

MAN ALIVE

ROY BONISTEEL

A Biography

When CBC-TV first began the Man Alive series in 1967, Roy Bonisteel was signed up as host for 13 weeks. Eleven years later he's still with the series and finding his work as fascinating and challenging as ever.

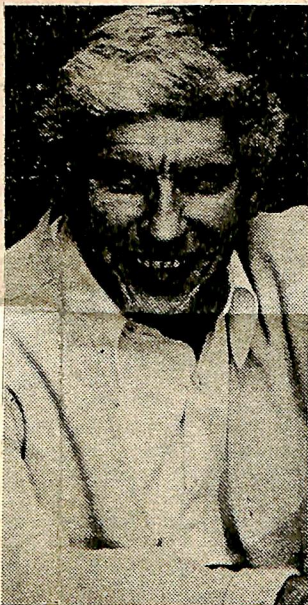
Over the past 11 years, Bonisteel and Man Alive have tackled an amazing range of topics. For the most part the series has stayed away from denominational themes, and uses the term "Religion" in the broadest sense. This fits nicely with Bonisteel's own philosophy that "religion is a way of life, not a Sunday thing".

Bonisteel lives with his wife, Donna, and their 3 children on a farm in the Bay of Quinte area of Ontario — the area in which his family have lived for generations.

He was born in Trenton and began his career doing general reporting on a newspaper in his home town in 1949. The next year he became a newscaster on CJBQ in Belleville. In 1953 he moved to St. Catharines, to CKTB, and for the next 12 years worked on news, farm broadcasts and general interviews for the station before becoming its Program Director.

In 1965 Bonisteel moved to Van-

cover to produce Dateline, a radio program for the United Church in B.C. At the same time, and also for the United Church, he was producing Checkpoint, a national radio program out of Toronto — commuting back and forth between the two cities on a regular basis.



Two years later he was back in Toronto to set up a whole new radio organization for the Anglican; Roman Catholic and United Churches. As National Radio Co-ordinator Bonisteel was starting to move out of the production area. He held this position from 1967 to 1970. When he resigned as National Radio Co-ordinator for the combined churches he had already been hosting Man Alive for three years.

If you ask Roy Bonisteel what he personally gets out of Man Alive, he'll tell you that it's the kind of broadcasting he always wanted to do. Sometimes he has to ask very tough personal questions. The rewards, however, are great. He feels he's gained a greater understanding of people himself. Certainly he's been in contact with some remarkable people — Dr. Barbara Ward; the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsay; Gordon Sinclair; Germaine Greer; Malcolm Muggeridge. Sometimes it's the unknown, but equally remarkable, people who draw the type of positive response from viewers that Man Alive has become noted for. Bonisteel remembers his interview with Sondra Diamond, the psychologist, handicapped by cerebral palsy from birth and confined to a wheel chair. The program won awards in Canada and the United States.

The travelling involved in Bonisteel's job is heavy. He is continually on the move in Canada, and has been to the United States and England several times this season; also to Germany and Jamaica. But he manages to fit into his schedule a number of speaking engagements each year, and conducts seminars and communications workshops across Canada.