, the magazine would be then continued, produced under the supervision of the governors and the New Zealand governors would be invited to participate. If members did not want a regional magazine, the project would be abandoned without further argument and with no cost to any but the two sponsor clubs. Failure of the project was widely predicted.⁵ However, it was an immediate success and the governors of the following year (1965-66) became the first Board of Governors (now members of the Council) of “Rotary Down Under – an unincorporated, not-for-profit association of Rotarians” (now Rotary Down Under Inc.) which meets in conjunction with the annual Institutes to review policy and appoint its committee of management. The property of the association is vested in a Company Limited by Guarantee – RDU Pty Limited.

Originally completely complementary to the official magazine and totally regional, *Rotary Down Under* was the first Rotary regional magazine to be granted “official” status by the board of directors of R.I. after a two-years experiment (1976-78) in which official international and regional material was successfully integrated. Other regional magazines were granted official status in the following years.⁶

There had been an earlier regional magazine in Australia, *The Pinion*. Established by the Rotary Club of Sydney in 1924 as a club publication, it became the regional publication in 1926 and ceased publication in 1940 because of wartime restrictions on the use of paper and the shortage of Rotarians to publish it.⁷ Attempts to revive it after

World War Two were unsuccessful and it had become generally acknowledged that the international magazine met antipodean communication requirements and, in fact, that the appearance of a regional magazine would affect the “internationality” of Rotary and was thus to be strongly resisted.

In 1991 *Rotary Down Under* had a circulation of more than 52,000. In the next decade this dropped to around 40,000, attributed partly to a decline in the number of members but partly, also, to the increasing number of husband-and-wife Rotarians who subscribe to only one magazine per family.⁸

The official magazine of Rotary International is *The Rotarian*, published monthly in English at the secretariat in Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A. and subscribed to by all Rotarians in North America and most officers and past officers throughout the world.⁹ In addition to the material published in all official magazines, *The Rotarian* also publishes general interest articles on subjects as diverse as kite-flying, the American “Wild West”, English castles, recent archaeological discoveries, Antarctic wildlife, bird-watching in Europe, mountaineering in Nepal, agencies of the United Nations and gourmet cooking. The magazine regularly promotes the next convention, with supporting articles not only about the program but also the attractions of the host city and country; then it reports on the success of the occasion before beginning the promotion of the next. All Rotary programs and, of course, The Rotary Foundation are given extensive coverage.¹⁰

The international and regional magazines of Rotary became known as the Rotary World Press; and readership is encouraged, with an emphasis on their use as resources, during the designated Magazine Month each year.¹¹

Three more regular periodicals are issued from the Rotary International secretariat. The General Secretary’s Letter is issued every two months to all officers and past officers of R.I. with information and reminders for governors.¹² *Rotary News* (formerly *R.I.News*), is a monthly news report for all R.I. officers and club presidents. To these, in July 2010, was added *The Rotary Leader*, an electronic newsletter for all Rotary club and district officers issued six times a year in eight languages. Beginning with an “inspirational” message from the president, it also provides reminders of coming events and special observances, Rotary Foundation promotions and a small selection of club and district projects and programs from around the world.

In addition to these regular publications, Rotary International publishes an *Official Directory* each year, a tome of more than 600 pages of 6pt. type in solid setting, showing the name, meeting venue, time and day of the week, date of charter, name and

address of the president and secretary of every Rotary club in the world, and also the names and contact details of all officers of R.I. and the personnel of all international committees and a wealth of additional information.¹³ Since 2010 the Official Directory has been generally available online and, since 2013, on line only.

Every three years, after the council on legislation completes its deliberations, the *Manual of Procedure* is reissued, containing “a compilation of statements of policies and procedures developed by the annual convention, the Council on Legislation, the Board of Directors of R.I. and the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation.”¹⁴ It also includes the text of the Constitution and By-Laws of R.I. and the Standard Rotary Club Constitution (which may be changed only by action of the Council on Legislation), as well as club by-laws recommended by the R.I. Board and the By-Laws of The Rotary Foundation.¹⁵ The Manual of Procedure (known widely as the MOP) is to all ambitious Rotarians the equivalent of Holy Writ, to be referred to and quoted; and the authority of which, to the Rotary “fundamentalist”, may not be questioned. In fact the only enforceable laws contained therein are the constitutional documents (always printed on yellow pages) while the remainder (printed on white pages) may be ignored with impunity by any but incumbent officers of R.I., who bind themselves to comply when they accept nomination for office.¹⁶ The *Manual of Procedure* has been available on line since 2010.

While all legislative changes are reflected in the latest Manual, which sets out the constitutional documents as currently in force and effect, Rotary “Policy” – subject to constant change by action of the Council on Legislation or decisions of the board – is not so easily identified. In May, 2014, after two years’ work, the board issued the “Rotary International Code of Policies”. This impressive document, which will be regularly amended and re-issued, should leave Rotary officers in no future doubt about the policies adopted for their guidance; including those policies emphasising the core values implicit in the Object of Rotary: selfless service, recognition of all lawful vocations, adherence to high ethical standards, respect for and acceptance of people of all nationalities, races and religious faiths and the advancement of international understanding and peace¹⁷

Each year, before taking office, every district governor receives the “District Governor Elect’s Handbook” and every incoming club president is given the “Club President’s Manual” and the secretary receives the “Club Secretary’s Manual”, containing detailed instructions on every aspect of district and club administration; with

additional lift-out leaflets for the various committee chairmen; and there is a manual, a handbook, a guide-book, a pamphlet or a leaflet on every aspect of Rotary service and recognised activity available from the secretariat and its branch offices around the world.¹⁸ Almost all of these are now available on line. There were also numerous slide-sets (slide and tape programs) now replaced by power-point presentations and video programs to promote Rotary activities¹⁹.

In addition to these, Rotary clubs, particularly in Australia and New Zealand, have available, in print and on line, the many locally-produced manuals, guidebooks and audio-visual programs (described in other chapters) on many areas of Rotary service, including RYLA, ROVE, Youth Exchange, MUNA, Australian Rotary Health, Probus, world community service programs and projects, vocational projects, Indigenes, literacy, the environment and many more.²⁰ It is clear that more attention to “social media” will be needed in the future.

The mass of printed, audio-visual and electronically available material notwithstanding, most senior Rotarians are convinced that Rotary’s greatest problem is ineffective communications.

Chapter Twelve: Rotarians

The members of Rotary are called Rotarians and are members of Rotary clubs. The clubs are members of the association known as Rotary International; Rotarians, therefore, are not members of Rotary International but of its constituent clubs.

The general qualifications for membership are set out in the standard constitution which must be adopted by all Rotary clubs:-

“This club shall be composed of adult persons of good character and of good business or professional reputation.”

Rotarians are of all known ethnic origins, citizens of 221 countries and adherents to an unknown number of religions and religious denominations – or to none.

When the first Rotary clubs were chartered in Australia, and until 2003, to be qualified for election to active membership, the candidate was also required to be “(1) *engaged as a proprietor, partner, corporate officer or manager* of any worthy recognised business or profession; or (2) *holding an important position in an executive capacity with discretionary authority* in any worthy business or profession; or acting as *the local agent or branch representative* of any worthy and recognised business or profession *having charge of such agency or branch in an executive capacity*; and *personally and actively engaged in the business or profession in which he is to be classified* in the club...”¹ Constitutional amendments in subsequent years have considerably liberalised these qualification so that, by 2013, the following text had been added: “ or (3) having retired from any position listed in sub-section (1) or (2) of this sub-section; or (4) being a community leader who has demonstrated through personal involvement in community affairs a commitment to service and the Object of Rotary; or (5) having the status of a Rotary Foundation alumnus...or (6) having interrupted employment or having worked in order to care for children or to assist the spouse in their work ... and ... having his/her place of business or residence located in the locality of the club or the surrounding area...”²

These amendments, clearly, have changed the character of the Rotary club from a select (sometimes described as “elite”) group of acknowledged business and professional leaders in a community, to a club that welcomes almost anyone who is willing to pay the annual subscription, the luncheon or dinner fees and conference registration fees and is equally willing to accept the obligations of regular attendance and demanding personal service. Many deplore the “watering down” of membership

qualifications while others hail the changes as essential to the future relevance and even the future existence of the movement. The latter view appears to be supported by the findings of Lang and Roessl in 2009:

Civic participation is positively-correlated to various domains of social capital, especially providing access to high-prestige positions and therefore instrumental resources. However...volunteers within their community seem to develop ties to low-prestige positions too. Thus an important target-group, for community-based organizations to access critical resources, are residents who already have volunteering experience.³

The constitution next sets out the classification system and the kinds of membership. As noted in Chapter Three, the “one member to represent each classification” has given way – in simple terms – to a limit of 10% of the membership holding the same classification. The kinds of membership, formerly “active”, “senior active”, “additional active” “past service” and “honorary” have been reduced to two: active and honorary).⁴

The first Rotary clubs in Australasia [see Chapter One] were confined to the major cities. The men chosen to represent their business and professional classifications as Rotary members, therefore, were acknowledged business, professional (and social) leaders of the Commonwealth and the Dominion; but as the early clubs relinquished territory to form new clubs in the smaller centres, the status of members was diminished. Thus the member holding the “education” classification in the Melbourne club was the State Director of Education. In a large suburban or small provincial city the regional inspector of schools or the principal of the largest secondary school would have represented the classification; and as Rotary clubs were formed in smaller communities the principal of the local primary school could have been elected to membership. Later, with the extension of the classification system, a club often had representatives of “education-primary”, “education secondary”, “education tertiary”, “education administration” (e.g. inspectors of schools) and various specialist subdivisions of the classifications. In Canberra the “Law” classification was held by the Solicitor General of the Commonwealth and “Public Service - Social Security” was held by the permanent under-secretary of the Department of Social Services; while, in a country town these classifications were held by a local solicitor and the managing clerk of the local Commonwealth Social Security (Centre Link) office. Similarly, the chairman of directors of a huge department store, a Knight of the Realm, represented a retailing classification in Sydney while the same classification could be held by the proprietor of a small general store in a country town; for he was the recognised leader of

his vocation in that community no less than his city counterpart; and at district conferences, assemblies or other Rotary gatherings, they met as equals.

However, while there is considerable variation in the socio-educational-economic status of Rotarians, they were, as a group, among the more privileged members of society and, possibly to a somewhat lesser extent because of the costs involved, remain so.

Characteristics

The changing Rotarian profile in the past two decades is shown by comparing two surveys; the first in 1991 and the second in 2013.⁵

1991 Rotarians were characteristically middle-aged men with more than half in the 40-59 age group; 9% were under forty; 60% were aged between forty and fifty nine; and 31% were sixty and over. Since 1988 in USA and 1989 in the rest of the world, women had been eligible for Rotary membership; but by 1991-92, understandably, they still represented only 2% of Rotary membership in Oceania.

2013 76.39% were males and 23.61% females; 2.68% of Rotarians were under 40; 24.02 were 40-59; and 55.47 were over 65.

1991 Average annual income of Rotarians was \$60,400 compared with the average recorded for adults in full time employment of \$31,200.

2013 Average Rotarian income was \$89,900 compared with average adult earnings of \$74,724.

1991 Educationally, 42% of Rotarians had completed tertiary education (university or college degree) compared with 18% of the general population.

2013 49.94% of Rotarians were university graduates compared with 38% of the general population.

1991 Vocationally, 36% of Rotarians were business proprietors (self employed) compared with 6% of the adult population; Business managers/executives 17% (compared with 5% of adult population); Professional/senior government officials 17% (12%); Clerical/sales employees 2% (4%); Tradesmen 1% (12%); Rural property owner/managers 6% (2%); Retired 19% (22%); Home duties/unemployed 0% (22%); Other (including students) 1% (9%).

2013, Business proprietors 20.48% (12.5% of general population); Managers/Executives 9.25% (12.5 %), Professional/Snr Govt 16.22% (12.3 %), Clerical/Sales 3.03% (12%), Trades 1.64% (10.64 %), Rural 1.72% (1.53%),

Retired 47.67% (50.21% - includes self-funded retirees, pensioners, students and unemployed).⁵

Not shown in the 1992 survey – obviously – were the numbers of Rotarians who owned mobile telephones, personal computers, video cameras, MP3 player/Ipod, Ipad, Kindle-e-readers and other electronic devices. The 2013 survey showed that, on average, 95.97% of Rotarians were owners of all such devices. 99.69% owned personal computers and 17.35% spent more than 20 hours a week using the internet.

