

CLEM RENOUF
President Rotary International, 1978-79
by Clem Renouf

Preface

Ordinary men – extraordinary opportunities

When I was invited to contribute to this history I contemplated writing exclusively about my experiences as a Rotarian, with particular reference to the presidency, but I was persuaded to go beyond that, to write a biographical sketch of my life, realising that one's Rotary experiences don't occur in isolation, but influence and are influenced by the factors and events that shape our personal lives. For there is, in the view of many Rotarians, a certain aura surrounding the presidency (not the president) which makes the office seem remote and beyond the reach of all but a very privileged or very gifted few. If this biographical sketch of the life of an ordinary Rotarian dispels that myth and encourages others to realise the full potential of their Rotary membership it will have served its purpose.

Clem Renouf
June 1997

Growing Up - 1921- 1940

Rotary takes ordinary men and gives them extraordinary opportunities to do more with their lives than they had ever dreamed possible.

As I prepared at the 1977 Convention of Rotary International in San Francisco for formal election to serve as president in 1978-79, I realised that any one of hundreds at that convention, given the same opportunities I had been given, could be in my shoes that day. This conviction was echoed in my remarks following the formal election:-

I stand before you to-day, not as a captain of industry from one of the great industrial or commercial cities of the world; not as the head of one of the great institutions of learning, nor as a famous business or political figure - but as one who has earned his living, as most of you have, in a relatively small community, and has grown up in Rotary in the intimate atmosphere of an average sized club.

I am here because Rotary takes ordinary men, and gives them extraordinary opportunities to do more with their lives than they had ever dreamed possible. I am here because Rotary cares about people.

I believe that sincerely, because it has been my experience and the experience of scores of my friends whose lives have been enriched beyond measure simply because they have seen in their Rotary membership an opportunity to use the organisational strength and structure and integrity of our movement to add a new dimension to their lives, in service to others. Only a few of them have served as R.I. President, but the contribution of many of them who have not served in that office has been just as significant, and just as rewarding.

I was born in Ingham (North Queensland) on April 19, 1921, two days before Rotary came to Australia and, co-incidentally, on the birth date of Paul Harris. I am the eldest of a family of six. We lived most of my childhood in Hardy Street - well named, for they were tough times for everyone. Our home was a typical Queenslander, but not as high off the ground as many, perched on stumps about 4 feet (1.2 m.)

high. Judged by to-day's standards it was pretty basic, but we thought it was better than most. Looking back, I wonder how my parents managed to raise six children under conditions which to-day would be regarded as quite primitive.

There were no "mod. cons." as we know them - no refrigerator, no dishwasher, no T.V., no vacuum cleaner, no washing machine. The clothes dryer was in the backyard - several lengths of wire strung between posts, with the added luxury of the fence around the house to accommodate any excess. When Mum did the washing (which was just about every day) she had to boil up the "copper" (a large copper receptacle) over a wood fire and transfer the hot water to tubs on the bench, scrubbing the clothes on a contraption known as a scrubbing board, comprising an oblong frame in which was mounted a thick sheet of corrugated glass. Like most mothers of that time, she believed passionately in bringing the copper to the boil, and having it gurgle vigorously as the clothes were immersed in the bubbling mixture of "Sunlight" soap and washing soda, guaranteed to kill every germ which ever threatened to infect her precious brood. I think it worked, for my recollection is that we suffered less than to-day's children from colds and 'flu and the myriad other childhood illnesses that afflict them.

The house was built on an acre (4,000 square metres) of land. We always had at least one milking Jersey cow, which supplied adequate quantities of fresh milk and cream - the cream skimmed off the top of the milk after it had been left to stand for some time in a large bowl. We also had a fowl house and enclosed fowl yard. All kitchen scraps, with occasional grain supplement, were converted into eggs. I suspect the calves were traded with the butcher for fresh meat. And we grew a few vegetables.

Toward the rear of the allotment was a large shed (we called it "the implement shed") in which dad assembled the machinery which he sold. In those days Massey Harris ploughs and other farm implements were sent up by rail in large wooden packing cases, to be unpacked and assembled in that shed. It's a wonder I'm not more adept at putting simple mechanical contrivances together. Obviously such skills are acquired, not inherited. I guess by today's standards we lived rather primitively, but we didn't think so, for that was the way most people lived.

Although I was born in Ingham, my parents were living in Cloncurry at the time, mum coming in to "civilisation" and to be near her own mother for my birth. Dad tells the story of having received a telegram announcing the event in the words "Cement arrived this morning - 7 pounds". The telegraph operator was accustomed to receiving telegrams for dad advising the arrival of a variety of hardware, so he knew "Clement" was just a simple mis-spelling of the word "cement".

He represented Burns Philp, large general merchants with their North Queensland head office in Townsville. Based in Cloncurry he travelled out

over a wide area into places such as Camooweal, Urandangie, Tenants Creek and deep into the Northern Territory, selling hardware and supplies to the stores and station owners scattered through that vast and sparsely populated region. There were few roads. Many times I have heard Dad tell of falling asleep at the wheel at night, leaving the track he was following, and being awakened by the noise of a herd of goats into which he had blundered.

I have seen photos (how I would like to have them now) of the car he used to drive, with a couple of cases of Shell motor spirit strapped to the running board, each case containing two 4 gallon tins. Those cases made great cupboards, stacked one on top of the other, disguised with a covering of colourful cretonne material. And the tins had a hundred uses. Recycling was not then just an environmental option. It was an economic necessity.

While he was there Mt. Isa was discovered. Dad used to tell the story of his having met Mr. Miles on his return (presumably to Cloncurry) from a prospecting trip with a bag of samples for despatch for assay. According to Dad, the man who discovered Mt. Isa (and named it after his wife) said in response to Dad's questions: "Mr. Renouf, one can never be certain what lies beyond the point of the pick. But if this is as good as I think it is, it will be the greatest mineral discovery in the country." He was right!

I can rightly (and proudly) claim to have been born into a pioneering family living on the edge of civilisation, accepting inconveniences we would not suffer to-day; they were typical of a generation from which we have inherited so much which has enriched our lives.

In financial terms, I am free of debt. I have worked hard for years to get to that point, and at the same time build an asset base which will provide security for me and my loved ones for whatever time is left to us on this earth. But in the process I have incurred an enormous debt to others - and to none more than to my parents. They must have made huge personal sacrifices for us, without complaint or even comment. They just accepted that this was the price one paid for the privilege of having a family.

There was no high school in Ingham, but they were determined that all six of us would have equal opportunity for a secondary education; and so we each spent two years away at either Thornburgh or Blackheath College at Charters Towers, as boarders. I know it was the turning point in my life, not only because of what I learned, but also because of the example they set in establishing priorities of fundamental importance; and the experience of living at a boarding school under the influence of such great personalities as Dr. T.R. McKenzie. Nothing I have ever achieved in the years which followed would have been possible had they not made that sacrifice.

If I were to be asked which of them influenced me most, I think I would say "my mother" - and in that there would be no disrespect to dad. He

carried the burden of earning a living to support his young family at a time when it wasn't easy. He did it on his own, without the benefit of a family inheritance or of an already established family business.

In the years immediately prior to his marriage he had been on active service during the whole of World War 1. He wasted no time in volunteering. His low regimental number 469 is evidence of that. He joined the 2nd. Australian Light Horse Regiment on 22 August 1914, and left Australia with the first contingent to sail for Gallipoli.

He once showed me a diagram of the ships' formation, with his ship on the starboard side of the formation, and slightly ahead and to starboard a Japanese cruiser providing protection.

Little could he have known or imagined then that less than 30 years later he would have a son dropping bombs on Japanese warships from an aeroplane. Aircraft had yet to be used as instruments of war, and in any case Japan was then a third or fourth rate nation, never likely to challenge the might of the British empire. Like so many of his generation, he talked little of his four years and 157 days of active service on Gallipoli and in the desert campaign. I know they had a tough time, and paid for it with impaired health.

But he adjusted quickly to the return to civilian life, married, reared a family and worked, initially (as previously stated) as a sales representative for Burns Philp, later returning to Ingham as Secretary of the local Canegrowers' Association, and then in business on his own account selling farm machinery, fertilisers and cars.

But he was not to know that in just a few years, before he could become securely established in business, the great flood and cyclone of 1927 would have a devastating effect on his enterprise. The cyclone ripped the roof off the implement shed at the rear of our allotment and flung it into the adjoining railway yard. The flood roared straight through his shop, carrying everything before it - even motor cars on the floor. A lesser man would have given up. But with a wife and five children to provide for, he re-stocked and took on some new lines.

Then came the great depression. These were desperate times, etched indelibly on my mind. To be eligible for "relief", men were required to search for work. If you just sat at home, you starved. And so men travelled from town to town in search of work, and rations. The cheapest mode of transport was to "jump the rattler" - to hitch a free ride under tarpaulins on the freight trains. As they slowed down approaching the Ingham station, with their swags on their backs they would leap from under the tarpaulins and rush for cover, to evade the police waiting to arrest them for travelling without a ticket.

The gully which bisected our allotment and then ran down along one boundary to the railway station offered cover. I have vivid memories of lines of men, running crouched along that depression (an apt description)

to camp in the railway goods sheds. Apparently there was no law against free occupancy of railway property provided it was stationary ! Of course many of them would come to our home for a hand-out. We didn't have much, but Mum was a good cook and we had a couple of cows and poultry, so we shared what we had.

One can only imagine the immense strain upon Dad during those dark days - and also on Mum. Perhaps it was fortunate that World War II brought an end to the desperation of the depression years, providing full employment. Dad enlisted for full-time duty with the Volunteer Defence Corps, and served for two or three years on guard duty at the Garbutt airfield at Townsville.

It was while he was there that I had the opportunity to take him up with me in a Beaufort bomber which I was test-flying before going up to Milne Bay to join 6 Squadron. It must have been as big a thrill for him as it was for me; but I wonder what misgivings he had flying with a son (then aged 22) who just a few years earlier couldn't drive a car.

Perhaps he thought, as so many do who have not flown, that with a couple of hundred hours in my log book I was a really experienced pilot. I think I would have agreed at the time, but not later, with just on 1700 hours when I was discharged.

Of course, I took him up to Ingham. This was too good an opportunity to miss. We flew all round the district, Dad excitedly pointing out the farms of his various customers; and we flew low along Hardy Street, right over our home.

Nearing Townsville on the return journey I decided to play a prank on George Griffith, our navigator, sitting in his accustomed place in the nose of the aircraft. Pulling the nose up very gradually, dropping off airspeed, I told dad to watch George come unstuck and float around in his navigator's compartment. Then I pushed the stick forward suddenly, and to my horror dad floated free, arms and legs flailing as he left his seat beside me and disappeared into the bowels of the aircraft. he sustained a small cut on an arm. But it could have been much more serious. Had he grabbed the overhead handle used by the pilot to exit from the cockpit he would have been sucked out and lost. My blood ran cold when I realised what might have been. Meantime, George remained unmoved, his legs wrapped firmly around his seat. He had been caught that way before!

The opportunity for such experiences came all too rarely. I'm sure he would have wished for a greater sharing of quality time with his children before they too became parents, with the same pressures upon them.

Not long before he died we were sitting in the lounge at home talking about the past, both of us realising there was not much time left. He expressed regret that, after a long life, he had little to show for it. He would leave no large estate to his family. He was measuring his life's work in terms of material possessions. In one of those rare moments of insight,

perfect for the occasion, I reminded him that he had reared six children, giving to each a good education, including two years at boarding school. This had been expensive.

"Pop," I said, "had you chosen to invest that money in Government bonds at cumulative interest, to-day you would be a wealthy man in material terms. But you invested it in your family. They are the legacy you leave." They were words he needed to hear. I will always be grateful that I was led to say them, when they were most needed. I had neglected for too long to say how much he meant to all of us, for by his example he influenced us profoundly - unpretentious, industrious, highly intelligent and extremely generous in his attitude to others.

But Mum was really the rock on which the family structure was built. She was the elder of the two children of a pioneering sugar cane farmer and his wife who had taken up land at Gairloch, on the banks of the Herbert River, about five miles from Ingham.

Her father, not long before his death, had acquired a second cane farm from a neighbour who had been eaten out by cane beetles and was happy to have someone take it over for the mortgage debt he owed. Mum had a younger brother but at that stage he was not old enough to carry the burden of running the farms. That fell upon my grandmother with the assistance of the hired Kanaka labour (Islanders recruited from the Melanesian Islands on three year terms, at the end of which they could re-engage or be repatriated). She would tell how, following a bout of drinking, they would appear at her isolated farm house at night, brandishing cane knives and making demands which she had no intention of meeting - and of how she would confront them, outwardly calm and stern, but inwardly quaking and fearful. What indomitable pioneers were our forebears !

My mother grew up under these conditions. She learned early to cope with hardship and desperate circumstances, and it never deserted her. She also grew up in a home which was devoutly religious. Her father was a local preacher at the fledgling Methodist church. Her mother was a devout Methodist - and a biased one. Growing up in Northern Ireland, she inherited all the religious prejudices for which that country continues to be best known. She was strongly opposed to such worldly influences as drinking, dancing and doing any work on Sunday. Although my mother was more moderate in her attitudes, we were nevertheless much more puritanical than most of the families in our community.

Sunday was for church and Sunday school. Work (apart from the absolute essentials) was forbidden. After Sunday lunch (typically timed salmon, mashed potatoes and peas, all prepared in advance) the blankets would be spread out on the open verandah and we would all sit around reading or playing games which involved a minimum of physical activity - and no card games! They were somehow associated with the devil - probably

because gamblers played cards, and gambling was wrong and against the teaching of the church.

