

Features

Heart attack survivor enjoys new lease on life



Richard Clague of Georgetown changed his lifestyle and career after suffering a heart attack in November, 1988. Now, he exercises, eats right and works for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario as their Director of Corporate Relations. (Herald photo)

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

When a person survives a heart attack, it changes their life. For Richard Clague of Georgetown, it spurred him on to adjust his lifestyle and switch to a career with the Ontario Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Before November 1988, Mr. Clague worked 17 hours a day, seven days a week with his own business, Richard Clague and Associates Inc., as a management consultant.

"I worked hard, at what I felt like and generally figured I was invincible," remembers Mr. Clague.

But in November, 1988, when a blood clot blocked his cholesterol laden arteries and stopped the blood flow to his heart, he realized he wasn't invincible.

To save his life, doctors at Toronto Western Hospital performed a technique called 'perfusion balloon angioplasty' on Mr. Clague. It involves introducing a small inflatable balloon into the coronary artery and inflating it to stretch the artery back to its normal size. As the artery is expanded, the cholesterol lining in the artery begins to break up, explained Mr. Clague.

The fact that this technique had only been perfected eight months before it saved his life brought home to him how important research into heart disease and

stroke is and he soon found himself interested in the Heart and Stroke organization which provides 67 percent of the funds used for Heart and Stroke research in Ontario.

When the foundation began advertising for a person to fulfill the duties of director of corporate relations, Mr. Clague was interested and was hired in December, 1990.

"When the position presented itself, it was an opportunity for me to combine my experience with corporations from my business career with my interest in the foundation," said Mr. Clague.

In his new position, Mr. Clague has two main duties. One is to inform and encourage corporations to provide direct or outside access to healthier lifestyle programs such as the wellness program the foundation offers. The other is to increase the financial participation of corporations for the foundation.

He's also responsible for the direct canvassing of 300 national firms in Ontario which requires him to travel across Ontario. Part of his travels include visiting the community chapters of the organization to help them develop programs for their community.

Promoting healthy attitudes within corporations is an impor-

tant part of the job, said Mr. Clague. "Businesses often insure the physical aspects of the business but often there's not a whole lot of attention spent on the employee's well-being and their ability to be at work."

He said as the result of heart disease and stroke business loses \$21 billion a year from lost time, lost capability and medical costs.

Mr. Clague has found he really enjoys his new position. "I like the challenge of trying to establish and create this new function of director of corporate relations."

But he says although it's rewarding to help raise money to fund research, he lives with the fear "that the research program the foundation wasn't able to fund may have been the one to make a significant difference."

The foundation only raises enough money to fund 45 percent of the requests for research. Last year, the provincial foundation raised \$30 million of which \$14 million goes directly to research and the rest to education and administration costs.

He knows how important it is to fund the foundation, for if people hadn't been donating money to fund the development of perfusion balloon angioplasty, he wouldn't have his current position with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario - or his life.

Heart and Stroke luncheon kicks-off 1991 campaign

The second annual Heart and Stroke Luncheon was another success as residents and businessmen filled the dining hall at North Halton Golf and Country Club to listen to the President of the Canadian Manufacturer's Association, Laurent Thibault's, address.

Mr. Thibault said in his speech, to many local businessmen who are heart and stroke supporters, that if Canada wants to maintain its high standard of living, it has no choice but to become part of the global community.

"I don't think we realize how pervasive the global community is," said Mr. Thibault, citing the ability of modern technology to allow the transaction of billions of funds every second and passage of messages across the world in minutes so countries are no longer isolated.

He said Canada has to start looking at competing in the global market because its traditional exports of natural resources just aren't as globally valuable as they used to be.

"Some of the countries who have rapidly increased their standard of living in recent years have no natural resources," said Mr. Thibault. "We have to recognize the physical limits of our fisheries and forests."

"We need to ask ourselves how Canada can position itself in the rapidly evolving global community."

He said Canada's signing of the free trade agreement with the United States is a step towards becoming globally competitive.

Canada's competitiveness has been gradually slipping as companies are forced to pay higher wages to their workers than their product value warrants. As well, he said, statistics revealing Canada's low numbers on patents being issued and the number of scientists per population is another indication that global competitors are getting ahead of us.

"Clearly," said Mr. Thibault, "our factors to build economic growth are not at the level they should be."

In order to change this trend, he suggested, it's time people took more control of how their funds are spent rather than allowing government to control how dollars are spent in this country.

"The amount of money people allow to flow through to the government is too large," he said. "We should return to a system where there are greater rewards for activity and greater punishment for mediocrity."