While the socio-economic gap between Rotarians and average adults has narrowed in the past two decades, it appears that those who serve in Rotary ranks are still slightly if not significantly better off financially, socially or educationally than the rest of the communities in which they serve. However, not all Rotarians are even slightly more affluent than “average” citizens. The local minister of religion, for example, despite his superior education and social position, may be worse off financially than the local council labourer. The schoolmaster of a one or two-teacher state school, despite a tertiary education, does not necessarily enjoy an exalted social status and may receive a salary somewhat lower than the wage of a skilled tradesman. One of the most unusual classifications recorded in a Rotary club in the 1970s was that of “boomerang manufacturing”, held by a man who was functionally illiterate but whose traditionally-made products were eagerly sought by tourists. An enthusiastic Rotary worker, he was a respected citizen but declined nomination for any office in his club because of his lack of formal education.⁶

Women in Rotary

The enthusiastic participation in the service clubs for women based on the Rotary model [discussed in Chapter Thirteen] clearly indicates that women were no less motivated than men in their philanthropic endeavours.

From early in the 20th Century, the image of women’s role in the domestic idyll described briefly in Chapter One was reproduced – and thereby reinforced – in both works of fiction and documentary sources. Both Australia and New Zealand, however, had active feminist movements which had succeeded in making the welfare of women a live topic in public discourse, leading the world in their successful advocacy. New Zealand women won the right to vote in 1893, followed by their Australian sisters in 1901. At the inaugural meeting of the National Council of Women of New Zealand in 1896, these “first-wave feminists”, as they are now called, demanded legal equality with

men and eligibility for election to parliament.⁷ Few Australasians, however, dissented from the idea that being mothers and wives was a natural destiny for women; and nationalism posited this as an important issue in increasing the population. Feminist writers tended to uphold women's right to maintenance and protection from male waywardness rather than the career possibilities supported by the post-1960s feminists. Men in influential positions tended to have fixed views of women's role. Jethro Brown, President of the South Australian Industrial Court from 1916 to 1927, gave as his opinion that: "the whole spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race supports the view that the woman should be supported by the man". (Quoted by Braham Dabscheck, *The Typical Mother of the White Race*, and the *Origins of Female Wage Determination*, Hecate 12, no. 1/2 , 1986.) This was not an idle observation. Jethro Brown was one of those determining what was considered a normal and reasonable living wage for women workers. Despite the devotion that women showed in their home-making skills, there was an inclination to limit births, which was a key issue for women's health and social freedom. The low birthrate in early 20th century Australia indicates that women had aspirations of their own; and this attracted official concern. One notes the opinion of: the 1904 New South Wales Royal Commission into the Decline in the Birth Rate – specifically the problem of the falling Anglo-Australian birth rate. The findings of the commissioners (all men) suggested that "many Anglo-Australian women were selfishly following their own desires and not having enough children".⁸

These smaller families, however, were more likely to have an improved standard of health and education in a community where social advancement was a general aspiration.

Though the domestic ideal was powerful in Australian society and in the 1920s, as Rotary clubs were being established for men who were professional, business and community leaders, and ex-servicemen's associations, local sporting clubs and other men's societies were being formed, women were joining organisations for housewives in unprecedented numbers. Historian Judith Smart records that groups such as the Housewives Association and the Women's Christian Temperance Union were established in all Australian states during the 1920s and these

larger women's associations tended to define and focus on a particular sphere of activity but, apart from that interest, the most important guiding principles were those derived from ... Christian ideals ... arguably more important in the new mass women's groups than conventional political values (socialism, liberalism, conservatism) in the not entirely unsuccessful attempt made by their leaders to

undermine class loyalties and acculturate ordinary family women into the responsibilities of a specifically feminine citizenship.⁹

These groups were successful in meeting the expectations of Australian women in the inter-war era, but did not adapt to later social changes and faded in the post-World War Two era. The idea that men and women would join different social groups for different activities seems to have been accepted without question early in the 20th century, and reflects family roles.

Several tentative suggestions to admit women to Rotary membership, beginning in 1921, were discussed at conventions but the first formal motion to amend the constitution was proposed and rejected in 1955. Enactments were again proposed and rejected in 1964 and 1972. Similar proposals in 1977, 1980, 1983 and 1986 gained a simple majority in favour but failed to reach the required two thirds majority to amend the Constitution.

It was not until 1989, after long, unedifying legal challenges and a Supreme Court judgment in the USA, that the constitution was finally amended and women were welcomed into Rotary ranks.

Many thousands of words have been written about the very long and sometimes emotionally-charged campaign to admit women to membership and it is tempting to include the chronicle in this work; but the saga applies to the Rotary world and not only to Oceania.¹⁰ The history of this initiative was probably best summarised by Sir Clem Renouf, a former president of Rotary International, firstly in an address to a Rotary conference and secondly in a book:-

For the best part of a decade prior to 1978 successive Councils on Legislation had considered, debated and finally rejected proposals to admit women into membership. Then, in 1978 the board of R.I. was made aware that the Rotary Club of Duarte in California had admitted three women into membership in contravention of the R.I. Constitution. I was on that board, as incoming president. Of course, the board had no option but to defend the integrity of the constitution and withdrew the club's charter.

For not even the board of R.I. can thumb its nose at the constitutional provisions governing the qualifications for membership of a Rotary club, which have been determined, not by the R.I. board, but by vote of a democratically elected Council on Legislation, with the opportunity every three years for any club to propose amendment. I hold the view (some don't) that Rotary clubs have an obligation (not an option) to abide by the provisions of our constitution; as has every citizen by the law of the land; every sporting club by the rules of the game; every P & C by its constitution.

However, supported by an aggressive and well-funded Council for Civil Liberties, the feminist movement, a sympathetic press, and a significant body of Rotary club

opinion, the X-Rotary Club of Duarte (as it now called itself) challenged the board through the courts of California, successive R.I. conventions, and ultimately the Supreme Court of the United States, which upheld their challenge because discrimination on the basis of gender was against the law in the U.S.A. – and the Rotary Clubs of the U.S.A. had no option but to amend their constitution. Finally, in 1989, the Council on Legislation, meeting in Singapore, voted to allow all Rotary clubs to admit qualified women. Note that it did not amend any of the other qualifications for membership. [Referring to the often-advanced argument during the long debate that Rotary also discriminated against employed tradesmen, nurses, classroom teachers, shop assistants, clerks – any person, in fact, who was not recognized as a “boss”.]

So, after a battle lasting 11 years, a small Rotary club won a victory destined to have far reaching consequences for our movement. However, I have sometimes thought we may have achieved the same result a little sooner had the Rotary Club of Duarte been prepared to wait; for at each Council on Legislation the idea was gaining increased acceptance – particularly against the background of rapidly changing attitudes to women in the workplace.¹¹

And:-

Meanwhile, the battle being fought out by the “X-Rotary Club of Duarte” (as it called itself) raged on, through the courts of California, and ultimately to the Supreme Court of the U.S.A. It was, of course, a matter of much greater significance than just the membership of a small Rotary club. It involved the integrity of the rule of law – of the obligation by clubs, on acceptance of their charter from R.I. to abide by its rules.

But of course Rotary clubs and the Rotary organisation are ultimately subject to the law of the land – and when the seven judges of the Supreme Court of the U.S.A. decided unanimously that the male only qualification for Rotary membership was contrary to U.S. law, women were admitted to membership of Rotary clubs first in the U.S.A. and later, by decision of a Council on Legislation, world-wide.

It was unfortunate that the door, closed to female membership, was finally battered down from the outside instead of being opened invitingly from the inside, as it would have been eventually, with changing attitudes and increasing pressure for change evident at succeeding councils on legislation.¹²

Paradoxically, considering the large majority support in Australia and New Zealand and the growing worldwide support for a constitutional amendment to admit women to membership from the 1970s, there was quite strong resistance in a few clubs, to an enactment of the Council on Legislation forced upon it by what was seen as a political rather than a legal decision of the Supreme Court Of the U.S.A. in ruling that membership of a Rotary club gave a person a business advantage and that the denial of membership to women was contrary to the anti-discrimination legislation of that country. Rotarians in Australasia (as in the United Kingdom and European countries)

deny that they have gained any commercial advantage from their membership and that, on the contrary, their voluntary contribution of time and money constitutes a financial burden.

The next Council on Legislation recognised the absurdity of having different rules for different countries, (particularly when travelling female Rotarians from the U.S.A. had full rights to “make up” by attending meetings of clubs in all parts of the world) and accepted the inevitable, reminding clubs that support for this constitutional change had been growing in recent years; and that, though the proposed amendments had not achieved the required two thirds majority, there had been a simple majority of votes at several councils.¹³ Therefore, council proponent delegates argued and the few remaining opponents accepted, it was only a matter of time.¹⁴

Very few Australasian clubs took advantage of an “escape” clause, included to accommodate clubs in those countries in which it was culturally unacceptable or even illegal for men and women to associate in public, which provides for a club (outside the U.S.A.) to remain a “single gender” club by resolution of its members. A few simply did not nominate women to fill vacant classifications. It is said that a few disgruntled members resigned – probably not more than a dozen in the whole region; but no statistics on reasons for resignation have been sought or made available. New clubs formed since 1989, with very few exceptions, have been chartered with both female and male members.

When Rotary membership was opened to women, the Rotary Club of Sydney set a high standard by electing, as its first female member, well known academic Leonie Kramer, Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) and Dame of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (DBE). Her acceptance of membership encouraged other professional and business women to become members. The first woman elected to membership of the Rotary Club of Wellington was Beverley Wakem, who had been a Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholar.

By December, 2013, 23.61% of Rotarians in this region were women (compared with 18% worldwide); and all available anecdotal evidence suggests that they have revitalised Rotary clubs. They have been willing workers, have been ready to accept leadership responsibilities and have shown themselves to be quite as imaginative in initiating new projects as their male fellows.

By the late 1990s there were women from the region serving as district governors. Women from the U.S.A. and Canada had been serving in this office from 1993; and the

first woman elected to the board of Rotary International was from France in 2008. The first woman to serve as district governor in the Down Under region was Judith Ward from Balmain, NSW in 2002-03.¹⁵ The first woman vice president of Rotary International was Dr Anne Matthews from North Carolina, USA, elected to the board in 2012 and as vice president in 2013.¹⁶ Three more women serve with her on the nineteen-member board; so it is confidently predicted that the first female president will be elected before the end of the current decade. Antipodeans await the election of the first Australian or New Zealand woman to the board.

Distinguished Rotarians

Many distinguished Australians and New Zealanders are or have been Rotarians but few of these have sought high office in Rotary beyond the leadership of their clubs; which is hardly surprising when one considers the commitment demanded of officers of Rotary International. General Sir John Monash was a charter member and the second president of the Rotary Club of Melbourne; Sir George Fowlds was charter president of Auckland and the first commissioner (district governor); geologist and Antarctic explorer Sir TW Edgeworth David was a charter member of the Rotary Club of Sydney; and a highly respected member was ABC Chairman Sir Charles Boyer, whose name is perpetuated in the Boyer Lectures; Australian Governors-General Lord Casey, Sir Zelman Cowen and Sir William Deane had been Rotarians; and Canberra club numbered among its charter members Sir Robert Garran, known as one of the “Fathers of Federation”, for his work in writing the Australian Constitution and Sir George Knowles, sometime Solicitor General. New Zealand’s High Commissioner to Britain Sir Terence McCombs served as a Rotary district governor. Air Chief Marshall Sir Keith Park of Battle-of-Britain fame was an Auckland Rotarian; and former New Zealand Prime Minister and Governor-General Sir Keith Holyoake delighted in introducing himself at Rotary gatherings as: “Keith Holyoake, Rotary Club of Pahiatua, classification: farming”. Australian industrialist and Chancellor of the University of Queensland Sir James Foots was a district governor. Australian former Governor General Sir William Deane was not only a Sydney Rotarian before his appointment to Canberra but also had been a Rotary Foundation postgraduate Fellow as a young man. Dame Leonie Kramer, Chancellor of the University of Sydney, as noted above, was a Rotarian, as was University of NSW Vice Chancellor Sir Philip Baxter; Sydney University Challis Professor of History and later Vice Chancellor Sir Stephen Roberts;

Macquarie University's first Vice Chancellor, world authority on linguistics and author A. G. Mitchell, C.B.E. was a district governor, as was leading scientist Dr. Bertram Dickson, C.M.G. Among the world famous Antipodean Rotarians were Sir Donald Bradman of South Australia and Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand. The list is long.¹⁷

Only six Antipodeans have served in the office of Rotary International president: Sir Angus Mitchell of Melbourne (1948-49); Harold T. Thomas of Auckland (1959-60); Sir Clem Renouf, AM. of Nambour, Qld. (1978-79); A.H.Royce Abbey, AO, DCM, of Essendon, Vic. (1988-89); Glen W. Kinross AO, of Hamiton, Qld (1997-98); and William B. Boyd CNZM, QSO, of Pakuranga, NZ. (2006-2007).