Early in life I attended meetings of the Band of Hope, and when I was old enough to understand its significance, signed The Pledge, promising to abstain from drinking alcohol. It is a pledge I have kept over all these years - not just because I signed it, but because of the evidence of its destructive effect on others. There was a time, during and for a short time after the depression years, with the enormous strains they created for Dad, struggling to survive in business, that he sought solace in alcohol. He was never abusive or unpleasant, but was badly affected by relatively small amounts. Knowing it to be a drug of addiction and that his tolerance to it was low, I feared I may also have inherited a low level of resistance. So I decided early that there was no point in exposing myself to those dangers. I was always proud of the fact that, with the advent of less worrisome days, Dad was able to kick the habit, and for the rest of his life was a very moderate social drinker.

Mum was an excellent cook. I can't ever remember being hungry. She served us plain, simple, nutritious meals, but she had the knack of making them appetising. She did all our sewing. At the commencement of each school year we all went off in new outfits, Mum lining us up for a final inspection. And she insisted we wear shoes. Most families could ill afford such luxuries except for Sunday wear, but we wore them always when we were 'out'. We would wear them until the soles had holes in them, and then an inner lining of cardboard would be inserted. I could never understand why we couldn't each have two pairs, wearing one pair and having the other in for repair. I guess the reason was that the capital outlay for eight extra pairs of shoes was just beyond them.

Like every good mother, she lived for her family. As we gathered around her bedside just before she died at the age of 77 years - all six of us - and as she named each one of us in turn, I know she knew that she had done her best, and that we knew it and appreciated it, even though in that twilight time just before her passing we could not find the words to express adequately what was in our hearts. But she lives still in the lives of each of us and of our children.

My greatest regret is that she and Dad were not around to share in some of the great experiences of our lives, to which they contributed so much.

Because I believe we are all in some measure a product of the past, influenced by it in subtle ways not always recognised, I have delved a little into the conditions in which my family lived and worked. It is sobering to realise that what we do to-day - how we live and the sort of people we are - influences others and therefore lives on in them to shape future generations.

And so does our schooling, not just solely in terms of academic achievement (or lack of it). I must confess I can remember very little of conse-

quence about my primary schooling at the Ingham State School. I can't remember playing any sport. I never was very good at it.

We always had music in our home. Mum was a church organist for many years, and we had an organ in the lounge room. She also played the mandolin. She tried to teach each of us to play the organ, but in our opposition we just outnumbered her.

We also had one of the early radios. It was such a novelty we used to put it up on a table in the lounge, the speaker pointing out the window, and people from around the neighbourhood would gather outside the house, in the dark, listening to it.

Eventually, having passed the scholarship exam, with quite creditable results, the time came for me to move on to secondary school. There was no high school in Ingham, which meant if I was to receive further education, my parents had to face up to the expense of sending me to a boarding school. In fact, theirs was an even bigger decision, for in sending me they were also committing themselves to doing the same for five younger children. They wanted to give each of us equal opportunity.

This was 1935. The dark clouds of the depression hung heavily over the landscape. Businesses were going bankrupt. Large numbers of people were roaming the country desperately looking for work. Dad was struggling to survive in a business climate which offered little hope.

Fortunately, my grandmother offered to help. In fact, as it was told to me later, she insisted. She had by now leased out the two cane farms to which she had clung so tenaciously over many years, despite all the problems, and had retired alone to a home she had built in town, almost opposite where we lived, to spend her remaining years in comfortable retirement.

Although my parents shielded us from any sense of financial stringency, I was old enough to be aware of the sacrifice they were making to give me this opportunity. It hurt me deeply, therefore, in my first year at Thornburgh College, to have Dr. McKenzie say, in the end of year report, that I was 'resting on the oars'. It was his way of trying to spur me on, and perhaps it did. But I resented it, and when I got the opportunity later I took great delight in putting a match to that report.

I was enrolled in ten subjects - a rather strange mixture which included French. I soon discovered I had no aptitude for French, so I approached the principal, who taught the subject, and asked him to let me drop it. He pointed out to me, very firmly, that if I wanted to enter the ministry I needed a second language. "But I don't intend becoming a minister," I told him. "Oh yes you do," he said. "Your mother and your grandmother want you to." I didn't want to disappoint them, but I felt no particular call to the ministry. So I continued with French, failed it at Junior, and therefore didn't qualify for entry to the ministry. What a narrow escape for the church !

Having tried unsuccessfully to persuade me to learn music, Mum was determined I would get some culture, so I was enrolled for "art of speech" and took elocution lessons under Dr. T.R. McKenzie. He was an eminent teacher and very good Shakespearean actor - and a very demanding task master. He took a keen personal interest in me, but his standards were such that it was almost impossible to attain them. Early in my second year, when I was not quite 15 years old, he entered me for the open recitation at the North Queensland Eisteddfod, competing against mature adults. The piece was Hamlet's famous soliloquy on death - "To be or not to be . . ." Years later he continued to tell me, and anyone else he thought should be interested, of the thrill it was for him to have this youth, competing out of his division, win the open recitation. For me, it was merely a performance. Every inflection, every pause, every emphasis, was his. I was little more than a vocal puppet. At the time "art of speech" was just another subject. Little did I realise how important it would be for me years later, in public life, where people are often judged (or misjudged) on their public speaking ability.

After two years at Thornburgh I passed the Junior exam with a pass which was better than average (3As, 2Bs, and 3Cs), but nothing to write home about. My top five subjects (the so-called 'academic' subjects) were English, Maths A and B, Physics and Chemistry. I also did two commercial subjects - Stenotyping (shorthand and typing) and book-keeping, little realising then how useful they would later be for an accountant who uses a computer, where proficiency as a touch-typist has been so useful.

Knowing it was now Enid's turn to go to Blackheath, I set about looking for a job. I wanted to work as an articled clerk in a solicitor's office. There was an opening in a local office, but the successful applicant would be required to pay for the privilege of working there and being trained. That was beyond us. More than anything else I wanted to be a lawyer, but that was denied me. Now, as I look back over my life I realise how fortunate I was to have missed out, for as have happened on so many occasions, the path I have travelled has not always been the one I chose originally - but the destination has been the one I have come to prefer.

Eventually, after months of searching, I found employment with a local accountant and immediately enrolled in an Accountancy course with The Hemingway Robertson Institute. I started on 16/6 (\$1.65) per week from which I paid 5/- (50 cents) on the accountancy course, and 5/- on my Malvern Star bicycle (both essential for my work). I enrolled with the Federal Institute of Accountants (one of the antecedent bodies to The Australian Society of Accountants and ultimately the Australian Society of C.P.A.s) and settled down to study. I enjoyed it. My work complemented it.

Because I was studying hard, and getting good results in my exams, I was constantly being entrusted with more responsible work. I was given my own group of clients, for whom I did tax returns. (The Income Tax Act

Malvern Star bicycle (both essential for my work). I enrolled with the Federal Institute of Accountants (one of the antecedent bodies to The Australian Society of Accountants and ultimately the Australian Society of C.P.A.s) and settled down to study. I enjoyed it. My work complemented it.

Because I was studying hard, and getting good results in my exams, I was constantly being entrusted with more responsible work. I was given my own group of clients, for whom I did tax returns. (The Income Tax Act was not then nearly as complex as it is to-day.) In fact, when I gained 1st. honors place in Queensland for Intermediate auditing in January, 1939, my boss decided I should take over the audit of The Herbert River Canegrowers' Association - the organisation of which my dad had been Secretary 17 or 18 years earlier. I'm not sure I would have been so trusting, as the employer of such a raw recruit (not yet 18 years old) and I must confess to having felt some uncertainty about this new challenge. But it was great experience, and it helped develop a sense of responsibility.

We didn't have adding machines or calculators in those days. In the preparation of income tax returns, we simply went through the cheque butts, dissected them on 24 money column dissection pads, then reconciled them with the hand-written bank pass books.

My boss was also the Ingham correspondent for The Townsville Daily Bulletin - the principal newspaper for that city, and in fact the whole of North Queensland. He would buy the local paper early in the morning, pick out items of interest, re-write them, have them typed, and put them on the afternoon train for Townsville, to appear next day in the Townsville press under the heading "Ingham News". Occasionally I would take over his editorial duties. Very occasionally we sent in something quite original.

Much of what I did had little to do with accountancy in the conventional sense, but it was good training because it put me in touch with people, in a variety of circumstances. I learned later that technical or academic competence is no guarantee of success in business, if one lacks the ability to work with people.

But all the while I was studying hard. I had a study program, updated each fortnight, designed to ensure I would be qualified in Accounting and Secretarial by my 21st birthday; and I would have but for the interruption of the war. In fact, after five and a half years of service in the R.A.A.F., during which I broke no new ground with my studies, I qualified in Accounting just before my 25th birthday and in Secretarial the following year.

I was fortunate that I had good study facilities. In such a large family it would have been difficult in our small home. But my grandmother lived almost opposite us, on her own. I used to have all my meals at home, but after the evening meal would go over to her home, where I would study for several hours, and then go to bed in my own bedroom at her home. She was

a great reader, and respected my need for quiet. Every night, before retiring, she would cut me a big double cheese sandwich, thickly buttered on fresh white bread (I can still taste it) prepare a cup of cocoa made on milk, and leave a small spirit stove, filled with methylated spirit (the cover over the bowl to prevent evaporation), with a box of matches beside it. She really did spoil me, but she derived great satisfaction from it, and even with my preoccupation with study I was company. I owe her a great deal. She was an incredibly strong character.

I will always remember her for many things; her piety; her thriftiness; her passion for her garden ("you are nearer God's heart in the garden than anywhere else on earth" was a frequent saying); her strong faith; her love of reading (which no doubt prompted her to give me my first book which I treasured for years - a Pocket Oxford Dictionary); and her generosity to others. I guess many of those admirable characteristics were the result of the harsh physical and financial conditions which shaped the lives of pioneers such as she was.

Whenever I felt the going was getting tough, I would write on a piece of paper "C.W.B. Renouf A.F.I.A." the goal I had set; and just to reassure myself that it was all worth while I'd calculate the difference between an accountant's annual salary and a clerk's and multiply that by 40 (my expected working years). It was a persuasive argument for investing 5/- (50 cents) a week in the course, plus most of my spare time away from work.

The War Years

I had been working for three and a half years, and was studying hard in preparation for my final accountancy exams in April, 1940, when the world was plunged into World War II on September 3, 1939. I can vividly remember sitting in a canvas chair on our front verandah, reading the optimistic predictions by our political leaders of the early defeat of the German aggressors, and hoping it would not be over before I had a chance to join and see service.

I'm not sure why I was so keen to be involved. It was not out of a sense of adventure. I was far too timid for that. It was not out of boredom. I had plenty on my plate with study. Perhaps it was patriotism; but if it was I think it was because Dad had served in World War I enlisting early and serving on Gallipoli. He had established a family tradition which I felt obliged to honour.

I decided the Army was not for me - all that marching and living in trenches and shooting and killing with bayonets didn't have much appeal. I thought the Air Force might have me. So I wrote to the RAAF and asked for an application form. The sheltered life I had led for 18 years, never having travelled more than 120 miles (200 km.) from home, was soon to change.

Having applied to the Air Force recruiting centre in Brisbane for enlistment soon after the outbreak of war, I was obliged to wait several months until the mobile recruiting train visited Townsville in April, 1940. Unfortunately, it coincided with the time of my exams, so I skipped them and went off to Townsville with high hopes and some apprehension, to join the Air Force as a clerk. I had to have parental consent, of course. Mum wouldn't sign the form (she just couldn't bring herself to do it) but she had no objection to Dad doing so.

After passing all the tests, I was waiting for my boss's son to go through, when one of the recruiting staff asked if I had ever considered applying for aircrew.

"Me? What could I do?" was my response.

"Well," he said, "you could be a pilot. You have the educational standard and you've passed your physical without any problem." I had only ever seen one pilot - a tall, well built specimen who had made a forced landing somewhere near Ingham and had come to our office (we were the local

booking agents for Australian National Airways, later to become Ansett). I was a puny specimen beside him, and lacked his obvious dash and confidence. And of course the physical would be much more demanding. But I thought about it for a few minutes, asked for a form of application for air-crew, and was recalled for further interview and medical examination. I failed the more stringent eyesight tests for aircrew. Disappointed, as I left the interview I took with me the blue application form on which the interviewing officer had initialled each question as I answered it, little realising how important that document (or lack of it) would later prove to be. So I would serve my country as a clerk.

I wondered later what trauma this would have caused my mother, had she known. Her tacit but reluctant approval of my serving as a clerk could never have extended to the greater risks of flying.

This all took place about the time of my 19th birthday. Within a week or so I received my call-up and enlisted on May 31, 1940. By now the war in Europe was well under way, and large numbers of volunteers were enlisting. Quite a large group assembled in Townsville. We were despatched by train to No. 2 Recruiting Depot in Richmond (west of Sydney) to be equipped and whipped into shape with endless parades, drills and physical training.

The whole experience was new to me. I had never been further south than Townsville (100km). Never more than 200 km from home (to school at Charters Towers). I had never experienced the cold of a winter so far south. I had never faced such uncertainty, not knowing where I might be next week, next month, or next year – for I had enlisted to serve anywhere I was sent 'for the duration'. And I had never had so much money to risk – my entire savings converted into nine 1 pound (\$2) postal notes, made payable to myself, so that only I could cash them at a post office. Anyone stealing my life's savings would be frustrated in his plans for instant wealth!

