

# What does Rotary mean to a Rotarian?

by Fred Hacker

It's my privilege to be able to share with you some of my personal thoughts on what Rotary is to me.

What was it . . . and what is it . . . about Rotary that makes its members such strong supporters?

Again, let me repeat that these are very personal views but this is what Rotary has come to mean to me.

#### FELLOWSHIP:

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Rotary is the friendship of other Rotarians. For those of you who have attended a meeting of the Midland Rotary Club, you will know that there is tremendous good humor, quick wit and rapid exchanges.

There is also a warmth of human interrelationship. Good friendships are made in Rotary. I think each of us in Midland considers the 60 members of the Midland Rotary Club to be very close friends. We can trust and rely upon one another.

The meeting setting also provides good training and experience. Rotary is almost like a "Toastmasters Club".

#### EDUCATIONAL:

Every Rotarian finds Rotary a constant learning experience.

We have weekly speakers drawn from across the community and from outside our area who provide informative, challenging and stimulating talks.

The weekly meeting is highlighted by enlightened conversation around the lunch table.

The program activities teach us much. Our involvement with concerts, with international programs,

with the radio auction, with social events, teach us more about the community and about ourselves.

The group study exchange brings groups of young men from foreign countries to teach us about their homeland.

And the student exchange brings senior high school students into our homes from far away places in the world.

Again, on a very personal note, my family and I have cherished the experiences we have had with foreign students. How many of you had ever heard of the Falkland Islands three months ago? In 1977, a young girl from Argentina lived in our home for two months and told us over dinner one night that there would be trouble some day over the Falkland Islands. And we have been able to develop similar relationships with a boy from South Africa, a girl from Australia, a girl from Holland, a boy from Germany, and so on.

#### CONTRIBUTION:

Rotary provides a sense of fulfillment through service to others.

One of the contributions is through the raising of funds. The Midland Rotary Club has played a role in this community by raising funds which have supported many local institutions including: \$15,000 to the Midland Y.M.C.A.; \$2,000 to the Midland Arena; a contribution to the Penetanguishene Arena; a contribution to the Penetanguishene Hospital; \$10,000 towards art work at the Huronia District Hospital; a car to the Victorian Order of Nurses; an

ambulance for the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade; and hundreds of other donations ranging from a few dollars to several thousand dollars to support community organizations, charities, international organizations, and academic pursuits.

Rotary is recognized as a leader in community activities throughout the world.

#### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Beyond the financial and organizational assistance given to community projects, Rotarians become involved in assisting in the running of events, raising of funds and supporting many projects sponsored by other organizations within the community.

#### CREATIVITY:

It's hard to say whether one becomes impressed with Rotary or with Rotarians.

One of the aspects of the Midland Rotary Club which constantly gratifies me is the creative approach to Public Works.

Ours is a club in which one man, Roland Kuerzdoerfer, arranged for the opera to come to town, spearheaded ticket sales and in fact made money on the presentation of an opera production in our area . . . believe it or not.

Gerry Van Klink of our club was frustrated that there was no simple directory showing the time and place of Rotary meetings throughout Ontario. So Gerry undertook to prepare one, distributed them throughout Ontario and our club raised more than \$600 which has been donated to international Rotary works.

One evening in the family room of my home, Dean

Nicholls became frustrated that Ottawa Rotarians had a project called "Adventure in Citizenship" and that we might do something similar. So the "Adventure in Civilization" was born - a project which brings 40 kids per year from all over Canada to the Midland-Penetanguishene area and provides an in-depth look at the roots of North American civilization in Huronia. And quite frankly the Midland Rotary Club makes money on that project which it uses to present other programs. It was the Midland

Rotarians who got the Octoberfest Project going then handed it on to the local German Canadian Club to operate.

It was the Midland Rotary Club which installed the Community Bulletin Board in downtown Midland.

The club keeps coming up with new ideas and new programs. The Midland Rotary Club wanted to donate \$10,000 to the Y.M.C.A. The board of directors said fine but we have to find a way to raise that money. And so was born

the Rotary Radio Auction which now annually brings us over \$7,000.

The Midland Rotary Club heard a speaker, Dr. Elliot Barker, of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to children. The members were touched with what Elliot was doing with his organization and so began a new program by the Midland Rotary Club which now is soliciting support from more than 400 Rotary Clubs in Canada for the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

## H.A.M.R salutes Midland Rotarians

The Huronia Association for the Mentally Retarded was chartered in 1960. During its infancy the Association was in many ways dependent upon other community organizations to offer assistance and co-operation.