Angus Sinclair Mitchell was born in Shanghai, China, in 1884 of Scottish ancestry and was brought to Australia in infancy. He attended Scotch College in Melbourne, excelling in school work, particularly mathematics, and sport. He entered the business of grain broking and prospered, his firm Mitchell, Belair and Lees becoming the largest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. He joined the Rotary Club of Melbourne in 1927, was president in 1931-32, district governor in 1934-35. He retired from business in 1936 and was able to devote most of his time to Rotary. He was a director of Rotary International in 1937-38, then served as district governor again as war clouds gathered in 1938-39 (the district then covering 75% of the continent). In 1940-41 he was again a director and in 1948-49 he was president of Rotary International and is credited with re-establishing Rotary in Japan, from which it had been banned by the government during the war years. He also encouraged the speedy restoration of the movement in the other former enemy countries from which, of course, it had been prohibited by Hitler and Mussolini. Angus Mitchell was knighted in 1956 for his services to the community through the Crippled Children's Society and the YMCA. He died in 1961.¹⁸

Harold Tahana Thomas was born of British immigrant parents in a tent in the remote and primitive far north of New Zealand in 1891. His mother was attended by a Maori woman whose husband was a chief named Tahana, hence his second name. The only school he attended was built by his father on his own land. He was one of 16 pupils and left at the age of 12 when he could learn no more from the teacher. He worked for a produce merchant under conditions that would not have been tolerated even in the 1920s and, at the age of 16, went to Auckland where he worked in a furniture store. He served with the New Zealand army in World War I and was the victim of a gas attack. On his discharge he became manager of a very small furniture business which he later acquired, building it into a chain of home-furniture stores operating throughout the

North Island. He joined the Rotary Club of Auckland in 1923, served as president in 1937, district governor in 1944, Rotary International director in 1950-51, vice president 1951-52 and president of R.I. in 1959-60. He founded and fully funded a Rotary trust to provide medical treatment for the children of the South Pacific. He published two books describing life in New Zealand's pioneering days, one discussing the development of Rotary policies and services, and two volumes of poetry. His major contribution to Rotary was in the promotion of international understanding, reflected in his presidential theme: "Build Bridges of Friendship". The Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humanities was conferred upon him by Redlands University of California. He died in 1992 aged 101.¹⁹

Clement William Bailey Renouf was born at Ingham, North Queensland, in 1921. After gaining his Junior School Certificate he was articled to an accountant. His studies were interrupted by war service in the Pacific as a pilot in the RAAF. He gained his Accountancy degree shortly after demobilisation and, after a brief period of employment in a firm of accountants, he opened his own practice in Nambour, about 200 kilometres north of Brisbane. He became an active member of the local Legacy group and was involved in a number of local charitable bodies. When the Rotary club of Nambour was formed in 1949, he was invited to join and was elected charter secretary. He served as club president in 1954-55, district governor in 1965-66, Rotary International director in 1970-72 and president in 1978-79. The year of his presidency was notable for Rotary's dramatic departure from its former resistance to major international projects and programs beyond those which came under the umbrella of The Rotary Foundation. Clem Renouf, in the face of very strong opposition, was able to introduce what became known as 3-H – the promotion of Health, the relief of Hunger and the total care of Humanity everywhere, setting the stage for the later vast humanitarian programs such as Polio-Plus to rid the world of poliomyelitis plus other infectious diseases. Despite his involvement in Rotary, he still maintained his interest in other causes – the care of the aged, the University of Queensland International House and the University of the Sunshine Coast. He was honoured as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1978 and was knighted (Kt.B) in 1988, one of the last Australians to receive an Imperial Award before they were discontinued in favour of awards in The Order of Australia.²⁰

Albert Henry Royce Abbey was born in 1923 in the working class Melbourne suburb of Footscray. On leaving school at the age of 14 he first worked as a messenger

in a shoe shop and then as a trainee in a real-estate firm before his enlistment in the army in 1941. As an acting sergeant he was awarded a DCM and was later commissioned a lieutenant. After war service he tried clerical work, which was not to his liking, so he joined his father and brothers in a small window-blind manufacturing venture as manager, salesman and factory worker. The company prospered, becoming the largest manufacturer of venetian blinds and awnings in the Southern Hemisphere before merging with a multinational corporation. Royce Abbey retired as Marketing Director in 1974 and established a business consultancy. He served a term as an Alderman on the Essendon City Council and held several senior offices in the YMCA, including president of the National Council. He joined the Rotary Club of Essendon in 1954, served as club president in 1963-64, district governor in 1969-70, Rotary International director in 1976-77, vice president 1977-78 and president in 1988-89. His major contribution during his presidential year was the successful promotion of the Polio-Plus campaign and the re-establishing of Rotary in Russia, from which it had been banned during the Soviet years. He was named Victorian of the Year in 1989. For his youth work, Royce Abbey was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1988; and, for his community and international service, became an Officer of the Order (AO) in 2001. He died in February, 2014.²¹

Glen William Kinross was born in Brisbane in 1931 of Scottish ancestry. He was of the third generation in a family of furniture manufacturers with a successful business in Queensland and a reputation for high quality products and business integrity. Educated at Brisbane Grammar School, where he excelled in sport but claimed to have been a less than enthusiastic student, he was apprenticed to the furniture trade in the family firm at the age of 16. He became a master of his chosen craft and also studied business management, eventually taking his place as a director of the company. He joined the Rotary Club of Hamilton and immediately embraced Rotary ideals of service and ethical standards which, he said, were identical to those he had absorbed from his parents and his church. He served as club president in 1967, district governor in 1973-74 and, after several important Rotary International appointments, as RI director 1982-83, vice president 1983-84 and president in 1997-98. His deep personal concern for the disadvantaged of all nations and his quiet determination to improve the lot of as many as possible through Rotary programs, particularly by providing low-cost shelters for the homeless, was evident throughout his presidency. His year was also notable for the first Presidential Peace Conference held in Russia, at which 50 speakers from 15 countries

addressed topics such as poverty, homelessness, child abandonment and economic and environmental issues. For his services to the community and to Rotary International, Glen Kinross was elected an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1998.²²

William Bernard Boyd, born in 1930, left school at 15 to work in his father's bookshop and retired in 1995 as General Manager [CEO] of Gordon and Gotch Magazines Ltd. He joined the Rotary Club of Wellington South in 1971, was club president in 1978-79 and governor of District 9940 in 1983-84. He moved to Auckland in 1985. In 1991 he was appointed Regional Rotary Foundation Co-ordinator and he has been a member of or chaired a Rotary International or Rotary Foundation committee every year since. He served as R.I. Director 1998-99 and Treasurer 1999-2000. He was Chairman of Rotary Down Under for several years and currently (2014) is chair of the Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group. He was President of Rotary International in 2006-2007, visiting 40 countries, some several times, during his presidential year to advance world understanding, to promote the polio-plus campaign and – his own passion – to advance literacy worldwide, particularly in developing countries. He was Chair of The Rotary Foundation 2011/2012. A Trustee of the Trees for Survival Trust and the June Gray Trust, he has served in many community organisations, has been a warranted Scoutmaster and an elder and youth leader in the Presbyterian Church. Always interested in sport, he played rugby in his youth and was a rugby referee for 31 years. Awarded the Rotary Foundation's Distinguished Service Award and Citation for Meritorious Service, he was also a recipient of the Rotary Down Under Distinguished Service Award. He was named a Member of the Queen's Service Order (QSO) for community service in 2007 and Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM) in 2013.²³

All past presidents of Rotary International continue their service as Trustees and, in their fourth year, as Chairman of The Rotary Foundation. They are also called upon, for as many years as they are willing and able, to represent the president at conferences, accept the leadership of a variety of committees and be available as guest speakers and simply for advice and guidance at club, district, regional and international level.

It is interesting that of the six Rotarians from Australia and New Zealand who have served in the highest office in Rotary International, only two (Angus Mitchell and Glen Kinross) came from affluent families and one (William Boyd) from a small business background. All built highly successful businesses. Three volunteered for service in wartime but all worked assiduously for peace. All were active workers for several

charitable organisations and gave exceptional service to Rotary. None could be described as famous or even particularly well-known people beyond their own communities, their areas of interest and the Rotary movement in which, needless to say, their place in history is assured.

The same applies to all those who have served as directors (including vice presidents) of Rotary International. All were successful business or professional people; all were involved in benevolent organisations in leadership roles; none was a person of international or even national fame. Rotary does not attract “celebrities” to its leadership.

It is clear, as noted above, that people of the highest distinction, though happy enough to be Rotarians and to serve, perhaps, as club presidents or even district governors, are unable or unwilling to commit themselves to the demands of service in higher Rotary International office.

On the other hand, several people of distinction have accepted appointments to R.I. ad hoc or standing committees to which they could make a specific contribution but as this applies equally to people of similar status in other countries, there is no particular significance in the appointment of Australian and New Zealand “high-profile” Rotarians.

Number of Rotarians

In the Australia-New Zealand-Pacific Islands (Oceania) area of Rotary International there were (June 2013) 1,112 Rotarians per million population compared with 318 in Europe, 577 in USA and Canada, 191 in Central and South America, twenty five in the Middle East and Africa and fifty two in Asia).²⁴ These figures do not give a completely reliable picture because some countries have few Rotarians in huge populations (e.g. China with 141 members of two clubs in a population of 1.38 billion; and Middle East and Africa from which Rotary is still excluded from some populous nations). In Russia, on the other hand, from which Rotary was banned under the Soviet regime, after the first club was chartered in 1990 eighty two clubs with some 3,200 members had been formed by July, 2014.

Motivation

Why do people join a Rotary club? Why does anyone join any service club – or, indeed, any association of voluntary workers?

Dolnicar and Randle identified six kinds of volunteers: “classic volunteers” (doing something worthwhile and gaining personal satisfaction while helping others); “dedicated volunteers” (perceiving each of the motivations as relevant); “personally involved volunteers” (donating time because of a personal or family association with the cause – usually a child); “personal satisfaction volunteers” (the “feel good” volunteers); “altruists” (motivated only by a wish to help others) and “niche volunteers” (who seek to gain personal development, leadership skills, work experience or some other benefit). Such insights, they claim, “can be used by voluntary organisations to target segments with customised messages”.²⁵

There are those who assert that motivation for all voluntary service is altruistic while others contend that all volunteers are motivated solely by their own interests rather than any form of altruism.²⁶

Melanie Oppenheimer, who makes passing reference to service clubs including Rotary, in her thoroughly-researched and comprehensive study of volunteering, identifies what she calls the “Australian Way of Volunteering”, which also applies, with some modifications, to New Zealand. She argues that we have developed a unique form of volunteering that is a “hybrid” of British and other influences. The three main factors are, (i) our historical antecedents, underpinning a unique relationship between State, the voluntary sector and volunteering; (ii) geography – remoteness in a physically unforgiving landscape and the adversity faced by pioneers who forged small, interdependent communities that developed a special kind of volunteering and (iii) Australian federalism, which both helps and hinders the specific structures of volunteering: an overarching state and federal system with very little at the local and “parish” level, leaving people to do what needed to be done themselves – or it would be left undone. “To get things done,” she says, “... to gather together and work with other people ... has little to do with class but is a broad, cross-cultural phenomenon.”²⁷

The notion that the motivation for volunteering which began as a matter of necessity – perhaps survival – became habitual and embedded in the national psyche is an attractive proposition. This view might be partially supported by David Cannine (*Ornamentalism – How the British saw their Empire*) who concluded that people throughout the Imperial world were often extremely resistant to being moulded into hierarchical shapes in the approved British model.²⁸

In 2001 the then president of Rotary International, Richard D King (an American lawyer) provided 20 answers to the question, “Why Join Rotary?”: friendship; business development; personal growth; leadership development; citizenship and community; continuing education; fun; public speaking skills; world citizenship; assistance when travelling; entertainment; development of social skills; family programs; vocational skills; development of ethics; cultural awareness; prestige; nice people(?); absence of an “official creed”; and, finally, the opportunity to serve. The last, he declared, was “...the best reason for becoming a Rotarian: the chance to do something for somebody else and to sense the self-fulfillment that comes in the process and return of that satisfaction to one’s own life. It is richly rewarding.”²⁹

King appears to have been thus placing most Rotarians with Dolnicar and Randle’s “classic” and “personal satisfaction” volunteers.