From Richmond I was posted to Wagga, among the first 100 to move into the new station then under construction. Within months ground crew were being given the opportunity to re-muster to air crew, so I tried again. I was stationed at Wagga Wagga, N.S.W., at the time, as the secretary to the station commander, Wing Commander (later Air Marshall) Scherger. It was a stroke of luck, for he had been chairman of the selection committee for air crew prior to the war, and I'm sure his recommendation carried great weight in my ultimate acceptance for flying training.

Having been frustrated in my plans to do final Accounting and Auditing exams in April, because of my call-up, I decided to sit for Auditing six months later at Wagga, and was surprised subsequently to be advised that I had gained second place in New South Wales and third in Australia. Because of the war, the numbers presenting themselves for examination would have been down, so I was never sure whether or not there were more

would have been down, so I was never sure whether or not there were more than three competing.

From Wagga I went to Melbourne to do a pay course, and was then posted to 3 Recruiting Centre in Brisbane, as the pay clerk, while I waited for my air crew application to be dealt with. Again, this was a stroke of luck, for I had access here to my records, and discovered there was nothing on file about my first air crew application, and therefore no record of my failure to pass the eyesight tests for air crew. Uncertain of the outcome of my new application, I took up study again, and for exercise played basket ball at the Y.M.C.A. Then word came through that I had been selected for air crew training, subject to a satisfactory medical examination. Now I faced a dilemma – to study or not to study? My eyes were a constant problem when I spent long hours at my books. I knew they needed to be in good condition if I was to have any prospect of passing the medical.

I decided to resolve that dilemma immediately, so I made an appointment to consult Dr. Lockhart Gibson, at my own expense. I told him of my problem. If I had no chance of passing the medical I would concentrate on study, for the April exams. If there was any chance, I would abandon study and get my eyes in good condition. He had served as a pilot in World War 1 – a big, kindly man. As I left his surgery he placed a fatherly arm on my shoulder and gave me some advice I'll never forget, even though I didn't take it. "Well, sonny," he said, "I'm afraid you're going to have to abandon your high hopes of dropping bombs on Berlin. You'll never fly."

So I went straight back to recruiting centre, saw the Medical Officer (Flt. Lt. Yeates) and asked him for an immediate medical. I did this in the knowledge that there was no record on their files of my previous air crew medical almost a year earlier. The other piece of good fortune for me was the fact that the two medical orderlies, who were on staff with me, and who did some (but not all) of the eye tests, were themselves re-mustering to air crew. So they were sympathetic to my subterfuge when, in reading the charts, I turned the chair a little to the right, twisted a little to the right, turned my head a little to the right, and looked almost cross-eyed behind the cover over my right eye, to help the weaker left eye. In every other respect I had no problems with the medical. So I was passed as fit, with probably the worst eyesight of any air force pilot.

Again I had to defer my studies, for on April 27, 1941 (eight days after my 20th birthday) I was posted to 3 Initial Training Squadron at Sandgate on course 14P, to be trained in the theory of flight, the intricacies of internal combustion engines and, of course, the inevitable marching and drill. I'm sure we engaged in many such useless activities because that was the way they did it in World War 1, and they did it then because the Flying Corps was born out of the infantry.

Finally I got to fly on Tiger Moths, on posting to 3 Elementary Flying

Training School at Archerfield, on June 26, 1941. It was at once an exhilarating and terrifying experience. I was far from confident of my ability to go solo, but when the great day came I was exuberant. Because what goes up must come down, and because landing an aircraft requires good co-ordination of hand and eye, my defective eyesight meant that I always took about the maximum time allowed to go solo.

The Tiger Moth is a two-seat bi-plane, very manoeuvrable and very safe, with a low stalling speed. In addition to 'circuits and bumps' we did a lot of aerobatic flying (stalls, spins, loops) and practised forced landings. It was great experience, because later, on less forgiving aircraft it was not possible to practise most of those manoeuvres. But in an emergency (and years later I had one) this training provided a background of experience to draw upon almost instinctively.

On Tiger Moths, twelve hours of dual instruction were about all the R.A.A.F. could afford to invest in a trainee. Fortunately for me they persevered a little longer. After 12 hours and 55 minutes of instruction, and exactly 14 days after my first flight, I did my first solo.

After seven weeks of training and 55 hours and 10 minutes of flying I completed my elementary flying training course with a grading of "Average". Now to make the transition from a single engine aircraft to a twin. I was amazed to find that after seven short flights and five hours and 45 minutes of instruction, I was allowed to go solo. That was about average.

I did my conversion to twins at Amberley, flying Avro Ansons. The struggle to survive was intense – not in terms of danger, but against the background of being constantly subjected to testing which could at any stage terminate one's training. Looking back, I wonder why we strove so determinedly to qualify as pilots, knowing what that might lead to.

After 89 hours on Ansons I did my last flight at Amberley on December 7, 1941, the day before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour (our time zone being about 20 hours ahead of Hawaii), and graduated on 11 December 1941 with a commission, with an "Average" rating as a pilot. At last I could wear the coveted pilot's wings on my proud chest.

But there was one more hurdle – another medical examination. Again, fortune smiled on me. The doctor examining me was the same Dr. Yeates who had passed me as fit for aircrew just eight months earlier. Of course, I reminded him of this, and of the fact that I had passed with flying colours, having surprised him with my ability to blow up the mercury (a legacy of my training at the Y.M.C.A). I kept talking, and finally he passed me without giving me another eye test.

I was a perfect physical specimen again, so I went home on leave for Christmas, prior to posting to Laverton (Victoria) to be trained in navigation and to do a conversion course to fly Lockheed Hudson medium bombers. We were now being trained, not just to fly, but for combat; and

navigation and to do a conversion course to fly Lockheed Hudson medium bombers. We were now being trained, not just to fly, but for combat; and not to defend some distant country, but our own – for already the Japanese forces were advancing rapidly from the north.

On February 17, 1942 I commenced training at No. 1 Operational Training Unit, West Sale, flying Hudsons. After eight hours of dual instruction and one hr. 10 mins. as 1st pilot, my training came to an abrupt and near tragic end, when the brakes seized during take-off on an early morning training flight. Unfortunately the undercarriage collapsed under the sideways strain of the locked brake, the port wing bit into the ground, split and spilt the fuel (stored in the wings) on to a hot exhaust. Instantly, the aeroplane was on fire. Just one week after the devastating attack on Darwin, the loss of another aircraft was a severe blow to the war effort.

After a day's rest, I was taken up on a test flight. It was a disaster. Perhaps I should have taken the advice of the doctor who examined me after the accident, and advised me to get drunk, for I was so tense and apprehensive. I failed miserably. My conversion to Hudsons finished that day – and I soon found myself flying as second pilot in a crew training seriously for combat flying.

Upon completion of crew training I immediately took a couple of weeks' pre-embarkation leave, and once again avoided the much-dreaded eye tests, for upon termination of leave I reported to Adelaide, and then overland to Darwin to join 13 Squadron, based at Hughes Field, about 30 miles (50 km.) south of Darwin.

The war was at a critical stage at this time. Our squadron, operating in Malaya, had been savagely mauled by the advancing Japanese. Displaying incredible courage and airmanship, they had fought a rear guard action to delay the advance of the enemy – but they were exhausted, their few remaining aircraft in poor condition. We were the much needed replacements.

Our crew comprised a pilot, a navigator, a wireless operator-air gunner, and me as second pilot. The duties of the other crew members were clearly defined. I was a sort of Jack-of-all-trades. There were occasions, such as when we were shot up over Ambon, when the captain and I took turns about to fly the plane back to base, struggling to hold the nose up because of damage to the elevators. On other occasions I would man the belly gun. When not in use it was simply part of the fuselage. In action, I would wind it down to allow the swivel mounted gun to be used, and would lie down on the sloping floor, confronting with a yawning void. It was quite safe, although a little disconcerting at first. The gun mounting prevented the operator from sliding out.

The Lockheed Hudson was a military adaptation of the civilian version, the Lockheed Lodestar. To give it extra range inboard fuel tanks had been

fitted, between the pilot and the wireless operator. They were simply large tanks, wrapped in some sort of gelatinous rubber compound which was supposed to seal automatically if a bullet passed through them. We tried not to think of the consequences if that bullet happened to be an incendiary.

On the evening of June 2, 1942 we were to drop our bombs on the enemy for the first time. How ironic that, after a year of training and all the expectation of attacking the mighty Japanese army, our first target was to be a small building at Atamboea, near Dilli on the Island of Timor, which (our intelligence informed us) was the local brothel. We attacked just on dusk, when the Japanese officers were expected to be there. We had nine aircraft – the first three to silence the ack-ack guns, the next two vics of three to bomb the brothel. As we left the target area and reformed, our leader saw a convoy of trucks travelling along a nearby road, and decided to strafe them. The rest of the flight followed, in line astern. Suddenly, right in the middle of our flight, one plane reared up like a stricken animal, turned over and plunged nose first through the formation, bursting into flame on impact. The second pilot (Don Campbell) was one of my best friends.

Mercifully, the crew would have died instantly. To have survived under those circumstances, and to have fallen into the hands of the Japanese army (especially after what we had done to their officers) would have been a fate worse than death.

On my next leave I met Don's mother, by arrangement in Brisbane. She clung desperately to the hope that he had survived and would eventually return home. As gently as I could, without disclosing the full circumstances of his fiery death, I tried to convince her that he would not be coming back. But I knew she was not convinced. Who was it who wrote?

Oh, if beside the dead slumbered the pain
 Oh, if the hearts that bled slept with the slain
 If the grief died – but no, death will not have it so.

The war at times was tough for the combatants, but the constant strain of uncertainty and anxiety on loved ones at home, not knowing what was happening but fearing the worst, must have been devastating.

We did our last flight in 13 Squadron out of Hughes field on December 23, 1942. We had flown a total of 489 hours (59 of them at night). Most of those sorties are dim in my memory. One of them stands out, because it changed my life.

We were in a formation of three Hudsons searching for enemy shipping. As we approached the target area a Zeke (a Zero floatplane) taxied across the water, gathering speed to get airborne to attack us. We were the last of the three Hudsons flying in line astern, attacking the floatplane at its most

the water, gathering speed to get airborne to attack us. We were the last of the three Hudsons flying in line astern, attacking the floatplane at its most vulnerable time, while still on the water. The first two aircraft had strafed it. As we came in, I was lying on the floor, manning the belly gun, pointing astern under the aircraft. Of course, I couldn't see what was happening. As the pilot throttled back to lose altitude my only sensation was of our plane rapidly approaching the water, its engines almost silent. Then, just as we passed over the floatplane, it exploded. We were very low. The suddenness of the explosion, the acrid smell and shower of debris, convinced me we were about to die. Later, when I contemplated the incident, I realised that the thought uppermost in my mind was simply that we should not have been there. We were standing in for a crew which had gone south on leave ahead of its allotted time because their pilot's wife was about to have a baby.

I knew then that, despite my Methodist upbringing and the years of attending church and Sunday school, I really didn't have any deep religious conviction. Faced with the prospect of almost certain death (or so I thought), I was consumed by superficial (almost frivolous) thoughts. It caused me to think seriously about my faith. I realised it was pretty shallow, and the recollection of a former Methodist minister on the staff at Wagga whose behaviour was anything but exemplary, did nothing to strengthen it. Perhaps there was a God, but I could find no firm factual evidence to support that belief – and until I found it I wasn't going to pretend there was. Months later I was told I was an agnostic.

Despite that, I continued to attend church spasmodically, and read the Bible more assiduously than I ever had, searching for, but failing to find, the evidence I needed to convince me of the teachings of my youth. It was nine years before I gave up the search (at a Rotary meeting of all places) with acceptance of the message of the Presbyterian minister delivering the Easter message, that not all things can be scientifically proven: that our lives are built on faith, and would be barren and impoverished without it.

Looking back, I wonder why those of us who were serving in what was then known as the North Western Sector, based on Darwin and flying out over Timor and adjacent islands, knew so little of what was happening elsewhere in the South Pacific theatre. Of course there were no newspapers or radio or television. We were isolated from news of the momentous sea and air battles such as Midway and the Battle of the Coral Sea, which were the turning point in the South Pacific war. We had our own little area to patrol and protect. That it was appreciated was evidenced in a letter dated October 11, 1942 sent to our C.O. by General George C. Kenney, Commander U.S. Army Air Force, which read:—

1. I wish to take this opportunity to commend Squadron Number 13, Royal Australian Air Force, for the excellent manner in which its

assignments were performed in the Timor area during the period from August 10, 1942 to September 18, 1942.

2. The initiative and courage demonstrated during the numerous reconnaissance and photographic missions as well as in the raids made on enemy shipping and ground installations were very gratifying. I r e f e r particularly to the attacks carried out by nine Hudsons on August 10, 1942, against two enemy vessels, which resulted in the sinking of one of them; also the attack made by nine Hudsons on troops, buildings and motor transports at Mape, Timor, on August 14, 1942. All bombs were dropped in the target area, with several direct hits having been scored. The successful reconnaissance missions which were carried out over Beco, Viqueue, Mova Anadia and Cape Beacon proved to be of the utmost importance.

3. Those operations contributed greatly to the success enjoyed by the allied forces during this period and your squadron can feel justly proud of the part it played.