In order to compete globally, he suggested Canadians should invest more in educating their people to develop new technologies which will allow Canada to maintain the standard of living Canadians have become accustomed to.

Also in attendance at the luncheon was the chairman of the local Heart and Stroke Foundation, Steamer Emmerson; area co-ordinator of the foundation, Mary Goodfellow; a representative from the Ontario Heart and Stroke Foundation, Richard Clague; co-chairperson of the

luncheon, Carol McMurray, Halton-Peel M.P. Garth Turner and wife Dorothy; Halton Regional Chairman, Peter Pomeroy; Regional Director for Heart and Stroke, Marjorie Farrell; Halton Hills Mayor, Russ Miller; local real estate agent and master of ceremonies, Rud Whiting; and President of Varian, G. Connell Smith.

Ms. Goodfellow presented award certificates to several people in the audience for their donation of money and time to the

organization. Among honourees were Bob and Mary Malcolmson; Laurie Burns from 'Work That Body'; Dave Paterson and Grant Richardson from the Ed Paterson Memorial Dart Tournament; Gary Brand, local real estate agent, and Steamer Emmerson, who's been involved with charities in the community for 50 years.

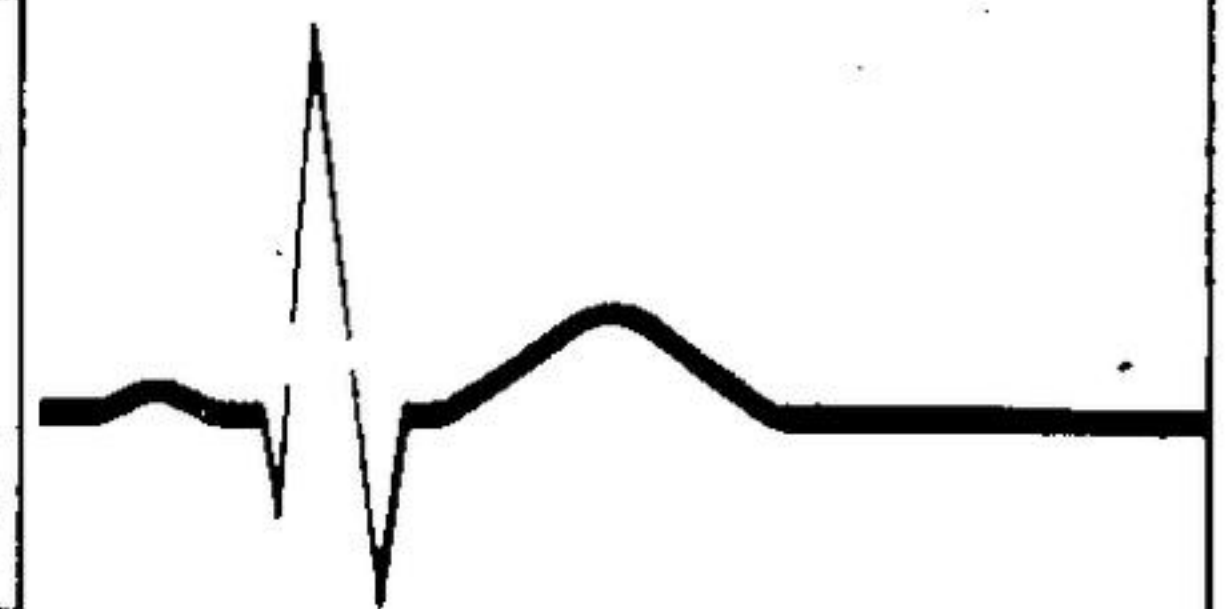
Mr. Emmerson is a former Mayor of Georgetown and current columnist with The Halton Hills Herald.



Fundraising for the 1991 Halton Hills Heart and Stroke Foundation campaign was officially kicked off at the second annual luncheon held at the North Halton Golf and Country Club Wednesday with master of ceremonies for the dinner, Rud Whiting (far left) and Mary Goodfellow, area co-ordinator for the foundation (beside Mr. Whiting), accepting donations. Donations in this picture include Dave Paterson and Grant Richardson (standing centre)

from the Ed Paterson Memorial Dart Tournament and Bob McNeilly and Norm Ward (standing far right) representing Georgetown Branch 120 Royal Canadian Legion. Seated at the table is Carol McMurray (behind podium), luncheon co-chair; Marjorie Farrell, Regional Director for Heart and Stroke and Richard Clague, Director of Corporate Relations for the provincial foundation. (Herald photo)

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