Few Antipodean Rotarians, it seems, agree with him. In March, 2013, at a district conference attended by 420 Rotarians, 68 were asked, “Why did you join Rotary?” The responses were predictable: 39 said that Rotary offered an opportunity to help people as part of a team; 15 said for friendship and service; 4 for personal development; 1 admitted to joining in the hope of some business advantage (but was quick to add that he had remained a member to serve and enjoy fellowship); 4 were mainly interested in the advancement of international understanding; 1 had been a volunteer with a Rotary work team in PNG and wished to continue the association, 2 had been members of junior service clubs (1 Apex, 1 Rotaract); the remaining 6 offered combinations of reasons but all included “service” as the principal reason. All respondents referred to Rotary as a “family”.³⁰ As the first two responses were almost identical (*service with friends* and *friendship and service*), though in reverse order, 54 of the 68 (79.4%) claimed to have joined to enjoy fellowship and to serve society.

In 1998 American urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg published *The Great Good Place (Third Places)* to considerable acclaim but with some reservations. In this book and its sequels (1991 and 2000), Oldenburg claims that “beer gardens, main streets, pubs, cafes, coffee houses, post offices, and other ‘third places’ are the heart of the community and constitute a necessary addition to the first and second places in our lives, home and work-place.” Third places, he asserts, “host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the claims of home and work.” He maintains that “...daily life, in order to be relaxed and fulfilling, must find its balance in three realms of experience. One is domestic, a second is gainful or

productive, and the third is inclusively sociable, offering both the basis of community and the celebration of it.”³¹ Oldenburg does not identify the service club movement as a “third place” but all Rotarians are regularly reminded that their priorities should be “family first, vocation second and Rotary third”. Thus it might be argued that, in their regular weekly meetings and at their frequent service project gatherings, Rotarians find part of their motivation in this “third place”, albeit unconsciously and unwittingly. On the other hand, Oldenburg’s claim that the “third place” has no purpose beyond conversation and the pleasures of association clearly is not applicable to a Rotary club.³²

Rotary Founder Paul Harris might be said to have identified a “third place” when he described the Chicago saloon (the local pub) as the “poor man’s club”, the lure of which “...was in man’s insatiable desire for fellowship”... “but the pity was that it broke down more than barriers, it broke down his self-respect” leading to family break-down.³³ The comparison of the fellowship found in a Rotary club leading inevitably to socially useful service, with the companionship of the tavern, possibly leading to degeneracy, is too obvious to need elaboration. Perhaps to-day’s local community clubs (sports, ex-service, workers’) in Australia may be seen as the equivalent of the tavern, but with the addiction to gambling as well as alcohol constituting the danger of degeneracy.

Only three of the many books and articles consulted for this study – American and Antipodean – examining, defining and measuring “social capital” and “a civil society” has made any specific mention of service club members as contributors to “social capital” or “a civil society”. Presumably the service clubs and the motivations of their members to invest their time, energies and funds in the social capital of their nations are lumped in with all voluntary associations and agencies.³⁴ One exception was *Bowling Alone*, Robert D Putnam’s study of civic organisations, including service clubs, in the USA in which people can meet and “garner social capital”. He lists networking and doing things for the community as motivating factors.³⁵ Another was *Volunteering – Why we can’t survive without it* by Melanie Oppenheimer, [see above] who makes several passing references to Rotary and other service clubs.³⁶ The third was Eva Cox, in her Boyer Lectures, who pointed out that social capital is created by the myriad interactions that make up our public and private lives: our *vita activa*. It is established, in part, by working together in civic groups; one of which is Rotary.³⁷

Becoming a Rotarian

To become a Rotarian one must be invited. A member nominates a person for

membership and the nomination is referred by the board to the membership and classifications committees. If the nominee is properly qualified, fits an appropriate classification and is believed to be a person of unblemished character, her/his name is circulated to all members for approval. If no objection to the election of the candidate is received within the specified time, she/he is invited to membership, pays the appropriate fees and is duly enrolled and formally inducted.

Before the membership qualifications and rigid classification system were liberalised the procedure was much more complicated and it was not uncommon for some months to elapse between nomination and induction.

There is no standard induction ceremony but Rotary clubs are advised that it should be simple and dignified. Usually the sponsor and sergeant-at-arms conduct the candidate to the “top” table where the president officiates. In almost all inductions the president begins by telling the candidate that she/he has been chosen because “the members believe that you exemplify the ideals of Rotary in your personal, vocational and community life.” The candidate is then reminded of the obligations of Rotary membership, presented with the lapel badge and welcomed to “...this club and the world-wide fellowship of Rotary.”

Then begins the new Rotarian’s education. Some clubs have information classes but most appoint a mentor who is required to guide the new Rotarian gently through the first months of membership, explaining the rules and, more especially, the obligations of membership – and introducing her/him to the world-wide fellowship and service of Rotary.

The Rotary emblem



The first Rotary club, Chicago, formed in 1905, almost immediately adopted an emblem to emblazon its stationery and to be worn as a membership badge. It was a simple wagon wheel. Each club, thereafter designed its own variation of the Chicago original – some with a scroll inscribed “Xtown Rotary Club”, others with a puff of dust to show that the wheel was in motion; one had a portrait of Abraham Lincoln superimposed, another an oak tree and others a local landmark.

In 1911 a stylised gear wheel was adopted by the Association of Rotary Clubs as the official emblem but, objections having been raised by engineers who claimed that the wheel would not work, a new design was adopted in 1920 – a gear wheel with six

spokes and twenty four teeth (or cogs). It was gold with enamelled blue panels on which the words “Rotary International” were inscribed. In the following year it was pointed out that the wheel was an “idler” with no provision for the transmission of power to or from the wheel. One more small modification was made – a keyway in the centre. The new design was adopted in 1922 and became the official emblem – the badge of membership, the logo appearing on stationery and, in a variety of proportions, identifying all Rotary events great and small.³⁸

The emblem remained until 2013 when it was found that the blue and gold colours created problems on mobile and digital applications, so again the emblem was changed; but only minimally, by removing the blue panels, leaving a plain gold (or yellow) emblem as the official badge and registered trademark.

Though many have attempted, in speeches and articles, to attach symbolism to the emblem, no evidence of any symbolic significance, apart from the keyway, exists.

Chapter Thirteen: Influences

By its very existence and because of its membership qualifications, rigid classification system and attendance requirements, the Rotary movement influenced the formation of several more service clubs, all of which are modelled on Rotary in organisation and structure but none of which adopted similar restrictions.¹

Kiwanis

The first of these was Kiwanis, formed in Detroit in 1915 to provide opportunities for fellowship and business “networking” and, later for community service for men. Unlike Rotary, Kiwanis did not adopt the single classification principle. There are 8,000 Kiwanis clubs in 80 countries with a total membership of 150,000.²

Kiwanis clubs are organised in districts administered by district governors. The district is divided into divisions supervised by lieutenant governors. Membership is open to men (and, since 1987 to women) of good character, actively engaged in a business or profession. Clubs meet twice a month and begin their service work at local level with the major emphasis on the needs of young children.

The current (2014-15) world project, in partnership with UNICEF, is the elimination of tetanus in mothers and infants. They sponsor junior service clubs (Circle K) in schools and in the community (Key clubs). They also sponsor Aktion clubs for disabled adults³

Kiwanis clubs were first established in Australia and New Zealand in 1967. There are now 924 members of the sixty eight clubs in Australia and 271 members of fifteen clubs in New Zealand and Pacific. Approximately 25 % of members are women.⁴

Lions

The first Lions club was established in Chicago in 1917 and there are now some 1,350,000 members of 46,000 clubs in 195 countries, making it the world’s largest association of service clubs.⁵

Organised in districts, each with a district governor and a lieutenant governor, Lions operate initially at community level but are more likely to assist existing organisations by raising funds than to identify needs and initiate new agencies to meet them. Lions clubs usually have a national project to which all clubs are committed and an international program. Most of their activities involve fund-raising, at which Lions are

highly skilled. Meetings were held fortnightly, but clubs now have the option of meeting less often (e.g. monthly); however, members are still committed to service work between formal meetings.

Members of Lions clubs must be persons of good character and repute, engaged in or retired from a business or profession. While striving for a balanced membership with as many occupations represented as possible, there is no limit to the number of members from any one vocation. Membership has been open to women since 1987 and in Australasia, as a result of active recruitment, more than 30% of Lions are now women.⁶ Lions clubs sponsor junior service clubs called Leo clubs, open to school children from the age of fifteen and carrying through into the community. Former members of Leo clubs are automatically eligible for membership of Lions clubs. They also sponsor Lioness clubs, which were originally established to give women the opportunity of service when they could not be admitted to Lions clubs. Though sponsored by Lions clubs, Lioness clubs are totally independent within Lions International. Lioness clubs meet monthly but in all other respects perform service activities in the same way as do Lions clubs. Thus women in the Lions movement can be “Lady Lions” or “Lionesses” (or even, as they were popularly known, “Lions’ Ladies” – the wives of Lions).⁷

Brought to Australia in 1947 and New Zealand in 1955, Lions now have 1,637 clubs and 35,000 members in the Antipodes. Lions, apart from Rotary, can be said to be the most visible service club movement. There are 180 Lioness clubs and though they have been encouraged to become Lions clubs (which some have done) they prefer to remain independent.⁸

Zonta

The first Zonta club was established for business and professional women in Buffalo, N.Y., U.S.A. in 1919. There are now 1,100 clubs with 36,000 members in 65 countries.⁹ The qualifications for membership were exactly the same as for the Rotary clubs on which they were modelled, except for the gender of members. Their service work has remained very similar to that of Rotary – a balance of vocational, community and international service with an additional objective: “advancement of the status of women”. Its vigorous campaign during the first decade of the 21st Century for the elimination of violence against women – *Zonta says No* – has gained considerable public support.¹⁰

Zonta clubs meet monthly and are organised in districts administered by district governors who are assisted by lieutenant governors. Districts are divided into areas, of

five to ten clubs, each of which has a director to maintain personal contact with clubs. Zonta membership has been open to men since 1988.

An interesting international program is the Zonta Foundation, which awards Amelia Earhart Fellowships to women in aero-space science and engineering to honour the memory of the famous aviatrix who was a Zonta member.

The first Antipodean Zonta club was chartered in Sydney in 1929, boasting the famous poet Dorothea Mackellar as a charter member; but the club seems to have faded from view in about 1935.¹¹ The movement returned to Australasia in 1966. In 2014 there were 3,370 members of 108 clubs and Zonta remains very active in extension work, both in recruitment of members into existing clubs and the formation of new clubs. Their projects cover a wide range of community activities and world community service with a strong emphasis on education of the disadvantaged.