Referring to my log book, I note we took part in both the operations mentioned on August 10 and August 14 (in Hudson Al6-243). Half a century later I haven't even the faintest recollection of them. For me, it was good training for what lay ahead. But I was glad to leave on the eve of Christmas 1942, to spend several weeks with my family in Ingham.

I was posted to No. 1 Operational Training Unit at East Sale, for conversion to Beauforts. After 11 hours of dual instruction I did my first solo - the first 40 minutes of a long association over a period of almost exactly two and a half years during which I logged 954 hours on a machine widely regarded as unsafe and unpredictable. Not for nothing were they referred to in some quarters as "flying coffins". They had their limitations, but were nevertheless a useful medium bomber, which gave great service.

They were built originally in Britain, but later in Australia. It says a great deal for the ability of the average Australian tradesman that a piece of machinery as complicated as a Beaufort could be built in such a short space of time, starting from scratch, and that it performed as well as the original version built in a country with a much longer tradition and experience in such manufacture.

After completing my Beaufort conversion on June 3, 1943 we assembled a crew (a navigator and two wireless air gunners) and spent two months in training at O.T.U. and two months with 32 Squadron, operating out of Coffs Harbour on anti-submarine patrols, much of it at night. This was valuable experience, for much of my subsequent flying was at night. In late August 1943 I received word of our posting to 6 Squadron, Milne Bay (Papua New Guinea). They had been a Hudson squadron. We were to

replace them with Beauforts - new aircraft, and new crews.

I went home for a couple of weeks' leave in Ingham, with instructions to report to the R.A.A.F. at Garbutt (Townsville). A ferry pilot would fly my aircraft and crew from Richmond to Garbutt. I had much more important business to attend to. Word had come back that the Hudson crews had determined to drink the officers' mess dry. They weren't going to leave anything for the rookies from the south - and who could blame them? I was given the task of buying all the scotch and gin I could get within the limits of my cash resources. Fortunately, and largely because I didn't drink it myself, I had a fair credit in my pay book, so I drew most of it and set about my business.

I dealt mainly with two of the large wholesale wine and spirit merchants of Townsville. So here was I, a teetotaler, buying huge quantities of potent spirits, duty free and straight out of bond on to our aircraft. Scotch was in short supply so I could get only one case for every five of gin. Every crew going through was instructed to report to me. I would meet them with a truck load of grog, and they'd leave loaded down with cases stacked in every spare space on the aircraft. At no stage did I run short of liquor; and not one plane went through without taking on board its precious cargo. I was the last to join the squadron, and arrived to a hero's welcome - or perhaps it was just curiosity.

We operated out of Milne Bay for several months before moving to Goodenough Island, a little closer to our principal targets in New Britain. Rabaul was the main one. It had a magnificent harbour, ringed by high hills, and with three well defended air strips - an ideal refuge for the large Japanese naval force poised to strike against our northern defences.

Milne Bay was far from ideal as a base. The strip was built right on the water's edge, and at the end of a long narrow bay, with mountains on each side. Invariably we took off and landed toward the water, knowing that if we over-shot we'd land in the bay, and that if we came in too low we'd end up in the trees. It was also a bad strip to return to at night, in foul weather. More than once we found ourselves milling around near the mouth of the bay in thick clouds and rain with visibility near zero, waiting for daylight and wondering how many others were doing likewise - and how close they were. Of course we observed radio silence, so the risk of collision was high.

In strikes against Rabaul and enemy shipping we sometimes staged in for a night or two at Kiriwina Island, to get us closer to the target. One of the things that impressed me greatly during our frequent stop-overs was the courage and camaraderie of the American air crews. We were bombing under cover of darkness. They were going in against one of the most heavily defended targets in the world at that time, at low level in broad daylight. We would often share the "chow line" with them. They ate

better than we did, so we were never reluctant to join them. Usually they were eating after having bombed. We were doing it before we went out. The Americans ate as a crew, officers and enlisted men together. We ate in separate lines, officers separated from non-commissioned officers, despite the fact that in a few hours we would be mutually dependent. In the air, rank counted for nothing. Knowing what I know now, and with the benefit of a little more maturity, I think I should have been prepared to risk disciplinary action to have Pete (our air gunner) join us at meal time when we were engaged in operations away from base. But, like most, I was hostage to tradition.

One of the most memorable events of that operational tour, for me, occurred when the three Beaufort Squadrons (6, 8 and 100) were called out to attack a large enemy convoy steaming toward Rabaul. (Incidentally, I later discovered Ken Scheller was on the same strike). 100 Squadron were to go in under cover of darkness with torpedoes. We were to bomb from relatively low level. I was flying in formation in heavy cloud and darkness when I became separated from the flight, as did most of the others, it transpired, for the weather was pretty bad. After stooging around trying to find someone or something, our radio operator picked up on our radar something that looked like a ship. We came down cautiously through the cloud, and there it was directly ahead – a long dark shape, waves breaking over the bow, obviously steaming full speed ahead to Rabaul. I opened the bomb doors and we made our approach with the target between us and the moon, losing altitude as quickly as possible. At low altitude we released our bomb load, and scored a direct hit.

Within hours an American reconnaissance plane was on its way to confirm the strike. It returned with a report of a fire on board the stricken vessel. Unfortunately for my reputation, one of our own aircraft did a reconnaissance in that area later in the day. It got a little closer to the target, which it identified as a little island! We had hit it, and it was on fire. But we hadn't sunk it! That was about as close as I ever got to being decorated for gallantry – and all because someone decided to double-check the report of the American crew.

My nine month tour of duty with 6 Squadron came to an end on 19 June, 1944. We had flown a total of 299 hours in that time, and had successfully completed 14 strikes (seven daylight, seven at night). We had also patrolled thousands of square miles of ocean, searched for enemy submarines (didn't ever sight one) and for missing allied aircraft.

Those unfamiliar with life in an air force squadron might wonder how we filled in our spare time, having flown only 299 hours in nine months – an average of only 33 hours per month – for we were completely cut off from civilisation as we know it. Much of it was spent making "foreigners" (trinkets such as ash trays, scale model aircraft) out of perspex, pearl shell and spent cartridges. But most of it was spent either waiting for the

(trinkets such as ash trays, scale model aircraft) out of perspex, pearl shell and spent cartridges. But most of it was spent either waiting for the weather to clear, or in preparing for flights that didn't eventuate, or if they did were cut short by bad weather which obscured the target area and resulted in a recall. The constant frustrations of wasted time and effort (principally because of weather) are a recurring theme throughout a diary I kept.

There is one entry made on May 23, 1944, which I cannot read today (more than 50 years later) without being moved to tears, so vivid is it in my memory. I have hesitated to repeat it here, because it expressed a hatred toward the Japanese people which I no longer have; but I still cannot understand how so many decent people, under a cruel and barbaric leadership, became so depraved. Here is that diary entry –

Heard today of a jap atrocity repulsive beyond imagination. One of our naval officers present at the Hollandia landing told Doug Lorimer they found three Australian Army Nurses, riddled with disease and completely mental from constant rape. They didn't even know their own names. These girls, protected internationally under the rules of the Geneva Convention, have been used as prostitutes for the scum of the earth. Here and now I pledge myself to the extermination of every yellow rat on the face of the earth, without pity and without mercy. We are fighting beasts.

And then, an added remark directed at those who, having chosen to stay at home, working in protected occupations such as wharf labourers, went on strike to better pay conditions – "Would that our people down south knew of these things. There'd be no strikes and no complaints regarding rationing etc."

I was posted to No.1 Operational Training Unit at East Sale, as an instructor on Beauforts. With the war in Europe winding down, we were being sent some very experienced and highly decorated pilots to train. Most of them were to go on to fly Beaufighters. These were based on the Beaufort. They were fast, sturdy and highly effective as a fighter and in low level attack against troops and military installations. There was no provision for dual instruction, so we taught them how to fly the Beaufort, and gave them some elementary instruction in low level bombing and gunnery and formation flying. Of course, we were also training pilots to go on to operational work in Beauforts, for they were by now firmly established as an effective weapon in the air war in the north.

My time at O.T.U. was uneventful – routine, almost. It was much like any job – fairly regular and predictable hours, good living conditions, in close proximity to a fairly large town with all the normal facilities. In my

15 months there I flew 425 hours, so there was time to do other things.

I decided to spend that time preparing for civilian life. I brought my study books to Sale, and started in earnest to revise those final subjects I had yet to complete. There are few places in Australia colder than Sale in the depth of winter, with winds sweeping in across the ocean from the Antarctic. Although the large, well-appointed officers' mess with its big log fire was inviting, I chose to study in my room, attired in a heavy flying suit over my pyjamas. About 9 p.m. I would go over to the mess for a cup of hot cocoa and a toasted cheese sandwich, then back to study for another hour or so.

I well remember the night the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. I had been flying, and came into our hut to find everyone huddled round a radio set, listening to the news. We knew then that the war was all but over. Conversation centred on what we would do on discharge. It was difficult for many. Most of us had joined from shops and offices in our late teens, and now after five years were approaching our mid-twenties. Apart from those who had decided to continue in the aviation industry (T.A.A. was then in its embryo stage) the air force years were wasted years in terms of occupational experience. But they were pressure cooker years in terms of personal development. Young men had had responsibility and leadership thrust upon them. It would be difficult to take up where they had left off.

One night I was standing at the bar, discussing the future with a friend who had joined from a bank – a relatively junior employee. But five years in the R.A.A.F. had matured him beyond his years. He was a good combat pilot, resourceful and competent. He said there was no way he could go back to working nine to five in a bank; but he didn't want to continue with flying, and hadn't saved enough to be able to go into business. He was telling me how lucky I was. (Wasn't it Gary Player who said "The harder I work, the luckier I get" ?). I had continued my studies, I had saved most of what I had been paid, and I knew exactly what I was going to do the day I left the force. (Incidentally, he went back to the bank, and rose through the ranks to become a branch manager.)

I flew for the last time on September 11, 1945. I had logged a total of 1,689 hours and 35 minutes. It still stands at that. Principally because of the condition of my eyes, I decided not to take up recreational flying after the war.

After some leave, I reported to the unit at Sandgate for discharge – the same station I had entered in April 1942 for my initial aircrew training. On October 5, 1945 I was again a civilian, but a different one after five years and four months in the R.A.A.F., keen to get established before the years passed me by. For I was 24.

Civvie Street

The past fifteen months, during which I had revised the work necessary to finalise my accountancy examinations, had prepared me mentally and psychologically for the transition to civilian life. I was anxious to get going. Within three weeks I had taken two of the remaining subjects necessary for qualification, intending to complete the course at the next examinations the following April – which I did. Perhaps I could have tried for them all in the one sitting in October, in the off chance that I might have passed them all – or at least some of them. Many students operated that way. But my cautious nature was such that I sat for an exam only when I felt sure of passing – and in consequence I qualified without ever having to repeat a subject. I think it was a better approach, because one went into the examination room better prepared and with a more positive expectation of the result.

I returned for a few weeks to my former employer at his request, to help out; the 'taxation season' then being in full swing. But I didn't intend to stay. I wanted to get some commercial accounting experience, and was fortunate to get a job in the costing department of a large (by country town standards) wholesale and retail store in Innisfail. I went there on the understanding that I would be staying only six months, interested less in what I would earn than in what I could learn. It was an invaluable experience, which stood me in good stead later, for I now had some first hand knowledge of what went on on the other side of the counter.

Innisfail in the summer is hot and humid. My fifteen months in Sale must have softened me to the rigours of life in North Queensland in the summer, for I found it necessary, when studying at night, to wrap a small towel around my arms to absorb the sweat which poured out of me on to the paper on which I was working. But I persevered, and by April, 1946, in the month in which I turned 25, I had passed my final exams, entitled at last to write after my name the initials A.F.I.A. (Associate of the Federal Institute of Accountants).

Exactly six months after going to Innisfail I returned to Ingham. My father, who was by then an Insurance agent, was ill for a time, so for a couple of months until he recovered I took over his "run" riding my bicycle around the town collecting monthly life assurance premiums, popular in those days because few could afford to pay annually despite the

fact that it made much better business sense.

I intended to start a practice in Ingham. Premises were scarce, but the Bank of New South Wales was in the process of purchasing (for future use) a building which they were prepared to lease to me. But National Security Regulations were still in force, strangling transactions such as these in red tape. In consequence, neither the vendor nor the purchaser could give me possession. I found the delay irksome, but there was nothing I could do to speed the process.

Unless we were directly affected by them, I believe most of us who lived through that era have forgotten how long it took Government bureaucracies to relinquish war-time controls which had little relevance in peace time. Looking through some records recently I was surprised to discover a "Motor Spirit Consumer's Licence Issued Pursuant to Reg. 20", issued to my father on November 1, 1949, entitling him to a monthly ration of 45 gallons of petrol - 40 for business purposes, five for private use. Each month, as the ration tickets were issued, the licence was endorsed. I have four of these tickets, each for two gallons, with the instruction: "This ticket must be endorsed in ink by consumer with name, licence number and vehicle registration number." The final issue was made on January 31, 1950 - four years and five months after the end of hostilities.

The Japanese surrendered after only four years and eight months of intensive warfare. Our bureaucracy could have taught them a lesson or two on survival in a hostile environment - for petrol rationing was anything but popular. But there were other contributing factors. We were at that time entirely dependent on imports, so perhaps there may also have been an economic imperative in the rationing of a commodity we now take for granted. And perhaps we were more concerned than we now appear to be about an adverse balance of payments and ballooning foreign debt.