Individual Rotarians offered their expertise by serving on the Board of Directors of the Association and provided leadership. Many requests for assistance for specific projects were supported by the Midland Rotary Club through the intervention of these Rotarians.

During the mid sixties the Rotary Club of Midland assumed the responsibility of a major fund raising campaign to build a school

for children with mental retardation. The success of the campaign allowed the Association to acquire and renovate "The Old Fort School" with sufficient funds left to eventually build the first ARC building on William Street.

During the early seventies the Midland Rotary Club hosted an exchange visit between four adults from ARC programmes from the Province of Quebec and four local ARC participants. This involved billeting and arranging a complete agenda to acquaint the visitors with the area. It also committed individual Rotarians to sharing their homes and families with unknown guests who needed and enjoyed a caring environment.

The success of the "1980 Opportunathon", a fund raising telethon sponsored by the Huronia Association for the Mentally Retarded required the support of the entire community. Rotarians were quick to respond and assume many key positions to make success possible.

Through the years, Rotarians have evidenced their concern to provide for the needs of persons with handicaps by consistently giving their leadership and support to many of our endeavours.

The Huronia Association for the Mentally Retarded extends a sincere thank you and best wishes for a Happy Thirtieth Birthday to the Rotary Club of Midland.



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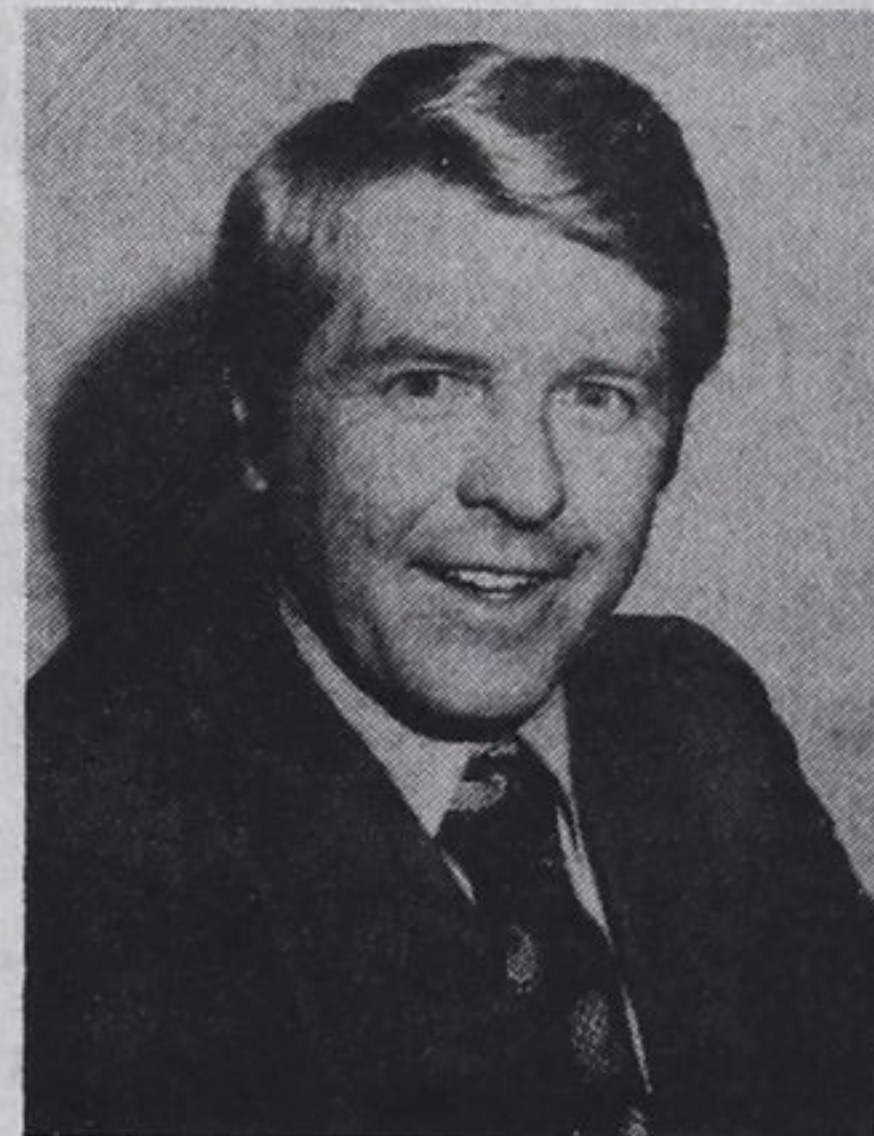
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