Quota

Formed in the same year (1919) in the same city (Buffalo) as Zonta, Quota has spread to only thirteen countries in which there are some 10,000 members of 450 clubs. Membership is open to business and professional women in what is referred to as a “decision-making” position. Membership has been open to men since 1987, but few have been recruited. Clubs meet twice monthly and are organised in districts, each with a governor and a lieutenant governor.¹²

Projects are local and “unified” and, in addition to its community project, each club is expected to support the two chosen unified projects each year, one of which, currently, is aid for disadvantaged women and children. Quota adopts a club-to-club approach in world community service: the club in the more affluent country assisting a club in a developing country to meet a pressing community need that would be beyond the latter club’s resources.

First established in Australia in 1933, Quota made little impression and disappeared from view in 1940 to be revived in 1944. There are now 140 clubs and 3,000 members in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji.¹³

Soroptimists

The first Soroptimist club was formed in Oaklands, California, U.S.A. in 1921, taking the name from an amalgam of “sorority” and “optimum”, implying that the clubs represent women at their best. (According to some members, perhaps in jest, the name

actually implies that they are an optimistic sisterhood – or a sisterhood of optimists.) There are more than 90,000 members of 2,900 Soroptimist clubs in 130 countries. Clubs are organised in regions within federations, there being four federations covering the world. Regions are administered by a region president whose duties are similar to those of district governor in most other service associations. Projects are mainly in the areas of health, education, environment, economic and social development, human rights and international understanding. Each club chooses its own local projects within these areas of concern but is also expected to support the quadrennial international project. They are also encouraged to raise funds for the annual international president's appeal, the proceeds of which are allocated by her to a worthy cause of her own choosing.

Soroptimists came to Australia in 1937 and New Zealand in 1939 and (including the Pacific Islands clubs) grew to a membership of some 3,000 in 120 clubs by 2001. In common with all service clubs, Soroptimist has suffered a membership decline. In 2014 there were 1,972 members of 103 clubs.¹⁴

Apex

Apex was established in Geelong, Vic., Australia in 1930. [See Chapter six.]

By 1980, in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region, Apex had a membership of 16,600 in 804 clubs, falling to 10,000 in 700 clubs by 1990. The decline thereafter was disastrous. By 2014 the total membership had fallen to 1,500 in 143 clubs.

Apex membership is open to young business and professional men and women of good character aged between 18 and 45 years. At the age of 45, Apexians retire. Clubs meet fortnightly and are organised in zones, each supported by a Zone Communicator.

Apex selects projects at club, district, zone and national levels, those beyond club level mainly involving fund-raising. There are some exceptions. In 1970 the Association of Apex Clubs commissioned a national study of community welfare services (including those provided by the service clubs) in which all Apex clubs participated by delivering and collecting questionnaires in their own communities and conducting interviews with key people. This became a major research project of a Sydney academic (Dr – later Professor – Tony Vinson) of the University of New South Wales.¹⁵

Apex Clubs identify and meet community needs and their projects mainly require physical exertion. They are frequently chosen to assist individuals, such as painting a house for a needy pensioner, mowing the lawns or chopping firewood for disabled or elderly people. To meet wider community needs, Apexians may be found physically

building a Guide or Scout hall, establishing a park or a picnic ground, building wheelchair ramps at a local sports ground or working on any one of literally thousands of projects.

Another and equally important aspect of Apex work is to encourage good citizenship by participating in service activities and providing opportunities for leadership.¹⁶

Round Table

The equivalent service movement of Apex in New Zealand is Round Table.

Founded in Norwich, UK, in 1927 by Rotarian Louis Marchesi, this young men's service club is said to have been inspired by a speech delivered by the then Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) in which he urged young professional and business people to “..get together round the table” to improve society.¹⁷

Though the emblem adopted is based on the famous illustration of Camelot, Round Table members insist that they claim no descent or affiliation with the mythical King Arthur's knights.

Round Table was introduced into New Zealand in 1953 by a former member of the Bradford, UK, Round Table Club and now boasts fourteen clubs with a membership of some 320. Membership is open to men aged eighteen to forty-five.¹⁸

Round Table clubs are autonomous but work within the framework of a national constitution; and modestly claim to be “...simply the best sociable community organisation in the world – ever.” They offer “a community-based way to meet more people, develop personally and promote understanding and goodwill”. All members are expected to participate fully and to accept leadership responsibility.

The motto of Round Table is “Adapt – Adopt – Improve”.¹⁹

Inner Wheel

Inner Wheel was formerly an association of female relatives (mainly wives) of Rotarians. In 2012, membership qualifications were expanded to include women from the community who have been invited to join. Originally formed as a women's auxiliary to support Rotary clubs in their work, it has long since acted quite independently, adopting its own projects at club, district, national or international level.

Inner Wheel was first established on 10 January, 1924 in England. There are now 3,900 clubs with more than 100,000 members in 102 countries and geographical regions. Clubs meet monthly and are organised in districts under the leadership of a

district chairman. Clubs choose their own local projects and usually support those proposed by their district or international leaders. Thus a club may be working to establish a neo-natal clinic in the local hospital while collecting clothing and blankets for flood victims as a district activity, raising funds for medical research as a national project and injecting funds into an educational program in Africa in response to a request by their international board.²⁰

Inner Wheel was not immediately popular with the Rotary International leadership and, in the 1960s, was being actively discouraged in some areas; allegedly because the existence of an Inner Wheel club might tend to divide the family effort if Rotarian husbands were expected to assist with I.W. projects at the expense of their Rotary commitments.¹⁹ However, the Council of R.I.B.I (Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland) was always supportive in the face of opposition from Rotary in some other areas. The perhaps cynical but widely-held view of Rotarians in some countries at the time was that Inner Wheel was opposed because it had not been initiated in the U.S.A.

All opposition had been withdrawn by the mid 1970s and most Rotarians were proud of their Inner Wheel clubs. It was not until 2010, however, that Inner Wheel was formally recognised by resolution of the Council on Legislation "...as a valuable working associate of Rotary."²¹

Inner Wheel was first established in Australia in 1934 with the formation of a club in Ballarat, Vic. The first club in New Zealand was Napier, established in 1936. There are (2014) 206 clubs and some 6,000 members in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, making it by far the largest but probably the least known of the women's service clubs.

While Inner Wheel operates independently of Rotary, many clubs choose to support Rotary projects and programs. In Oceania they have access to the RAWCS and RNZWCS lists from which to select projects in world community service.

There are other service clubs: Altrusa, Civitan, Sertoma, Twenty-Thirty, Optimists, Old Bastards and others with varying levels of support in different countries.

An interesting variation of the service club in Australia is the View club (Voice, Interest and Education of Women) formed in 1959 by The Smith Family, a Sydney-based charitable institution, as a very clever public relations exercise and to raise funds – for that charity only. The clubs operate independently, meet monthly for luncheon and hear a guest speaker, in the same manner as other service clubs, but are precluded by their constitution from assisting any cause other than The Smith Family.²²

All of these organisations of clubs can be said to have been modelled on the Rotary original. One other is worthy of special mention.

Legacy

Though dedicated to service, with the motto “The Spirit of Legacy is Service” this association of clubs is not a “service club” movement in the usually accepted sense, for it serves only one small segment of society: the widows and children of those who have served their country in war, whether they were killed in action, died of wounds or died subsequent to their active service, either in the Australian or any allied defence force.

Legacy had its origin in the Remembrance Club, established by Major General Sir John Gellibrand in Hobart in March, 1923. As Police Commissioner of Victoria, John Gellibrand had been a charter member of the Rotary Club of Melbourne but, resulting from a disagreement with the State Government (which failed to accept his recommendations for reform) he resigned and returned to his orchard in Tasmania to grow apples. It was there that the plight of some former comrades and their families was brought to his attention.²³

The Remembrance Club was formed by John Gellibrand to assist needy or distressed returned servicemen and their families. The immediate success of the enterprise encouraged him to propose formation of a similar organisation of returned servicemen in Melbourne and, later, in Sydney.

In Melbourne the organization was placed in the capable hands of John Gellibrand’s friend and former staff officer, Captain (later General Sir) Stanley Savige. It was largely due to his energy, enthusiasm and determination that the first Legacy club was formed in 1923. It is recorded in Legacy history that the task of caring for the widows and children of “fallen comrades” was suggested by a young surveyor named Frank Doolan. The suggestion was adopted with alacrity, quickly became its *raison d’etre* and has so remained.²⁴

The second Legacy Club was formed in 1926 in Sydney and thereafter it spread rapidly throughout Australia.

Members of Legacy are called Legatees and, at their induction, promise to “...accept the Legacy of Service and Sacrifice bequeathed to us by the Fallen.”²⁵

Originally only ex-servicemen who had seen active service were eligible for membership but Legacy now accepts women and men of known integrity who are willing to “accept the legacy of service and sacrifice”, many of whom are former

“Junior Legatees” – men and women who, as children, were supported by Legacy.

One cannot be sure that the traditional Legacy luncheon, with its sergeant-at-arms, emphasis on comradeship (fellowship) and personal service, guest speaker and the formal but simple induction of new members, was influenced by Rotary but the similarities are striking and it is generally assumed that Sir John Gellibrand used the Rotary club as a model for his new Remembrance club. However, Legacy clubs have neither all the characteristics of service clubs nor of veterans’ associations but seem to fall somewhere between. For example, while service clubs are prohibited by their constitutions from taking political action, Legacy has no hesitation in lobbying parliamentarians and making representations to governments, on behalf of the widows and children of deceased war veterans, for improved pensions, medical care and other benefits; and while service clubs seek out and meet social needs at home and abroad, Legacy’s service is confined to the care of that same small segment of society.

Each Legatee is given a number of families (widows and or children) whose welfare becomes his/her individual responsibility. Every newly-enrolled family is firstly helped to obtain all available statutory benefits; after which continuing advice and assistance is available, such as extra finance when needed, education, medical, dental and legal services. Clubs for widows and recreational activities for children are also provided, as well as holiday homes in rural and seaside locations

Recent conflicts in the Middle East have resulted in the deployment of many thousands of younger servicemen and women to areas of operational service. Their families eventually will be eligible for Legacy support; therefore the projected “completion of the Legacy task” – previously calculated to have been in the third decade of the 21st Century – has had to be revised, with major adjustments to its forward planning.²⁶

There are 5,900 Legatees caring for 90,000 widows and children (and 1905 adult dependants with disabilities) in forty nine Legacy clubs in Australia; and one for expatriate families and Legatees in London. Some capital city clubs are divided into divisions, each providing voluntary services locally. (Sydney Legacy, for example, has twenty four divisions).²⁷

There is no longer a New Zealand equivalent of Legacy. In the early days of the second World War, Wellington Jaycees formed a committee named Heritage to care for the widows and children of servicemen who had been killed in action. In 1942 they asked Rotary to undertake the extension of this program throughout New Zealand, a

commission that was gladly accepted and effectively completed during the war years.²⁸The care of widows and children is now the responsibility of the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services Association (RSA) which has, among its objectives, "...to promote the general welfare of servicemen, former servicemen, their dependants and the former dependants of deceased servicemen or ex-servicemen."²⁹

No attempt has been made, in this work, to discuss the many other organisations – with a volunteer workforce in state and/or local divisions, branches or chapters – that were not broadly modelled on Rotary. The not-for-profit sector at large has been the subject of numerous studies in both countries.

Nor is there more than passing reference (mainly in the Introduction) to the fraternities, sororities, friendly societies and other mutual benefit associations – principally concerned with the health, welfare or material advancement of their own members – almost all of which preceded the service club movement and many of which, as noted, were shrouded in secrecy, with mystic rituals, cryptic signs and even elaborate regalia. There are those in the community who confuse the service clubs with these societies, with which they have very little in common. Studies of such societies have been more than adequately provided in a number of publications, notably the history of IOOF by Professor Geoffrey Blainey and the comprehensive histories and analyses by Dr Bob James.³⁰ In New Zealand the friendly societies have been closely scrutinised by Dr Jenny Carlyon.³¹

No reference is made to the more than 600,000 not-for-profit organizations and small foundations established to meet perceived specific needs or in response to family tragedies; or the 60,755 Australian and 27,311 New Zealand registered charities.³² No doubt the work of many of them is very valuable; but they are not part of the service clubs movement that began on 23rd February, 1905, with a meeting of four men in an unpretentious upstairs office in Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

Chapter Fourteen – Rotary in Context: Past, Present and Future

To understand Rotary and the service club movement as a whole in Australia and New Zealand it is necessary to consider the movement in its historical context.