After months of interminable waiting, I decided to look elsewhere to hang my shingle. I had heard about a little town named Nambour, in which there was only one practising accountant, so I volunteered to assist my former boss's son drive a truck to Toowoomba (he was buying them from Army disposals on the Atherton tableland, driving them 1,500 km. through to Toowoomba, and selling them on the Darling Downs). In due course we delivered the vehicle, and I made my way to Nambour. My first reaction was favourable. I liked the appearance of the town, and it seemed to be busy. I didn't know anyone, but I enquired of locals in the street as to whether or not this was a typical day. "No," they told me, "today's Friday. It's always busy on Friday. Tuesdays it's dead." So I came back on Tuesday, and decided if this was as dead as it became, it would do me. I had made my decision - and I've never regretted it.

But premises were the problem. There wasn't a vacant office in the town. I had a letter of introduction to an ex-Army Major who had set up in

town. I had a letter of introduction to an ex-Army Major who had set up in real estate, so I enlisted his help. He told me he thought my only hope was a large two-storied building in the centre of town, with a general store on the ground floor and offices on the top floor. Just to be sure, we went across the street, borrowed a chair, stood on it and looked in through high-light windows into a couple of the rooms, which were empty. This would be ideal, so we went to see the owner.

My friend introduced me, with a harrowing account of my exploits as a young pilot who needed just a little office to enable him to become established in business in the town. But his plea fell on deaf ears. Those rooms, we were informed, were needed on occasions to store reserve stocks. (Eighteen years later, in partnership with three others, I bought the building and in due course had my office there). But for the present I was homeless.

Then we heard there was a cafe in the main street, the upper floor of which had been used during the war years as a dance floor. The owner was planning to partition off a portion of that area to be tenanted by the brother of a local bank officer, who intended setting up an accountancy practice upon discharge from the army in four or five months.

I had no compunction in persuading the cafe proprietor that I had a greater claim to the space than he did, explaining that priorities for discharge were determined by length of service, and especially of active service. Since I had already been out for twelve months, and had completed two tours on active service, I felt justified in arguing that I had a greater claim on the premises, and he agreed.

So I returned to Ingham, to prepare for the great adventure on which I was about to embark. Again, I had to be patient. Materials were scarce, and it was several weeks before the six feet high (aprox. 2 m.) three-ply partitions were in place, providing two very small offices with a connecting door. It was far from ideal. Access was by way of a long flight of stairs, opening not to the street but to the middle of the cafe, so that one had first to negotiate the rows of tables and chairs to find me. By now the "taxation season" was just about over. I would have a long wait for my first fee. But I was prepared for this. A friend who had been established for many years warned me that I could expect to lose money for the first eighteen months to two years - and he was right.

I kept a diary during those early months, and I'm glad I did, for mercifully time has erased from my memory some of the early frustrations and disappointments. But through it all I remained optimistic. Typical of my attitude at that time was a cutting I had taken from some publication and pasted inside the front cover of the diary, which read:-

There is a single reason why 99 of 100 average business men never become leaders. That is their unwillingness to pay the price of

responsibility. By the price of responsibility I mean hard, driving, continuous work – the courage to make decisions, to stand the gaff – the scourging honesty of never fooling yourself about yourself. You travel the road to leadership heavily laden.

I arrived in Nambour by train at 4.45 a.m. on Sunday, October 27, 1946. As I stood on the darkened station platform and saw the train retreating into the distance, suddenly realising my suitcases were still in the luggage van, I felt terribly lonely. My diary entry for that day reads: "Don't think I've ever felt more homesick. A stranger in a strange town, not even sure of a room at the hotel, I would have sold out cheaply as the train pulled out and cast me upon a world heedless of my isolation."

But it wasn't long before I was set up for business. In fact, just a week later, after buying office furniture, a safe and a second hand typewriter, on Monday, November 4, 1946 I opened my door to a public who couldn't have cared less – who had never heard of me.

It was a time of rapid change. Soldiers who had served in the area during the war were returning to start businesses or to take up land, growing pineapples. Many of them under-estimated the work and capital required to be successful pineapple-growers. It all looked so easy. But they learnt. Like me, they were young, and had no established connections. Many of them were prepared to entrust their accounting and taxation affairs to this 25 year old accountant who had more faith and enthusiasm than experience, although my knowledge of the statutes was up to date, and I had several State and Australian honours to my credit in my qualifying examinations.

Thus, I was able to build a practice by getting my share of new business coming into the area, without attracting existing clients from Bentley & Shrapnel, the other practice in the town. In consequence, our relationship was always open and friendly. In fact, at one of our first meetings Jasper Bentley said to me: "You're on your own. There'll be times when you'll want to talk over a problem with someone. Don't hesitate to give me a call."

I believe he was invited, as the longest established accountant in the town, to join as a charter member of the Rotary Club of Nambour, but declined because he was too busy, and suggested they give me a go. Fifteen years later, when I qualified for Senior Active membership, it was my great privilege to propose him for membership. He told me then that for most of that time he had regretted not being a member.

Arriving as a stranger in the town, I knew I had to make an effort to get to know people. For me that was against my natural inclinations. I was fairly retiring, and had to force myself to be involved in community affairs.

Not long after I had commenced practice I heard footsteps coming up the

stairs – actually, a footstep, for it was Reg. Hammond (a one legged bowler) who had come to invite me to join the Bowling Club (as it was then called). I pointed out to him that I was only 25, and any bowler I had met was at least twice that age. Not so, he assured me. We have a few in their forties. Then it transpired that the real reason for the invitation was that Jasper Bentley, who had been Treasurer since pre-war days, was no longer prepared to do it. Realising that this was an opportunity to get to know a group of men with whom I would not normally associate, I accepted the invitation. For me it was a strange experience. I called every-one Mr.; not for me the familiarity of Christian names. I learned to play, and actually enjoyed the game. But I was also playing tennis, and when later I met June I abandoned bowls to play tennis in the church team in which she was a member.

The R.S.&A.I.L.A. was a very active organisation, comprising returned servicemen with whom I had much in common – the leadership in the hands of World War I Diggers, but with World War II members taking an increasingly active interest. I attended monthly meetings very regularly, enjoying the fellowship but being too shy to enter into debate. However, one night something was being discussed about which I felt strongly enough to get to my feet and have my say. Apart from the clammy palms and the trickle of sweat down my back, I got some satisfaction from expressing my opinion. Having done it once, I became increasingly involved in discussions at monthly meetings. I soon found myself on the committee, and in 1949 was elected president of the sub-branch.

Two incidents in that year stand out. We had a member (a first world War Digger) who came to every meeting, well fortified after an hour or two at his favourite hotel, spoiling for an argument. True to form, he chose my first meeting as president for a command performance, continually disrupting the meeting. Finally someone moved that he be removed from the meeting. I had no trouble getting a seconder, and promptly put the motion. It's one thing to pass such a motion; it's another to give effect to it. Eventually, after protracted argument and threats, the old Digger pulled his badge from his coat, threw it on the floor, and marched out, declaring he was finished with the R.S.L. and would never return. But he did, next month, a much more subdued member. We actually became good friends over many years.

Toward the end of my term we had our annual dinner; probably about 50 or 60 present, seated at long trestle tables on long fold-up stools, each accommodating about six people. It was traditional, at such meetings, to drink a toast to fallen comrades – always a solemn occasion. And so in due course I rose, raised my glass, and said "Gentlemen, the toast is to fallen comrades." At that instant, one of the fold-up stools collapsed, and there were six fallen comrades on the floor, trying valiantly to get to their feet

to honour the toast to those other fallen comrades for whom it was intended.

It was at the R.S.L. sub-branch meetings that I first got a taste for public speaking; initially, just the confidence to say a few words; later the ability to join in debate. Although I didn't realise it then, it was to be very helpful to me in later life.

I had been invited to join Legacy. There was no local branch. I used to go regularly to Brisbane in company with the only other Nambour member of Brisbane Legacy, where I was a member for more than 20 years, until my involvement on the Rotary International Board took me away so often and for so long that I found it necessary to resign. Legacy membership imposes an obligation to be available as adviser to a family or families needing advice and assistance following the loss of the husband/father; and that means being readily available at times of need. It is a great organisation, working quietly to provide support when and where it is most needed. There are hundreds of men and women, prominent in business and community life to-day, who will readily attest to the vital influence of Legacy in their lives.

So when I was invited, just a few years after my R.S.L. presidency, to make my first public speech, and to deliver the Anzac day address at the Cenotaph, I spoke with some feeling about the need to support Legacy. I have in my possession a newspaper cutting, which reports that speech. Reading it now, so many years later, I recall the conviction with which I spoke, pleading the cause of the widows and children of men who had died on active service. It was then that I realised the power of the spoken word. It can be a powerful instrument for good.

Apart from my Presidency of the R.S.S&A.I.L.A., two other events occurred about this time which have done more than any other to shape my life – I saw June, and I joined Rotary.

I say "I saw June" because I think I had been aware of her for some time prior to this, but she was no more than just another person in the passing parade. She worked as receptionist for a doctor. I would frequently see her walking along the street, always immaculate in her snow white dress. (I learned later that she used to go home for lunch and iron out any wrinkles, so that it would be fresh for the afternoon). My sister, Lynette, who was working for me, fearing I would remain a bachelor, had engineered a meeting at a dance – ironic, because I was no dancer. We later went out together a few times, but only casually.

I was living at a boarding house at the time. Among the boarders was a tall, good looking school teacher. At the meal table one evening he was telling us how he had visited a local doctor, and there had met this beautiful receptionist – not beautiful in the film star sense, but neat and clean and wholesome looking. I knew immediately what doctor he had been to, and seeing June through his eyes decided I had better do something about it

and wholesome looking. I knew immediately what doctor he had been to, and seeing June through his eyes decided I had better do something about it before someone else did. So I have Don Hogarth (later a member of the Rotary Club of Melbourne) to thank for opening my eyes.

I delayed proposing marriage until I felt certain of my ability to provide adequately for her. I remember, not long before our engagement, briefing her on my financial position and my prospects for the future, as only an accountant would. She told me later she didn't hear a word of it. She was prepared to take whatever risk there was in marrying this young man whose practice was only then beginning to show signs of growth, because she loved him.

We were engaged for a couple of years before marrying on February 10, 1951. We were blessed with two children (Noel, born June 1, 1952 and Judy, born November 30, 1954) and 42 incomparable years of happiness and shared Rotary experiences, before a non-malignant brain tumour snuffed out her life on November 2, 1993. More than 600 letters and cards from around the world testified to the place she had in the hearts of people. In the hundreds of photographs I have, taken on our travels, meeting people in a great variety of circumstances, the image which shines through is of one whose whole attention is focused on the person with whom she is talking at that moment. She was genuinely interested in people, their problems and their interests.

An incident in Evanston illustrates that perfectly – perhaps more dramatically than normally. I had spent the day attending a meeting of the 3-H committee. We had been receiving proposals for a variety of immunisation projects, but predominantly for polio. Finally, we realised we could not accommodate them all, and decided to direct our limited funds to polio immunisation. In consequence, we had to turn down a request from India to immunise three million children against red measles, a potent killer of large numbers of malnourished children.

That evening we went to dinner with Jim and Edith Bonar. Jim was interested to know what had been decided at the 3-H meeting. I told him of our reluctant decision to reject the red measles immunization project. When we arrived back at our hotel, I could see that June had something on her mind. "Tell me," she said, "why did you turn down that project in India?" I explained that because of the heavy demands upon its resources, the committee had decided to give priority to funding for polio vaccines. "So how many children are at risk because of that decision?" she asked quietly. "Three million," I replied, and immediately knew June had seen, through the eyes of a caring mother, what the committee had failed to see – the anguish of a mother who loses a child to a disease which could be prevented at minimal cost through immunisation. That decision was reversed the following day.

June was not one to make speeches, or to expound publicly on Rotary

policies or procedures. She never sought the limelight, preferring to take her place quietly in the crowd. She listened, and she cared deeply about people. Others saw her as I had so many years ago, and were attracted to her by those same qualities which had drawn me to her – her simple, wholesome goodness. Rotary owes her a great deal for the example she set, as it does to so many Rotary wives for their quiet, constant support and encouragement of those of us who, but for them, would be much less effective in our Rotary service.

Shortly after commencing business I had been advised to make myself known to the local solicitors, bankers and real estate people, which I did. It was good advice. In discussion with one of the solicitors, I happened to mention that I had seen no evidence in Nambour of a small local finance company, such as had operated in Ingham. He was interested, and asked me to get him more information. In due course I met with him and a real estate agent to discuss the possibility of establishing a small company to provide hire purchase facilities to the customers of local traders.

Out of that meeting grew Maroochy Finance Company, in which I held a one-seventh share. The business grew rapidly. Realising its potential, I decided to ask my partners to permit me to increase my interest to a full one-third share, while it was still within my reach. They generously agreed, no doubt drawing reassurance from the fact that the partner running the business on a day to day basis was prepared to commit what was to him a substantial portion of his resources to the enterprise.

It was a struggle for me at the time, but it paid off handsomely in the long run. We decided, early in the firm's life, to operate as a partnership with full personal exposure to risk, rather than as a company with the protection of personal limited liability.

Other business ventures followed, as funds became available – always (with one exception), in partnership with others. This technique provided several advantages. It enabled me to spread what capital I had over a number of risks; in the event of my incapacity or death, June would be able to turn to others who had a financial stake in the enterprise; banks and insurance companies seemed to favour lending to a group of three or four, with the spread of risk and responsibility; and of course there was the sharing of ideas.

The groups (usually three or four) with which I was associated were rarely the same – different investments attracted different people. My interests were as diverse as rental properties, land sub-division, motels, sawmilling, a private hospital, a motor garage and, for a short time, a squash court – which made for a very interesting life, far removed from the stereotype of an accountant sitting under a bright light, eyes protected by an eye shade, laboriously adding up long columns of figures. And of course these business ventures all contributed to the growth of my accountancy practice – in fact, to an extent never contemplated when first

And of course these business ventures all contributed to the growth of my accountancy practice – in fact, to an extent never contemplated when first I became involved in them.

One day I was approached by a man (not a client) with substantial financial resources who said he had heard of Maroochy Finance Company, and asked if I would be prepared to set him up in a similar business. So I then operated both local finance companies. Then a retailer client decided he should do his own hire purchase financing and came to me for advice, so I set him up with identical forms, rate charts and systems.

Much the same occurred with my sawmilling interests. Initially I had a small interest in a small mill. One day I was approached by the owners of a competing but much larger mill, inviting me to do their accounting and taxation work. Of course, I disclosed my interest in their competitor.

It was not long before our little mill was taken over, and I became a shareholder in the larger sawmilling business, which expanded rapidly and became one of the two major sawmilling groups in our area. The larger, better financed mills were able to make better use of a diminishing resource than the smaller family-owned mills, operating less efficiently and less profitably. So a plan was devised for a rationalisation and reconstruction of the industry over a large area of South East Queensland. I was involved in the rather complex task of devising a formula, fair to all concerned, which would facilitate the amalgamation of the milling operations, licences and timber resources of all the mills in the area, some taking cash, some taking shares in a new company to be formed.

Having been for several years accountant, auditor and shareholder (albeit a minor one) in one of the two major operators, I derived great personal satisfaction from the fact that long time competitors were prepared to trust me (as they did) in devising a formula which ensured fair treatment to everyone. It was a practical demonstration of the relevance of the Four Way Test to present day business operations. I guess what we did then couldn't happen today. The Trade Practices Act would be invoked to prevent it on the basis that it would create a monopoly. But it made good business and environmental sense, and was beneficial to all concerned.

Thus, the accountancy practice grew, because I didn't just sit in my office and wait for business to come through the door, but because I became actively and personally involved in a variety of commercial enterprises which grew and required the accounting and financial services we offered.

The exception to which I referred above was the purchase by June and me, as joint tenants, of a block of land in the commercial heart of Nambour, on which we planned to build an office which would be my headquarters. This opportunity came about in a most unusual way.

Six weeks after I commenced in practice, on Friday December 13, 1946, Nambour suffered a disastrous fire, which destroyed a large part of its main street. The Shire Council moved quickly to acquire sufficient of the land made vacant by the fire to construct a new street. Suddenly and unexpectedly there was an opportunity to open up this area to commercial development.

I attended the auction when it was put on the market, keen to acquire a stake in the town in which I hoped to spend most of my life. It was offered on most generous terms – as I recall on a deposit of 10% with extended terms for the balance, interest at 5% p.a. The auction was well attended by most of the established businessmen in the town – but they couldn't be persuaded to respond to the auctioneer's invitation to bid 50 pounds per foot frontage for lots with quite good depth. I thought the price and terms were attractive, but as a novice in these matters decided that if the smart operators present were not prepared to respond, I wouldn't. The auction was a failure, but those same businessmen (or many of them) bought immediately afterwards at bargain prices. I had missed out because of my caution, and was disappointed.

When I heard several months later that it may be possible to buy portion of the unused land adjoining Whalley Chambers, I made an offer (at substantially more than 50 pounds per foot frontage) and had it accepted. So June and I now had a centrally-located allotment on which we would build an office. But the opportunity to invest in a motel came up soon after that, so we deferred the office-project.

Eventually, we were able to contribute this land to a larger project incorporating Whalley Chambers, and then to build, on what had been our land, a retail store and office which I occupied for many years, right up to the time of my retirement in 1973.

The one continuing business venture in which I have been involved for almost forty years (and continue to be involved) happened by chance. One day a real estate salesman approached my two partners in the finance company, offering for sale a small sub-division at Noosa Heads which had been on the market for some time. We were able to buy it at the right price and sell it quickly at a good profit.

Encouraged by this venture, we formed a private company (with the three of us as equal shareholders). We decided to incorporate, not to escape personal legal liability, but to ensure continuity of title in the event of the death of one of us. The wisdom of that decision has since been demonstrated, for although both my original partners have passed on, their interests have transferred to their families without any of the problems of dissolution of partnership and changes of title which would have resulted had we operated as a partnership.

Since that incidental launch in Noosa in the early 1950's we have bought, sub-divided and sold hundreds of acres of land, most of it in the

Since that incidental launch in Noosa in the early 1950's we have bought, sub-divided and sold hundreds of acres of land, most of it in the Maroochy and Noosa Shires. We have always had a sub-division either in course of construction or awaiting sale, and a land bank sufficient for several years' supply. In fact, the land we are presently sub-dividing in Nambour (about 65 acres) is the residue of 200 acres we bought in 1967 – then on the outskirts of town, now surrounded by it.

Land development is a cyclical business. We have insulated ourselves from the attendant risks by operating in a small way, without external debt. Others have made more money buying large tracts of land, borrowing heavily, simultaneously developing large numbers of blocks, and marketing aggressively. But many of them have not survived. The Sunshine Coast is one of the most rapidly developing areas in the State (in fact, in the country), so we have shared in that growth.

In the late fifties, at a time when we were doing particularly well, we discussed the possibility of donating to our church a 17 acre parcel of land close to the town centre, which we had acquired for sub-division, to be used by the church to establish an Aged Persons Village.

But before we could do anything about it, we heard that the Apex Club of Nambour had similar ideas, so we gave them the land on August 2, 1961, and in due course, with a great deal of public support, they built a very fine village (known as Sundale Garden Village), the first stage of which opened on November 30, 1963. It now houses about 350 people in a variety of accommodation (hostels, independent living units and a 115 bed nursing home). One of my partners in the land development business (Jim Grimes) was its first chairman and continued in that office for 18 years to the time of his death, contributing an enormous amount of his time and energy to the project. I was the inaugural treasurer, and remained in that office for 25 years. Thirty years after its establishment it had an operating budget of \$6.7 million and assets valued at \$23 million (much of that financed by resident funded loans).

When the original 17 acres of land had been fully occupied (retaining adequate open space for grounds and gardens etc.), and faced with a continuing demand for the type of accommodation Sundale offered, it became necessary to consider further acquisition of land and expansion of the facilities. My partners in land development (neither of them a Rotarian) readily agreed to our donating another 15 acres of land.

I had received the customary honorarium from Rotary International, intended to defray some of the costs of serving as president full time for a year. Most men who serve in that office make very substantial financial sacrifice (doctors, lawyers etc., who sell only their time) but I was no longer selling time, and had an income from investment which was only marginally affected. To have declined to accept it would have placed undue pressure on some of my successors, so I chose to receive the US\$20,000

honorarium, with the intention of donating it to some worth while charity. Sundale provided that opportunity.

The two Rotary clubs in Nambour raised additional funds, so that by late 1982 we had about \$80,000 in the bank, 15 acres of land, and a plan to establish a second retirement village. To-day Rotary Garden Village, as it is widely known, is home to somewhere near 200 people, in a variety of accommodation in a garden setting, with two recreation halls, a swimming pool, a bowls green and a workshop for hobbyists. In the year to June 30, 1993 it made an operating profit of \$108,000.

I believe this is the type of community service project in which more Rotary clubs could be involved – meeting a major community need, using the organisational skills and experience of their members to mobilise community support (financial and otherwise), then handing over to a community organisation in which representatives of the club continue to be involved, on a personal basis. And because, in my experience, it has been not only self-sustaining but profitable, there is no continuing charge upon the club's resources.

Of course, we were able to utilise the vocational skills of many of our members – foremost among them P.D.G. Rod Voller, who had recently come from Brisbane to Nambour to retire, but soon found himself caught up in a project to which he contributed thousands of hours on a voluntary basis as our honorary architect and planner. The Rod Voller Hostel in the centre of Rotary Garden Village stands as a reminder of his significant contribution to a facility which will serve the local community for many years.

In my first five years in Nambour the foundations were laid for those three factors which have dominated my life – in 1946 my business career, in 1949 my introduction to Rotary, and in 1951 my marriage to June. It is not possible to deal with any of them in isolation. Just as each of the strands in a rope is an integral part of the whole, essential to its strength and usefulness, so has each of these strands been an integral part of my life, providing strength and stability and purpose. But it was my marriage to June which made all else possible, and worthwhile.

Earlier I recounted the circumstances of our meeting, our marriage and the birth of our two children – Noel and Judith. I can't imagine a stronger, more satisfying marriage than ours, due in large measure to the strength of June's character. Noel encapsulated this in a note he wrote for inclusion in the eulogy at her funeral service.

Mum always made sure that things were done properly and that the details of things were right. She was very wise but she never presumed to know. She was a very devoted person, sure of her goals and committed to them. She was a very good mother with a strong focused love for us that was absolutely dependable. She was very strong.

ted to them. She was a very good mother with a strong focused love for us that was absolutely dependable. She was very strong.

Mum's love for Dad was very deep. She was preoccupied with his happiness and contentment and well being. Since she became ill, she and Dad became more dependent on each other. They worked hard and successfully at establishing new ways of being together, and it has been lovely to see.

She dealt with her illness and the possibility of her death thoughtfully, unflinchingly and bravely, and yet she was always concerned about us. But the surgery from which she did not recover was intended to improve the quality of her life: we did not expect her to die and I don't think that she expected to die either. If she had lived, she would have got a lot more pleasure from life. She did not deserve to die.

Over the last three or four years of her life we were trying to spend more time at our holiday unit at Burleigh Heads, where June hoped we would eventually retire. But I still had my business interests in Nambour, so we compromised by spending nine days a fortnight at Burleigh, including most week-ends. It was a good arrangement, except that when we returned to Nambour June had a large home and garden to keep in order, while I caught up on work. She suggested we find a small unit in the area, and sell the home, so that we would be able just to lock up a unit at either end when we moved from one home to the other. We found one in Buderim – one of a small block of four, under construction – unaware at the time of the brain tumour destined to rob her of her dream, or of the pivotal role that decision would have in my future.

In the unit next to ours was a retired couple of the same age, with similar interests – Ted and Firth Coates. Ted had been a bomber pilot in World War II, as I had. Firth was interested in craft and art, as was June. We became firm friends. But within seven months of our moving in June had died, and seven weeks later Ted.

Living in adjacent units, grieving together, with common interests, it was perhaps inevitable that our friendship as neighbours would deepen to a love which brought Firth and me together in marriage on September 17, 1994. "It was meant to be" says Firth. I don't subscribe to that theory, but I do know I will always be grateful that June came into my life when she did – and that at a time when I needed it most Firth did. She knew nothing of Rotary when we met, but has learned fast, and exhibits an enthusiasm for its programs and work which is stimulating and refreshing.

There is so much more I want to say about my life with June, but this is not the place for it. I intend writing a personal family history, just for the

Rotary comes to Nambour

I had been in business less than three years when representatives of the Rotary Club of Gympie surveyed Nambour for the possibility of forming a Rotary club. I think they were well advanced with their investigations when I was invited to be a charter member. I suspect the fact that I had office facilities, and that the other accountant in the town was too busy for Rotary, influenced that decision. Anyway, I was the charter secretary. We were chartered on September 26, 1949.

Gympie is about 80 km. from Nambour, and the Gympie Rotary Club was then only 12 months old, so they left us very much to our own devices. However, several of our members had business connections with Rotarians in the South Brisbane Club, so they kept a fatherly eye on us, and we gradually came to understand what it was all about. The first 12 programs were provided by members, four of them group discussions involving the whole club – the blind leading the blind!

Our charter was presented at the Nambour Showgrounds on October 29, 1949, with 217 in attendance. I was the only unmarried member of the club. I had as my guest Miss June Day. It was an affordable night out – only 10/- (\$1) per person! (Assuming inflation of 7% pa., that's equivalent to \$29.00 in 1999, which means the cost of Rotary really hasn't increased as much as we are sometimes tempted to believe.)

In those days we travelled a great deal more to charter nights and conferences than most Rotarians do these days. Our district extended from Casino in the south to Cairns in the north – a distance of approximately 2,000 km. I remember travelling by car, on September 15, 1950, to attend my first district conference in Lismore, where R.I. General Secretary Phil Lovejoy represented the President. I drove down one day and back the next.

We attended charter nights in force from our club, and over distances not now contemplated. I recall a car load travelling to Stanthorpe for their charter night (320 km.) – and on another occasion to Monto (approx. 420 km.) We went to district conferences in good numbers, always with some distinctive gimmick – usually brightly coloured bow ties, one year made especially for us by our wives in the blue and yellow Rotary colours. We went to conferences to be seen, to be heard, and to collect the attendance trophy – and we did it successfully for several years, before

eventually becoming staid and respectable. They were good years.

I was club president in 1954-55, Rotary's Golden Anniversary year. I should have capitalised on this unique historical milestone to do something really significant, but I let the opportunity slip through my fingers. In fact, at the end of my year I had no great sense of achievement, disappointed that I had aimed too low. We did become 100% in The Rotary Foundation, built some bus shelter sheds, prepared the holes for trees which we planted in the local showgrounds the following August, and chartered the Rotary Club of Caloundra. I came to the Presidency too early – married only three years, with a small son, a daughter born during my term, and a young and growing business demanding much of my time. On the positive side, I knew I had done less than I ought, and determined that if the opportunity for further office ever came my way, I wouldn't make the same mistake again.