Rotary clubs vary around the world in what might be termed their “host societies”. For example, Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland differs significantly from Rotary in the U.S.A. while Rotary in Japan differs from both because of historical, cultural and social differences that have influenced their perceptions of service clubs and shaped their practical expressions of the Rotary ideal of service. The Rotary Club of Apia in Samoa, for example, includes a disproportionate number of Samoans who have spent significant time abroad and of expatriates. This is not because Samoans in general lack public spirit; rather it seems that in Samoa, with a strong cultural emphasis on involvement in church and extended family activities, public-spirited and charitable initiatives are often channeled elsewhere.¹ This applies also to some other Pacific Island nations.

So Rotary in Australia and New Zealand has developed distinctive characteristics rooted in a particular past and in the response of the Rotary movement to both internal and external influences.

What follows are some past and present factors that, it is suggested, have helped to shape Rotary in this region; complemented by some indications of its likely future directions.

A bureaucracy and a mutual aid tradition

In 1921, when the first Rotary clubs were formed in Australia and New Zealand, the Commonwealth of Australia had been in existence as a federation of former self-governing colonies for only 20 years, and would not attain full independence until the parliamentary ratification in 1942 of the Statute of Westminster of 1931. New Zealand, though separated from N.S.W in 1840 as a separate colony and enjoying dominion status since 1907, did not gain full legal independence from Britain until it ratified the Statute of Westminster in 1947. For virtually all of the 19th Century, the people had lived first under the (mainly though not always benevolent) authoritarian rule of colonial governors and later under elected colonial governments with a limited franchise.²

The early governors, answerable to the British Government, were Naval and Military officers whose understanding of government was influenced by their calling; and they

exercised their authority with the assistance of an extensive bureaucracy which developed and issued, in the best military and civil service traditions, detailed instructions for every activity within their jurisdictions. Meticulous records of these instructions, rules and regulations were then kept.

For example, Governor Macquarie's instructions, through the Principal Superintendent of Convicts, to the timber-getters' overseer on 29th December 1812, setting out exactly how many feet of timber were to be cut, how many shingles, pailings (sic) and laths were to be produced (wet or dry) by each worker.³ Also the Commissary's account of the livestock in the Colony on 1st July, 1794, showing the exact number of horses, asses, oxen, sheep and goats; and the number of acres under cultivation.⁴ And Macquarie's report, after quitting the Colony, to Earl Bathurst on 27th July 1822, comparing the population (including the Military) on his arrival in 1810: "population 11,590; horned cattle 12,442; sheep 25,888; hogs 9,544; horses 1,113; and acres of land in tillage under crops 32,267" with the statistics in October, 1821, before his departure: "population 38,778; cattle 102,939; Sheep 290,158; hogs 33,906; horses 4,560."⁵

The granting of limited self government relieved the governor of absolute power and redistributed it to a group of elected men but the bureaucracy remained in place.⁶ The people became accustomed to the regulation of many aspects of their lives and felt quite comfortable with those requirements of government that did not restrict their liberty more than seemed necessary for the common good. This has been seen as paradoxical by some observers who, assuming that an egalitarian society had developed in the colonies as a rejection of the class system from which colonials had come, found the ready acceptance of bureaucratic controls perplexing; failing to appreciate the difference between rules imposed without consultation by one's "betters" and regulations for society's protection decreed by one's peers to whom temporary authority had been delegated. Also overlooked was the fairly obvious fact that the early free settlers certainly welcomed government controls for their protection; while emancipated convicts, recently released from bondage, found regulations for public benefit immeasurably preferable to the restrictions previously imposed upon them and therefore had little reason to complain.

It was observed quite early in colonial history that, contrary to all melancholy predictions, the progeny of the "licentious and depraved felons" – and even many of the felons themselves – became a thoroughly respectable, generally hard working and far

from impious people.⁷ They probably recognised no particular distinction between bureaucratic controls and other aspects of law and order; for there can be little doubt that colonials, with a few notable exceptions who practised the trade of bush-ranging, were law-abiding and comfortable with their bureaucracy. It was later to be noted that, at the time of the federation of the Australian colonies, in 1901, the people voted for a constitution in which provision for the development of an extensive bureaucracy was implicit.⁸

On the other hand, the people of Australasia developed a high level of self-reliance, became masters of improvisation and, particularly in the country, became mutually helpful and supportive. In isolated farming communities the settlers often shared agricultural equipment and their own labour. When disaster struck one family, the others would immediately provide help. And when a catastrophe in the form of flood, fire, drought or earthquake struck a whole community, other communities came to their aid with equal alacrity.⁹

And it was not only in their homelands that they offered succour. New Zealand provided willing hands in the mission fields of Asia and the Pacific Islands, backing up their missionaries with voluntary contributions from the public. Australians extended their missionary help to Africa. During the Irish and Scottish famines of 1846, towns in New South Wales held public appeals. Australians contributed more than those in the Mother Country when the Chief Rabbi of Britain appealed for assistance for Jews living under Turkish rule in Palestine. Lodges and friendly societies (essentially mutual support groups) in both Australia and New Zealand gave generously to help impoverished mill workers in Lancashire whose livelihood had been wrested from them by the warring American States from which cotton supplies were drastically curtailed. In 1877 Australians donated the equivalent of one full day's pay for every four people in the workforce to the Indian Famine Relief Fund. And families in Britain were sustained by Colonial donations during the long dock strike of 1890.¹⁰

The obligation to offer assistance to those in need thus became deeply embedded in the colonial psyche from its earliest days. (Such responses are by no means unique in human experience and obviously manifest themselves in many societies; as witness the response of the British people to the Blitz in 1940 and the public response to appeals following recent major natural disasters.)

The mutual help tradition, therefore, was still alive and well in Australia and New Zealand when Rotary was first introduced to these countries in 1921; and the benefits of

a well-founded and useful bureaucracy were readily accepted. The bureaucracy that developed, however, differed vastly from those agencies – mainly but not exclusively government – described by Michel Crozier (*The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*) which were characterised by patterns of maladaptive behaviour, encouraged by the inflexibility of the system and the disinclination of anyone to face the inevitable resistance to any attempt to change it. On the contrary, the “mini-bureaucracies” that evolved in continuing Rotary programs were guidelines rather than regulations, constantly reviewed and adapted to changing circumstances by regularly changing personnel.

A secular society

Notwithstanding the ready acceptance of an obligation to help others by showing “Christian charity”, it was a matter of concern from the earliest colonial times that religious observance was in serious decline.¹¹ Though the established Christian denominations did lead the way in the provision of education and welfare services, these were largely taken over by the State with free, compulsory education and broadly-based social services such as age and invalid pensions and basic health care.¹² As church attendance declined, there was also a decline in the provision of the more personal services to those in need, sickness or distress, previously gladly given by the good people of the parish at the behest of their pastor. Again in contrast to the United States, Australia and New Zealand were largely settled in the early nineteenth century, at a time when secular trends were stronger in the United Kingdom than in earlier centuries – which partly explains the continued “religiosity” of American social and public life.

With a diminished and generally ageing church membership, there were fewer able-bodied men to provide the labour for working bees; fewer women to provide the workforce for church fairs and bazaars. Parish Churches ceased to be social centres in which community services were initiated and became mere places of worship for the fewer faithful; and the social welfare responsibilities were delegated to church agencies; such as Anglicare, Catholic Welfare, Australian Missionary Society, St Vincent de Paul, Brotherhood of St Laurence *et al*.¹³

Many people who were finding churches less and less relevant in modern society were, nevertheless, still willing to accept the obligations of personal service previously implicit in church membership; as, indeed, were those who still attended church regularly but were no longer invited to participate in the welfare work of the parish. The

provision of government social services in no way diminished the need for voluntary work; for government could provide only equal benefits for eligible persons (the aged, disabled, widows, orphans, the unemployed) whereas needs were not distributed equally; and the churches and later the voluntary agencies were well aware of the need to treat unequal needs unequally. It could be argued that Rotary and similar service clubs in effect provide secular churches, whereby individuals somewhat detached from traditional church structures can find a sense of community and an opportunity to contribute to the broader community beyond their own individual family and business or professional concerns.

Priorities

One of the criticisms levelled against the Rotary movement is that its priorities are wrong: that so much money that could be contributed to charitable causes is spent by individual Rotarians on their weekly luncheon or dinner meetings, conference and convention registrations, travel and accommodation and purely social outings.

Certainly it could be argued that if all the funds expended by Rotarians and other service club members on their local, district, regional and international gatherings were devoted to their humanitarian aims, the total contribution would be enormous. In Australasia alone, it is estimated that, in 2013-2014, Rotarians paid about \$36 million for their weekly meetings and probably spent another \$4.5 million on their conferences, assemblies and institutes.¹⁴

It is a specious argument, of course, because all voluntary service given so cheerfully by Rotarians proceeds from the fellowship engendered by the “breaking of bread” with neighbours. Other associations with charitable aims (and one could use the larger sub-branches of the major war veterans’ association as an example) typically attract an average attendance at regular meetings of less than 10% and an even smaller active work-force – usually the officers and committee or board. Notable exceptions among veterans’ associations is Legacy [Chapter Six], organised on service club lines. Average attendance at meetings of fraternities and sororities are not revealed in the available literature.

Public image – and the *Babbit* effect

In 1922 Sinclair Lewis published *Babbit*, the story of a back-slapping, platitude-parroting, hypocritical, self-serving, successful realtor who was a member of the

“Boosters” club in an American Midwestern town. Despite a brief reference to Rotary as a “rival” club (suggesting, perhaps, that the mythical Boosters club was not to be seen as a Rotary club), there were elements in the story that were too close for comfort. Rotarians took umbrage; but they also took action, promptly going into damage control. They took a long, hard look at Rotary and how it was perceived by the general public. The impression that practical jokes, fines, boisterous community singing and, above all, the blatant advancement of members’ business interests, rather than “service above self” characterised Rotary needed to be corrected; and steps were taken to improve the Rotary image with a more positive public information policy.¹⁵ Lewis, himself was to recant in articles written for *The Rotarian* and in a much publicised speech in England.¹⁶

Rotary did not lack other world famous critics. When George Bernard Shaw was invited to address the 1930 R.I.B.I Conference in Edinburgh with the theme, “Where is Rotary Going?” he replied, “I can tell you where Rotary is going without travelling to Edinburgh to find out. It is going to lunch; and that is as far as it will ever go in this country.”¹⁷ GBS was later to praise Rotary for its work and write for *The Rotarian*.¹⁸ H.L. Mencken famously said that “the first Rotarian was the first man to call John the Baptist ‘Jack’.” He, too, later praised Rotary for its humanitarian work and contributed articles to the magazines.¹⁹

There is no extant evidence that the newly-inducted Rotarians in Australia and New Zealand were perturbed by the appearance of the fictional bumbling and hypocritical, self-serving Babbit on the other side of the world. He did not resemble any Rotarian in any of the few clubs then chartered. Nor did later Rotarians register anything more than mild amusement at the comments of the other critics.

During the 1971 Rotary International convention in Sydney, a television reporter, in a “background” program, pointed out that Rotary had provided many cots in children’s hospitals and thousands of park benches; “... but what has Rotary done,” he asked, “to help prevent the illnesses of the children who would occupy those cots and to help the drug addicts and alcoholics who would sleep on those park benches?”²⁰

That commentary and final question, which were seen as trivialising the work of Rotary clubs, angered many and reinforced the determination of those seeking to improve Rotary public relations – to promote Rotary’s “image” in the language of the public relations practitioners of the time, replaced more recently by “brand”. Those opposed to publicity-seeking for Rotary were equally determined to ignore the media. More than 40 years later the debate continues. Should Rotary be actively promoted –

ostensibly so that those invited to membership will be aware of its value and be more likely to accept but possibly as much for public approbation – or should the movement at large concentrate on its job of identifying and meeting needs at home and abroad, disregarding public perceptions?