The following year, for the first time, I experienced Rotary beyond my own district borders. The Pacific Regional Conference was held in Sydney. There, for the first and only time, I met Sir Angus Mitchell, but only briefly. I remember how honoured I felt just to have met him. Kiyoshi (George) Togasaki, who later served as President in 1968-69, was also a featured speaker – memorable for two reasons; he was unexpectedly fluent in English, and he came as an ambassador of peace from a country with which we had so recently had such hostile relations. Because feeling against the Japanese was still strong in many quarters, I admired him for the fact that he was prepared to risk rejection to attend and speak.

The next big Rotary experience for June and me was our attendance at the R.I. Convention in Tokyo in 1961. We travelled, in the company of about 1,200 Rotarians and wives from Australia and New Zealand, aboard the P & O liner The Iberia. What an experience! It was a six week journey, living on board ship. We anchored in Yokohama harbour and travelled to and from the Convention on Harumi pier either by train or ferry. We preferred the ferry. The attendance of 23,366 stood as a record for 17 years, until the next Tokyo convention in 1978, when 39,834 were registered.

There are several things about that convention which remain firmly fixed in my memory. I will never forget the agony of the separation from our two children. They were wonderful – so bright and positive, farewelling us as though we were just going for a week-end. We were distraught at the prospect of being separated for six weeks, regretting when the time came that we had decided to do the trip. I was very conscious of the fact that, if anything serious happened to us, we would have spent money possibly needed for their further education, so I took out additional life assurance cover to compensate for the financial risk, and to ease my troubled conscience.

The R.I. President that year was J. Edd McLaughlin, a tall rangy Texan, whose theme was "You are Rotary. Live it! Express it! Expand it!" In

sharp contrast, both in appearance and style, was Vice-President Richard L. Evans from Salt Lake City, in my view (and that of most people) the finest speaker to serve Rotary as President, which he did six years later, his theme: "Build a better world through Rotary". Attending my first Rotary International Convention, I was fascinated to experience such sharp contrasts in Rotary's leadership, as I have been on many occasions since, for each man brings to the office his own peculiar attributes. Incidentally, Doug Stewart was a Director that year (and 1st Vice-President the following year), although I didn't know him then. Rotary in Nambour then was a long way removed from Rotary in Sydney - and not just geographically.

On board we had regular meetings of members with special interests. Joe Bradbury and Arnold Forsyth were strong proponents of a program new to me - the Youth Exchange Program. I learnt all I could of it, and introduced the idea to my own district, with the first exchanges taking place in my year as governor.

R.I. Past President Harold Thomas was on the ship. One day as I was about to open a door I saw him coming toward me, so I held it open with the remark: "This may be the only chance I will ever have to open a door for a Past President of Rotary." When, during my term as president, a Rotarian would come up to me and say: "I just want to shake the hand of a President of Rotary," I could relate his feelings to mine on the Iberia 18 years earlier.

By now I was well established in my accounting practice in Nambour, always grateful that my earlier ambition to be a lawyer had been thwarted by a lack of money. In a small country town (which is where I prefer to live) lawyers are concerned principally with conveyancing - at least, that was my impression. Perhaps I was wrong, just as are those who look upon the work of an accountant as limited to the preparation of tax returns and the systematic recording of thousands of figures into appropriate categories.

There is a human face to accounting which makes it richly satisfying - not necessarily in the financial sense. I recall, early in my career, having a young business man and his wife and small child come into my office, at the end of their tether. They had put all they had into their little business, living in a rented house badly in need of repair. It had been raining heavily the week they called to see me. The roof was leaking, the mother couldn't get the napkins (diapers) dry, and there was little cash left to carry on the business. They were about to throw in the towel. Years later when they were well established, with their own home and a family long since grown to adulthood (the little baby now a university graduate) I derived great satisfaction from the knowledge that, at that critical time in their lives, I was able to advise on the installation of a costing system which restored profitability to what was fundamentally a good business,

their lives, I was able to advise on the installation of a costing system which restored profitability to what was fundamentally a good business, and to persuade them not to give in so soon.

I had another client whose close call with death brought home to me the need to be concerned with more than just the tax return. He was driving to work one day in his utility when his vehicle and another coming toward him met on a narrow bridge. One of the side rails on the bridge was torn off and speared through the cabin of his truck, missing him by inches. He said he was lucky, because he had insurance on his truck. "What about you?" I asked. He admitted he didn't carry any life assurance, and that if that shaft of wood had speared through just a couple of inches to the left it would have killed him, leaving his wife and children in a very serious financial predicament. And he didn't have a will. After that incident, our interview sheets (completed when we gathered the tax information) contained checks on adequacy of life cover and location of will. It was just a little thing, which cost nothing, but was tremendously important to people; and appreciated.

Sometimes our clients were able to teach us more than we could them. I had been asked by a manufacturer of automobile mufflers to take over his accountancy affairs from a solicitor. His records were very basic - not even a costing system, in a business which employed in excess of 100 people. So I proceeded to install one which I knew would be invaluable as a management tool. Eventually, months after the end of the financial year, the great day arrived. I spread my figures out on his drawing board and told him how much money he had made in the year ended six months earlier. He nodded, and agreed with me that my figure would be about right, and to confirm it drew from his desk drawer a single sheet of paper, on which he had a weekly record of estimated net profit.

Fortunately for me his estimated profit was very close to my carefully and laboriously calculated result. When I asked him how he'd arrived at that figure he said: "Well, it's really fairly elementary. I know how many mufflers we've made, how much material goes into each one, what my wages are that week, and I know what my general overheads are. So I simply enter the invoice total for the week's production loaded on to the delivery truck, deduct the material, wages and overhead costs, and arrive at the week's profit." He knew every Friday how much money he had made. I was able to tell him only at the end of the financial year and to hope my answer was about the same as his.

When I had an interest in a motel in Nambour, I used to telephone the manager on Sunday evening, find out how many guests had been accommodated for the week, and, by a similar process, arrive at the weekly profit. The cumulative total for any accounting period by this method was never far from the figure arrived at by conventional accounting procedures.

Fortunately for accountants, such simple measures of profitability are unacceptable to the tax man and others who have a vested interest in the bottom line. But experiences such as these added spice to a life which may well have been humdrum.

After 17 years in practice as a sole practitioner, I made one of the best decisions of my life. I invited into partnership Doug Clarke, a young man who had come to me from school, with excellent credentials, and had studied while he worked to qualify (as I had done). We commenced in partnership on July 1, 1963, trading as Renouf & Clarke. Our partnership agreement contemplated my eventual gradual retirement from the practice, and to facilitate that, provided for the net profit of the practice to be shared according to the number of productive hours charged by each of us, after deducting agreed salaries and interest on the capital values of our respective interests. It was set up in this way so that, in time, I could gradually reduce my involvement in the practice without financial disadvantage to my partner, or embarrassment to me. Little did I dream then how soon that arrangement would be tested – and how effective it would prove to be.

District Governor 1965-66

The Rotary Club of Nambour had just hosted its first district conference, with almost 1,000 in attendance. I was conference secretary, an assignment which I believe resulted in my being asked the following year to serve as District Governor in 1965-66. Then, close to the deadline for receipt of nominations, as is so often the case, there was only one – an elderly and not very active Rotarian. So District Governor Ted Router, in consultation with my predecessor in office (Allan Maskell), decided to telephone me and try to persuade me to serve.

It was an unusual (and memorable) invitation in many ways. It was a Saturday. I was at home painting the door to my study, contemplating the shattering news that President Kennedy had just been assassinated, when the telephone rang. The conversation went something like this. "Is that you Clem?" "Yes." "It's Ted Router here. Have you ever thought of being District Governor?" "No". "Then think about it." I did, in shocked silence for about ten minutes. Then I went into the kitchen, where June was busily baking, and repeated the conversation. "Oh no!" she said "You could do it Clem. But I never could." How wrong she was.

I had the week-end to think about it. Although I was attracted to the idea, I thought the opportunity had come too soon. Our partnership was only four months old. We needed time to settle in. On Monday morning I told Doug of the conversation, and expressed the opinion that it was about five years too soon. "Would you like to do it?" he asked. I told him I would "Well then," he said, "I think you should. They mightn't ask you in five years. We could do it."

In his methodical way, he then set about re-allocating duties in our office, and encouraged me to accept the invitation. Not once, during the whole of my year as governor, absent from the office for most of the time during the first vital six months of the tax season, did he ever display concern or displeasure that, so soon after entering into partnership, he was asked to carry a disproportionate share of the load of a busy practice. I did as much as I could at week-ends, always grateful that at least our profit-sharing arrangement was fair to my partner, but for whom I could not have served. (Doug later joined our club, served as its president, and having recently retired from practice is still a very active member.)

Looking back, I wonder whether I may ever have served beyond club

president had Doug not been prepared to accept responsibility for carrying the burden of the office so soon after being admitted to partnership. During the five year period I thought we should wait, I served as district governor, group discussion leader, district leadership forum moderator, member of the R.I. Membership Committee, president's representative to a couple of conferences, and was appointed to the R.I. Board. It is unlikely those opportunities would have come in any other five year period.

Our children, too, had to make a sacrifice to enable me to serve as governor. We had promised to take them on a holiday to New Zealand, and they were looking forward to it with keen anticipation. But we could not do that and go to Lake Placid for training. I discussed it with Dr. Jim Trotter, June's former employer, who knew the family well. He said: "Why don't you sit them down, and discuss it with them?" So we had a family conference in the lounge room. We explained the position to them, making it very clear that the promise we had made to them had precedence over my serving as governor. Noel immediately said it would make little difference to him, since he would be going to boarding school that year. Judith said: "Don't worry about that. We can go to New Zealand any time." And she used to tell her friends, "My dad's the district governor - but he wouldn't have been able to do it if we hadn't agreed." Well, we never did get our family holiday together in New Zealand, but they were both exchange students in the U.S.A. during my term on the board, when we were able to spend time with them and their host families, and we've spent time overseas with each of them (but not as a family unit).

The Matched Districts Program was at that time one of the initiatives in the quest for better understanding. My district (260) was matched with three in Ohio, in what was really a futile exercise in international understanding. Looking back through my notes, I found a copy of the speech I gave at each official visit, in which I said:-

What have we achieved? We have learned to know our friends a little better - we have perhaps improved our knowledge of the geography of that part of the United States - but I don't really believe we have made any significant contribution to world understanding.

I think we have failed simply because we've been rather like the small boy who has been handed a powerful telescope without having been told how to use it, and has put the wrong end to his eye. Instead of the big, wide, wonderful world he expects to open up before him, the horizons are close and the view confined. His world is shrunken and puny.

We have done just that with our Matched Districts Program. We've focused it on ourselves, instead of on others. Perhaps we should turn the

focused it on ourselves, instead of on others. Perhaps we should turn the telescope round and focus it on someone else - say the people of India, for instance, where the opportunities are limitless.

Bryce Kendall (later to become a Director of R.I. and Trustee of The Rotary Foundation) was the governor of one of the Ohio districts in 1964-65. He and Allan Maskell decided the Matched Districts Program could best achieve its goal if our districts were to organise to do some really worthwhile project in one of the developing countries. So Allan made this known as he moved through the district on official visits, and in his monthly letter.

One night Eddie Parsons, a member of the Wynnum-Manly Club, attended a meeting of Anglican laymen, at which Dr. Felix Arden (not a Rotarian) spoke of the work of the Christian Medical College and Hospital at Vellore, west of Madras (India). Eddie immediately recognised the possibility of our districts being involved, and mentioned it to Allan Maskell. It was now close to the end of his term as governor, so he suggested I take it up. We were then planning our journey to the international assembly at Lake Placid, so decided to go via Vellore. We spent three days there, living with Drs. Frank and Val Garlick (missionary doctors from Brisbane), painfully aware of the enormous unmet needs and of the great opportunity we had to do something about it. In my address to the clubs on official visit, I used to say:-

It's much easier to talk about nations than about the people who make up those nations. I can talk about India and its poverty in a detached sort of way, because I can do so little to alleviate the distress of 300 million people. But I cannot talk about the poverty and the need and the helplessness of the people who come to Vellore (2,000 of them every day) without being moved, because here I am talking about persons - individuals - my fellow human beings. (As I write this, 34 years later, that 300 million is more than 800 million)

And I was in fact deeply moved, to the point of being distressed at each of the first three club visits when the words were matched in my memory with the pleading in the eyes of those hapless souls so dependent on the staff of this hospital. Fortunately, I managed to control my emotions at the fourth and subsequent visits. I didn't want to be remembered as the weeping governor.

In discussion with the Garlicks and others, we devised a plan under which we would set up a fund, from which would be paid the return air fares of a number of doctors or other medical staff to travel to Australia. We would find them employment at one of our local hospitals for a period of from six to twelve months. Newly acquired skills would be taken back to

India, and newly established contacts would strengthen ties of international friendship, the purpose of the plan.

Subsequently at the Conference of District 665 in Cleveland, Ohio, I was invited to speak of the work being done in Vellore, and shared my hopes for a joint district project, with the four districts subscribing to a fund to be known as "The Nitish Laharry Memorial Fund". [Nitish Laharry was at that time the only Indian to have served as President of R.I.] The target was to raise a capital fund of \$16,500, to be invested at 7% per annum to yield in excess of \$1,000 per year, to be applied toward the training of specialised doctors or nurses. The Ohio districts decided they'd rather supply equipment, but I decided to recommend to my district a scaled down version of the original concept.