The question might have been partially answered at the 2014 international convention in Sydney, for which a team of Rotarian public relations and marketing professionals (all volunteers) was recruited. The resultant media exposure was highly gratifying to all; though, predictably perhaps, the Sydney Harbour Bridge Climb by Rotarians from around the world – in which two records were broken: the number of people and the number of flags on the bridge – attracted more world media attention than the announcement by the Prime Minister of Australia that the Government had pledged \$100 million to Rotary’s campaign to rid the world of polio.²¹

Something Big

In an article in *Rotary Down Under* in 1965, Victorian Rotarian Charles Holloway suggested that Rotary should “do something big” – on a national or international level, to have a real social effect; and to gain public acclaim.²² It was one of Rotary’s hardy perennials: the suggestion that Rotary should undertake great national or international projects to gain publicity; and each such proposal meets with some support and always with considerable opposition.

Of course Rotary has undertaken projects on a grand scale. The Rotary Foundation is the largest privately-funded educational foundation in the world [Chapter Seven]. In more recent years, for the Polio-Plus campaign to rid the world of poliomyelitis and other infectious diseases [Chapter Four], Rotary clubs will continue to raise funds (with the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and governments) until the objective is achieved.²³ And many complain that all the credit goes to United Nations agencies.

At a national level, Australian Rotary Health [Chapter Six] is an example – now the largest privately-funded health-education, public awareness and research fund in Australia; which began, not to enhance Rotary’s “image” but to meet an urgent need for health research.

The success of such activities encourages Rotary leaders to consider more and greater campaigns, to the disquiet of those Rotarians who fear that a proliferation of national and international projects will mean that Rotary, as an association of

autonomous clubs seeking out and meeting needs at their own discretion, will be replaced by an oligarchy in which the role of the clubs will be to raise funds as directed by their masters.

Though these fears are certainly groundless, there have been what were seen, by some, as ominous signs of attempts to extend the authority of the Rotary International board by resolution of the Council on Legislation.²⁴ In fact the authority granted was limited to the setting of “suggested” Polio-Plus fund-raising targets for each district.

Identifying needs

Of the Rotary club presidents, past district governors, R.I. past directors and R.I. past presidents who provided information for this study, only one – the Rotary Club of South Sydney – indicated that community needs had been identified in 1947 by the use of an evidence-based social survey [Chapter Four]. The remainder relied upon “local knowledge”, the “personal experience of members” or information provided by one or more of the caretaker groups in the community: medical practitioners, community nurses, school teachers, clergy, social workers, community service workers, local social security and community service officers of State and National statutory agencies, meals-on-wheels services and police. The example set by the pioneer clubs in the region with their carefully planned and executed surveys clearly has not been followed; and modern clubs are even encouraged by some district governors to raise funds for distribution to worthy causes, not all of which are Rotary programs.²⁵

While most of the needs identified by the methods adopted are no doubt genuine, it is possible – even probable – that more urgent but less obvious community needs remain undetected; and that too many clubs take the easier option of raising funds and distributing the money to established agencies.

Future projects

How Rotary clubs choose their projects in future will be determined by their members and, if the second half of 2013-14 year can be taken as an indicator, there is no evidence that any dramatic changes are likely in the selection process.

A few examples:- The Rotary Club of Cleveland, Qld, provided neonatal equipment for the paediatric ward at the local hospital.²⁶ Continuing its long-term support of a school in Nepal, Port Macquarie Sunrise, NSW, bought a passive solar greenhouse for the garden that it had previously established at the school.²⁷ A team of fourteen doctors

from Wagga Wagga, NSW, and surrounding districts travelled to India for their fourth eye camp, performing 334 cataract operations, prescribing and dispensing 471 pairs of spectacles and issuing 1,412 medications – all at no cost to the patients.²⁸ Karrinyup, WA, was commended for its Farmers’ Market project, bringing fresh food direct from farmers to consumers and raising funds for Rotary charities.²⁹ Papeete, Tahiti, raised \$32,500 to fund its ambitious year’s projects and raised public awareness of Rotary’s work at a gala party attended by VIP guests from Tahiti and other countries in French Polynesia; and Otahuhu, N.Z., held a “Health Expo” featuring thirty five health-care exhibits to bring health information to the community.³⁰ Williamstown, Vic, partnered with Australian Rotary Health to fund research leading to a potential new treatment for Leukemia.³¹

It will be seen that recently-initiated projects still followed the well-known pattern of identifying needs – at home and abroad – and planning to meet them either by direct action, supporting existing agencies or generating new projects.

Because it is an obligation enshrined in its constitution, it is certain that every one of the 1,407 clubs in the region will continue to adopt at least one project in each “avenue of service” each year in the future; and it is safe to assume that most will adopt more than one such project; and that clubs will continue to support Rotary’s numerous continuing programs.

It is probable that, with the end of the “Polio Plus” campaign in sight, Rotarians are thinking about the next world project. The objectives under the “3H” program (promotion of Health, elimination of Hunger and continuing concern for Humanity) suggest that the next focus might be hunger; but no formal proposal has been sponsored.

Leaders’ opinions

Former Rotary International directors and presidents, past district governors and Rotary club presidents are by no means united in their observations on the radical changes to membership qualifications, the classification system and attendance requirements that have taken place in the last few decades. Nor do their opinions coincide on the reasons for declining membership; or their recommendations for future directions

For this study, information and comments were sought from 72 current Rotary club presidents, 36 past district governors, and the 11 surviving past directors of Rotary International (including three past presidents). Because the changes were enacted before

many of them would have been affected, current club presidents were not asked to comment on changes to the classification system, membership qualifications and attendance requirements.

Changes to the classification system were favoured by 27 past district governors (75%); 9 past directors (82%) – some with reservations and warnings against further relaxation.

Expanded membership qualifications were favoured by 22 past district governors (61%), and 10 past directors (91.9%) – again with reservations, most recognising the reasons for modifying membership qualifications but still regretting the necessity for doing so; suggesting that, if Rotary membership had not been confined to business and professional leaders (in effect to bosses), many – even most – of the most influential Rotarians might not have accepted the invitation.

Relaxed attendance requirements were approved by 24 past governors (66.7%) and 11 past directors (100%). However, most added that attendance should be still strongly encouraged by frequently emphasising the value of fellowship as the basis of service.

Reasons given for the decline in membership of associations (by clubs, past governors and past directors) were multiple and varied – most advancing several reasons – but included increased family pressures – particularly since more couples are to be found in the workforce, greater demands of business and a significant increase in the number of hours worked by executives and professionals. Several (17% of all respondents) observed that the decline in membership of voluntary associations coincided with the growth of social media, without suggesting that it was a cause; two, indeed, recommended that more use be made of social media to publicise Rotary's programs and “enhance the Rotary brand”. Uncertainty in an era of constant change – social, economic, occupational, domestic – was given as a contributing factor to the reluctance of people to join groups, perhaps echoing the notion of the “liquid society” advanced by Zygmunt Bauman in 2000.³²

The responses are summarised as follow:-

Club presidents (72):- Business and professional commitments 34 (47%); Cost 18 (25%); Family commitments 36 (50%); Social change 12 (16.6%); Time constraints 18 (25%); Uncertainty 8 (11%).

Past governors (36):- Business & Professional 8; Cost 1 (2.8%); Family 23 (63.8%); Failure by clubs to adopt innovative recruitment and retention strategies 4 (11%); Lack of commitment to anything 2; (5.55%); Social change 16.7%); Time 6 (16.7%); Uncertainty 6 (16.7%).

Past directors (11):- Business & professional 9 (82%), Family 8 (72.7%); Cost 0 (0%); Social change 4 (36,4%); Workforce mobility 6 (54.5%).

Some of these responses are supported by the findings of the study of volunteering by Mohammad Ramdianee, which he called “The Join, Stay, Leave Model”. He identified, as reasons for volunteering, for remaining and for leaving. They join because of the personality of the volunteer, the need to “belong”, societal pressures, family values, life experiences, religion, belief in the cause of the organisation or looking for a meaning to life. They stay because they enjoy the experience, feel that they are contributing, take pride in the organization, and their expectations are met. They leave because of time constraints, their expectations are not met and/or changed circumstances (e.g. family, employment, re-location, health).³³

Negative effects of some government policies on volunteering are examined by Carla Wilson et al in the *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, “Lady Bountiful” and the “Virtual Volunteers” who looked at how the widespread use of the “contract culture” has influenced volunteering within voluntary social service groups.³⁴

Recommendations for future directions

Leaders offer a variety of recommendations for the future directions of Rotary in the region.

All agreed that more attention must be given to the recruitment of qualified women, not merely to increase numbers but to influence Rotary’s style and culture.

Most suggested that the recent expansion of Rotary’s humanitarian programs, particularly in world community service, be continued at all levels.

To improve the retention rate, more emphasis should be placed on the obligations of Rotary membership so that prospective Rotarians will be aware, in advance, that they are being invited to join a service club, not a social club; and that it is pointless to join unless they are willing and able to contribute. This view is also supported by Mohammad Ramdianee’s conclusion:

Volunteer retention hinges on understanding the expectations of volunteers, and ensuring that only those whose expectations can be met are recruited and trained. Recruiting everybody who wishes to be a volunteer will inevitably lead to a waste of valuable and scarce resources.³⁵

Because the relaxed attendance rules have resulted in fewer Rotarians “making up” at other clubs, thus diminishing the useful “cross fertilisation” of ideas that were more

common a decade ago, members should be strongly encouraged to make up when unable to attend their own club meetings.

Adaptation to the expectations of younger people is essential; hence the need to explore the effectiveness of E-clubs, satellite clubs and other innovative variations, provided that the basic aims of service are not compromised.

Potential Rotarians should be invited to attend conferences and international conventions as guests so that they can experience the fellowship and the value of Rotary to the world community.

Rotary must reach out to minorities in the community. There appear to be still too few Rotarians of other than European origin and nominally Christian faith in clubs, particularly in Australia.

Some personal observations

Rotarians clearly enjoy their membership and the fellowship offered at their various meetings. They also enjoy the creative planning of useful projects and find considerable satisfaction in their successful completion. Thus one can hardly improve on the advice of a senior Rotary International officer who was asked for recommendations by members of the Australasian Rotary group he was addressing: “Why, just keep on doing what you’re doing; but, if you can, do it better.”³⁶

One might suggest ways, some of which have been indicated in foregoing chapters, in which what Rotary is doing in the Antipodes could be done better:-

Rotarians could be more aware of the criticism that they spend more money than appears necessary on meetings, conferences and assemblies at the expense (so it appears to a non-Rotarian observer) of the charitable causes they are pledged to support and might well consider ways in which their gatherings, particularly those that attract public attention by their sheer size, might be conducted without the deliberately-contrived blaze of publicity reminiscent of an American political party convention. On the other hand, Governments welcome the arrival of some hundreds to many thousands of Rotarians for a conference, institute or international convention because of the injection of funds into their local economies.

Agreement might be reached on a public relations policy for Rotary in Australia and New Zealand without reference to what is done elsewhere. Deliberate attempts to “create a good public image” or, in present-day jargon “enhance the brand”, may not be entirely appropriate in the antipodean environment; and it has been amply demonstrated

by the success of Rotary (and other service clubs) in these countries that a managed public relations program is not necessarily effective and might well be counter-productive. This, obviously, is a question to which Rotarians should try to find an answer; logically in a compromise policy of advising the media, without comment, of activities in which public support is needed and of the successful completion or the initiation of useful projects; but of never adopting a project or program for the purpose of gaining publicity. Moreover a mature acceptance of media indifference to “good news” would be highly desirable. A course of action that could be considered, therefore, is to meet needs irrespective of any public approval and to provide public information without comment; in other words, put all the cards on the table – face up. This appears to have been the policy adopted by the voluntary PR team at the 2014 convention in Sydney.

All available evidence suggests that Rotary operates most effectively under its existing organisational structure, as an association of autonomous clubs, each determining its own program of service and the extent to which it will support international, regional, national or district programs and projects. To ensure that club autonomy is not eroded by default, it is important that Rotarians remain vigilant when asked, every three years, to consider proposed legislation. Similarly, Rotary clubs should be prepared to indicate, quite clearly, that there is a limit to the support they are prepared to give to schemes, no matter how worthy, that tend to reduce them to the status of fund-raising agencies and diminish their effectiveness in locating and meeting community needs at home and abroad. Fortunately there is so far no indication of apathy but periodical reminders of the possible dangers of hierarchical expansion and control should not be overlooked.

Concerns about the inadequacy of methods employed to identify community needs appear to be negligible at present. As noted earlier [Chapter Six], it was a popular prediction in the 1960s and '70s that governments were assuming responsibility for so many of the services formerly provided by volunteers that there would soon be nothing left for the service clubs to do in the community and that Rotary's principal areas of service would be vocational and international. A total change of public policy in both countries and in all major political parties provided a vastly different situation by the 1980s. While retaining the broad sweep of social benefits, such as age and disability support pensions, unemployment benefits, primary and secondary education and basic health care, governments withdrew from some other areas of community welfare in

which they had begun to be involved, with a new belief in economic rationalism and the value of private enterprise.

Thus there seems no longer any likelihood, in the foreseeable future, of Rotary and other service clubs finding any shortage of community needs to be met. It is therefore even more important that Rotary clubs adopt more effective methods of identifying social needs. Perhaps constructive use of Rotary media to encourage the adoption of procedures more likely to produce valid findings might be helpful. The Rotary Institutes in Australia and New Zealand would seem to be the appropriate bodies to devise useful guidelines.

To encourage high ethical standards and the dignifying of one's occupation as an opportunity to serve society are worthy aims; but it is regrettable that Rotarians in the region (in common with those in all other regions) continue to confuse the achievement of these objectives with their commitment to practical service. It probably matters little that so many clubs complete so many very useful community projects which should be the province of the community service committees under the guise of "vocational" service except insofar as their concentration on such activities as arranging careers advisory services, compiling directories of potential employers, conducting simulated job interviews and even actively promoting local employment might be at the expense of the real work of the vocational service committee: the education of their own members and the encouragement of high ethical standards throughout their own professions, trades and industries and in their own communities. Again, it is the responsibility of the leadership to issue a clear, concise statement of what vocational service means in the context of the Object of Rotary, so that this most misunderstood of all avenues of service will be accorded its proper value.

There is no evidence that the admission of women to Rotary clubs has had any effect on the membership of the major women's service clubs, Soroptimists, Zonta and Quota, all of which may now admit males but none of which, so far, has shown any enthusiasm for doing so. Vague suggestions of amalgamation, when the membership qualifications of most clubs ceased to be gender specific, met with no positive response from any of the associations surveyed; mainly, one assumes, because no group can see any advantages in joining forces. However, there seems to be no good reason why there should not be more co-operation between service clubs. Former joint enterprises, in times of disaster or to meet an obvious or urgent community need, appear to have been very successful. One can logically acknowledge the benefit, therefore, of service club

leaders maintaining close liaison with a view to considering joint action when it is appropriate.

It could be recommended that Rotary clubs in this region should be more proactive in the recruitment of community leaders from ethnic and religious minorities. While no statistics are available (since no member or potential member is asked to reveal her/his race or religion – if it is not obvious), it might seem that they are under-represented.

One could make further observations about what may be seen to be minor weaknesses, inconsistencies or imperfections; but such shortcomings are not peculiar to Rotary in this region and the perception of them as faults is probably subjective.

Whether or not those who will be responsible for the future of Rotary might agree with these observations is largely irrelevant to its growth, vigour and effectiveness.

Chapter Fifteen – Conclusions

Though Rotary clubs throughout the world operate under an identical constitution, national characteristics between clubs can be easily observed. These show the influence of the particular characteristics imposed by the societies in which they serve.

The provisional conclusion is offered, from the evidence presented herein, that the unique characteristics identified in the Rotary movement in Australia and New Zealand were acquired as a result of the social history of these new nations:-

1. A comparatively recent frontier experience with a strong tradition of mutual help and an acceptance of the obligation to bring succour to those in need explains the willingness of Antipodeans to join the ranks of organisations dedicated to the service of others. It also helps to explain the enthusiasm with which they participate in personal service. Another quality observed in antipodean pioneers was their remarkable talent for improvisation; for devising their own solutions to problems – technological, social and personal. It is not surprising, then, that their descendants have inherited a talent for initiating projects and programs to meet needs identified in Rotary.
2. An essentially egalitarian society has facilitated the election to membership of anyone qualified, without the inhibition imposed by the social barriers which still often appear to exist in some older nations.
3. Little more than a century ago both countries emerged from a colonial past, in which a vast and mainly benevolent bureaucracy provided organisational and procedural guidelines for most aspects of daily life and work. Thus the people inherited an expectation of and a comfort with planned social organisation of their institutions and a collateral discomfort with – and, therefore, a propensity to bureaucratise – those that lack formal structures. Rotarians, consequently, have found it natural, as soon as a new program is established, to provide a complete organisational plan with laid-down procedures (or, at the very least, suggested guidelines) for its most efficient operation.
4. An entrenched social conscience, possibly inherited from Christian forbears and/or an egalitarian tradition of self-help and “mateship”, is evident in a large proportion of the people in the region; even, with respect to the religious aspect, those who have become disenchanted with traditional religion. This, it is suggested, prompts them to embrace the opportunity to enjoy fellowship and render service through an acceptable non-religious agency: in effect a secular

church (though it seems highly improbable that any church would retain many adherents if excommunication were the penalty for absence from worship on three successive Sundays – albeit if, to Catholics, non-attendance is a mortal sin).

5. While Rotarians were very confident during the 1960s and '70s that the youth of the day were strongly motivated to serve society and would be eager to swell the ranks of service clubs, they expressed considerable concern during the 1980s when it was feared that the “greed is good” philosophy would permeate all levels of society and result in a sharp decline in the number of recruits to Rotary. These fears were largely allayed during the early years of the 1990s, partly by the admission of women members, partly because of the number of new clubs holding their weekly meetings at breakfast to enable busy young executives to attend and partly, one assumes, because of the growing number of young people now qualified for membership who had been exposed to Rotary’s influence as Interact and Rotaract members, exchange students, Rotary Foundation scholars or group study exchangees, youth leadership awardees, delegates to Model United Nations Assemblies or the children of Rotarians. As the decade progressed, however, there is evidence that the fears of those who predicted a loss of interest in service clubs were, in part, realised. All major associations of service clubs reported a loss of members and slower recruiting but, as this applied also to sporting clubs, social clubs, business and professional associations, trade unions, fraternities and sororities and charitable organisations, any particular concern appeared unwarranted; however, vigorous recruiting continues.
6. This study finds that, notwithstanding a declining membership, the number of clubs has increased marginally and the number and scope of continuing programs has increased significantly in the past decade. This suggests that the long-established policy of handing over newly-created agencies to the community has been abandoned – or at least modified – and that Rotarians, having initiated a new program to meet an identified need, are satisfied that they can continue their management, control and further development of the program without compromising their ability to identify further needs, locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. There may be a risk here of over-reach; of trying to do too much with limited resources, rather than maintaining a sharp, disciplined focus and setting priorities rigorously.

No one can predict the attitudes to voluntary service of future generations but, in the

light of present knowledge, to guarantee that at least some of them will carry on established traditions of service, Rotary will need to expand the partnership with youth that has been developed successfully in the past. Also, in response to the overall decline in membership common to all or most voluntary organisations, Rotary will need a continuation and expansion of its current vigorous public information and membership development (recruitment) practices.

Rotary began its second century in 2005; and Rotarians will mark the centenary of their Antipodean service in 2021. A comprehensive scholarly history of the Rotary movement is yet to be written and it is hoped that this study will contribute to the existing literature. One can confidently predict that, as they have done in the past, Australasian Rotarians will be responsible for identifying more needs, developing more important initiatives and imaginative programs and will propose necessary constitutional change. It seems reasonably certain, also, that younger women and men, with fresh ideas and patent enthusiasm, will continue to be recruited into the ranks of Rotary to ensure a future of useful “Service above Self” in the Antipodes.

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Notes

Of the 540 references hereunder, 103 may be said to be, under normal circumstances, inadequately referenced for an academic study. In explanation of this deficiency I point out that most of these were referenced for a popular history before 1996 and most of the primary sources are either no longer accessible or, for a variety of reasons, no longer available to me. Where reference is made to existing and available archives, the locations are shown at the end of the Bibliography.

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Rotary Down Under Archives, Rotary Down Under House, 43 Hunter Street, (PO Box 779), Parramatta, NSW, 2124 02 9633 4888.

Club summaries, district histories, district and club reports and minutes, Minutes and Annual reports of Institute and multi-district projects and program committees.

Rotary Club of Melbourne, Level 9, 15 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000.
03 9654 8012

Rotary Club of Sydney, 163 Castlereagh Street, Sydney, 2000
GPO Box 1523, Sydney, NSW, 2001. 02 8014 8073

Rotary Club of Auckland, PO Box 105 334 Auckland Central 1143, New Zealand.
486 6010

Rotary Club of Wellington, PO Box 10243, Wellington, 6143, New Zealand.
0800 4 768 279

Rotary International Publications

Adventure in Service (an introduction to Rotary)

Club President's Work book

District Governor's Handbook

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Rotary Down Under – Regional Magazine – 49 Volumes (April, 1965 – June, 2014)

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RYLA Handbook, 1988

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Youth Exchange Handbook

Vocational Service Director's Guide, The

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Appendix A

Request for information and opinions from former presidents and directors of Rotary International in Australia and New Zealand

I shall be very grateful for your personal comments, observations, predictions, recommendations and criticisms – as few or as many as you feel disposed to share; as long or as short as you choose.

Unless you wish to have your name recorded, you will NOT be identified in this survey, except as a past general officer of Rotary International.

I have deliberately refrained from developing a questionnaire so that you will not be limited to answering specific questions; but I hope that you might be willing to comment on some or all of the following:

- changes to the classification system,
- membership qualifications and attendance requirements;
- reasons for declining membership (a world-wide phenomenon common to all associations including trade unions, fraternities, sporting clubs etc.);
- public relations and communications;
- identifying needs in our communities (are we failing to identify new needs and becoming mere fund-raisers for existing charities?);
- the future of Rotary – and the service club movement in general; and anything else that you consider important.

With thanks in anticipation of your help,

Appendix B

Questionnaire for Past Governors of Rotary International Districts

in Australia and New Zealand

During your year as District Governor, in which multi-district programs/projects did clubs in your district participate?

Did your district, in your year, adopt a district project supported by most clubs?

What, in your opinion, was the most significant project initiated by a club in your district during your year as DG?

Do most clubs in your district, from your own observation, identify needs and initiate projects to meet them? OR raise funds to support existing charities? OR both?

In your opinion, have the changes in the past 15 years to the membership qualifications, the classification system and the attendance requirements strengthened or weakened Rotary?

It appears that membership of virtually all associations – even sports clubs, social clubs and trade unions – has been declining in recent years. To what do you, personally, attribute the declining membership of service clubs?

Have you any personal observations or recommendations that might be helpful to future Rotary leaders?

In what year did you serve as District Governor?

Appendix C

To Rotary Club Presidents

Enclosed with the 2014 subscription renewal notice to all Rotary clubs in the region – by courtesy of the Board of Directors of Rotary Down Under Pty. Limited.

You can help in the current survey

1. by asking two or three local business or professional people the following questions and briefly recording their answers:-
 - a. Have you been invited to join a Rotary club? If YES, why did you decline? (e.g. time, cost, business, family etc)? If NO, would you have accepted if invited?
 - b. Are you or have you been a member of any other service club or voluntary service organisation(s)?
2. by completing the attached questionnaire and returning it, with your membership list, to Rotary Down Under.

[Questionnaire]

What do the members of your club consider the most significant project of your club since 1996?

In which year was it completed?

Was it reported in *Rotary Down Under*? Yes / No

Did it receive local media coverage? (press, radio, television) Yes / No

How does your club identify community needs (e.g. members' local knowledge, community surveys, information from "caretaker" groups – teachers, doctors, community nurses, youth leaders etc)?

How does your club choose world community service projects?

Which international programs (e.g. The Rotary Foundation) and multi district projects and programs does your club support?

What is the current membership of your club? Females.... Males....

To what do your members attribute the decline in service club membership in the last decade (e.g. family responsibilities, business/professional demands, cost of Rotary – subscriptions, meeting fee, conferences, donations)?

If you conducted the brief survey of non-Rotarians requested, what were the responses?