I could scarcely wait to get home to share with my district the exciting prospect of engaging in what I believed would be a great project. I called a meeting of the past district governors to tell them of my plans - to be reminded that it was contrary to our policy to engage in district projects. (I don't think we really had any such policy. I think it was just tradition.) Of course I was disappointed. I left the meeting with Hamlet's words ringing in my ears: Thus enterprises of great pith and moment, with this regard their currents turn awry, and lose the name of action.

I could understand the reason for this so-called policy. A district project would be more or less obligatory on all clubs. But suppose I just had a fund, to which the clubs of the district could subscribe 15/- (\$1.50) per head on a voluntary basis? Surely there could be no objection to that. Well, there wasn't.

At every official club visit I told the Vellore story, sometimes with scarcely controlled emotion, because I had been there and seen the plight of the people, and what needed to be done, and the response was almost 100% - 49 of the 52 clubs subscribed the suggested amount. In consequence, we were able to bring to Australia five of the Vellore staff, four of whom went back to continue the work for which the fund had been established. The fifth (a heart surgeon), was lost to the U.S.A. and there established himself in practice. I was in Vellore several years later, and was delighted to learn that this project was the beginning of a continuing exchange which still operates between that great institution and Australian hospitals.

The perceptive reader will recognise in this experience a parallel with the birth, 13 years later, of the Health, Hunger and Humanity Program. There were then needs to be met, and people who believed we should be involved - but there was a long-established policy which stood in the way of 'corporate action', arguing it could threaten the autonomy of the individual club. The solution was simply to amend that policy, to give to every club the opportunity, but not the obligation, to contribute voluntarily to a fund to meet the needs of a needy world. And the amount

voluntarily to a fund to meet the needs of a needy world. And the amount suggested was \$15 per person. Coincidence? Not really. It was the Vellore experience repeated, but to a wider audience, on a larger stage.

Neither Eddie Parsons nor Felix Arden could have imagined, when he attended that church men's meeting that night, that in an indirect but very real way his attendance would ultimately affect the lives of millions. It was Rotary which made that possible.

For all incoming district governors, the international assembly is much more than a training ground - much more than a place to acquire the technical skills to enable them to carry out their task. Drawing together, as it does, district leaders from around the world, one realises for the first time the diversity and potential of our great organisation.

In my year (1965-66) the assembly was at the Lake Placid Club at Lake Placid, in the Adirondacks, upper New York State. Snow was still on the ground, although the lake (frozen over in winter) had thawed. It was another world for June and me - "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife" - quiet and serene, with an old-world charm embedded deep in memory, the ideal place, (as stated on the sign over the entrance to the Agora Theatre where the plenary sessions were held) to "Enter to Learn" and on the reverse side, as one left, to "Go Forth to Serve".

We had about twenty incoming governors in each class, drawn from a number of different countries and regions, but so far as possible, speaking a common language. Those of us whose first language is English have a distinct advantage.

We had in our class an incoming governor from England - although they didn't call them "governors" in England in those days; they were known as "R.I. Representatives" and were also chairmen of their district councils within R.I.B.I. In fact, there were so many differences between Rotary as it was then practised in Britain and Ireland, and the rest of the Rotary world, that the Englishman in our class didn't think it necessary to bring with him the thick training manual we had each received in advance, for study prior to arrival. "Beastly heavy thing", he said, "so I left it at home." And by home he meant England. And he really didn't need it, for he had a closed mind to anything we did differently from the way to which he had become accustomed, taking little part in the discussion and rebuffing any attempt by our leader to involve him, with the rejoinder: "Of course, we do it differently in R.I.B.I." How things have changed - and how they needed to!

C.P.H. ("Sput") Teenstra was my President of R.I. He was a Dutchman. I crossed swords with him during the international assembly at Lake Placid. I went into one of our sessions to discover that our matching with the Ohio districts was to be changed, in favour of a couple of districts - one in England and one in France. Since we were then planning a co-operative project with the Ohio districts, (the Vellore project), there

seemed to be no point in the change, especially as I was not aware of any need to work for greater international understanding with England, apart from our differences on the cricket field. So I typed a letter, had it signed by the incoming governors of the Ohio and England districts, asking that we remain matched with the districts in Ohio and the new district in France, but that we be not matched with England. It required the approval of the president.

I made an appointment — and ran into a hornet's nest. He said the change could be approved only with the consent of all the districts, whereupon I produced the letter. It was not signed by the French governor, because we were happy to proceed with that. "Sput" seized on this to deny the request in respect of the other districts. I rarely lose my temper, but I did this time. Fortunately Ben Saltzman ("Sput's" aide) intervened and suggested having the matter referred back to the secretariat, who had doubtless engineered the whole thing in the first place. We remained matched as we had been.

But at the time I was furious. I swore I wouldn't do a thing for the president. I would do the best I could for my district, but so far as I was concerned the president could go to Hell. It was as well June was with me. After a day or so of my fuming she said: "Clem. You'd better forget about it, or you'll get nothing from this assembly." Of course, she was right — but when the Australian governors-nominee were assembled to organise an itinerary for the proposed visit of the president later in the year, I stood at the back of the group making no offer, content to let the others clamour to have him in their districts.

When the itinerary was finalised, it was discovered he would be visiting districts along the route of the New England Highway and passing through my district en route to Townsville, so I was asked to host him. Reluctantly I agreed. The announcement in my October monthly letter could scarcely have been less enthusiastic — "December 2, R.I. President "Sput" Teenstra will be at Toowoomba. The three Toowoomba clubs are organising a function at which you will have an opportunity to meet "Sput" and his wife Ella. This is a ladies' night".

A couple of weeks prior to his proposed visit to our district we had at Canberra what we now know as the Rotary Institute. They were not yet an official Rotary meeting, as they now are. (It was following his attendance at this one that "Sput" persuaded the board to recommend them as regular annual official Rotary meetings.)

A hot topic about that time concerned the relationship between R.I.B.I. (Rotary International in Britain & Ireland) and the rest of the Rotary world. Opinion was strong, and sharply divided, and vigorously debated. "Sput" was not one to sit on the fence, even when, as at this institute, he was greatly outnumbered; but he stood his ground, and I found myself admiring the man for his absolute honesty and integrity. I realised

tute, he was greatly outnumbered; but he stood his ground, and I found myself admiring the man for his absolute honesty and integrity. I realised that what had earlier seemed to me to be just cussedness was an expression of deep conviction. So immediately the Institute closed I hastened back home, got on the telephone to all my presidents, and at short notice they persuaded over 400 people to attend a crowded meeting in Toowoomba, in a venue booked months in advance, adequate to accommodate much more modest numbers. We had a great meeting.

Unfortunately "Sput's" autocratic style was a barrier to the co-operation a president needs if he is to accomplish whatever plans he has for his year in office. It was a pity. He was a simple, sincere man. Travelling by car from Warwick to Toowoomba, he read one of the billboards on which was an advertisement for the motel in which we had him booked — "First class accommodation at 35/- (\$3.50) per night." He was delighted. "Those damn fools in Sydney booked us into a huge suite in a big hotel. We don't need that. We just need a room." He didn't know we too had booked him into the best suite the motel had — and that there wasn't a big hotel w i t h comparable accommodation in Toowoomba at that time, otherwise we would have done as Sydney had.

When he enquired about cleaning his shoes, I introduced him to a shoe cleaning kit in a box outside his room. While he polished them I sat down and talked to him. I'm sure he would have been offended if I'd volunteered to do it. There are some presidents who prefer not to have too much special treatment. I remember Bill Walk telling me that when Richard Evans (President 1966-67) telephoned to congratulate him on his nomination he said: "Bill, never forget you've been appointed, not anointed."

Unlike my experience as club president, I finished my year as governor satisfied with what we were able to accomplish. Fortunately, there were new things happening. Interact and Youth Exchange were in their infancy. Group Study Exchange was a new program, in its inaugural year. And of course there was the Vellore project. I think I can best summarise the year by quoting the final paragraph of my last Governor's Monthly Letter:—

This is my last letter to a team which has worked magnificently during the past year — and this is the last paragraph. I find myself going back in my thoughts to the first paragraph of the first letter and repeating t h e sentiments I then expressed — —

"We stand to-day on the peaks of the past,
But merely in the foothills of the future."

(Many who read this book will have heard me use that quotation. It's

one of my favourites)

The highlights of the year have undoubtedly been the growth of Interact (from 2 clubs possibly to 12), the birth of two new provisional clubs (Redcliffe South and Newstead); the strong district support to the Vellore Project (\$3,572 from 49 clubs). Full participation in the activities of The Rotary Foundation (with a GSE team going overseas, a Rotary Foundation Fellow being selected, 2 District endorsements submitted for each of the Awards for Technical Training, and an Additional Foundation Fellowship application submitted); the heightened interest in International Youth Exchange (6 overseas students to be hosted); another successful R.Y.L.A. week; and the District Conference with its fellowship and enthusiasm.

More than ever I am conscious of the fact that what has been achieved during the past year has been in large measure the result of work and planning before we took office – and of course we have left unfinished many of the tasks we have begun. Some of them will never be finished, because they never can be finished. Our work in International Youth Exchange has just begun. Interact is destined to grow. The World Community Service idea will find fresh expression in countless Vellores. District projects will add a new dimension to community service. New Rotary clubs will be established, and existing clubs will grow.

For me (and for June) it has been a real privilege to have shared in the growth and development of Rotary in District 260 this year. We are extremely grateful to all who have done so much to help and encourage us. It would not be possible to list them all here, and it would be foolish to start. I know from my own experience that David will find, when he assumes office on 1st. July, that he belongs to a team, and that

"Someone will blend the plaster,
Someone will carry the stone,
Neither the man nor the master
Ever can build alone.
Making a roof from the weather,
Building a house for a king,
Only by building together
Can men accomplish a thing."

As was my later experience as president, I was fortunate to have had a warm, helpful relationship with both my predecessor and successor in office. That has not always been the experience of others, at either level.

warm, helpful relationship with both my predecessor and successor in office. That has not always been the experience of others, at either level.

The introduction of decimal currency in February 1966, and the consequent conversion of all financial records from pounds, shillings and pence to dollars and cents was one of the experiences I could have done without during that year. Actually, so far as our accounting practice was concerned, the whole operation went remarkably smoothly.

My biggest problem was in persuading the college of governors that in setting charges for the district conference the following month I had not suddenly become wildly extravagant, with the sorts of figures to which we had long been accustomed suddenly being doubled, the standard one pound becoming two dollars. I wrote a long letter to PDG John Peden, who had questioned what seemed to him to be a high registration fee, pointing out that if we excluded all meal costs (which we had included for the first time in our registration) the net registration fee was 80 cents, compared with \$23 for a couple to be registered at the Denver Convention. He had served on the R.I. Finance Committee, so I thought it appropriate also to point out that for the year ended June 30, 1965 convention registration fees were \$93,680 and expenditures \$213,552 – about 225% of the income received. Finally, I gave an undertaking that we would run the conference at a small profit – and we did, just \$10.94.

On April 11, 1967 I received a letter from R.I. President Luther Hodges inviting me to serve as a moderator in a new program, the District Leadership Forum. Pat Patterson came from Evanston to run a three-day seminar in Sydney, July 24-26, 1967. I served a couple of years in this capacity, and in the process got to know, in a way which would otherwise not have been possible, many of the leaders of Rotary in Australia at that time, and others coming into leadership positions. Barton Hack, as governor of District 980, presided at my first forum (I think it was at Hamilton). How fortunate I was to have had such a supportive and sympathetic governor for my first attempt. Kel. Carr was an active participant at one of the early forums at the Heidelberg Town Hall. I first met Royce Abbey at a Leadership Forum at Shepparton, when he was an incoming district governor.

I recall PDG Fred Bennett at one of the early forums, coming to my assistance in supplying the answer to a 'curly' question which had something to do with an appeal by a member against a board decision to terminate his membership – one of those situations one faces perhaps once in a lifetime, and a real trap for a novice such as I then was. Fred had actually been involved in such a situation, and was able to speak with the authority born of experience. When the same question was asked later at another forum, the participants were impressed that I was able to answer such a difficult question so easily, and defend my answer so convincingly. How much I owe to Fred and others who were active at that

time, and whose wisdom and experience contributed so much to my growth in Rotary. No man goes to the presidency of Rotary debt free. We all owe much to others who have helped and encouraged us along the way, or to events which at the time seemed relatively unimportant, but which in retrospect are seen to have been material.

By way of illustration, let me record the chain of events which led to my serving as a Director of R.I. in 1970-72. John Moon was the governor in 1968-69 of District 968 (as it then was). Typically, he left no stone unturned to make his a memorable conference. George Togasaki (the R.I. President) had promised to send as his representative Kyozo Yuasa, a prominent Japanese lawyer, but at the last moment Kyozo had to attend an international legal conference, so I was invited to represent in his stead. I know this must have been a disappointment to John, who had built his conference program around the presence of a Japanese representative. I consoled him by telling him that he had, as a substitute, the Australian PDG who looked most like a Japanese – short, olive complexion, straight jet black hair and wearing horn rimmed glasses. (In fact, on more than one occasion in Japan I had been mistaken for a local).

We had a great conference, one of the best I have attended, the venue was Lithgow High School. I think this was only the second time I had represented the president. After the conference John suggested that we (June and I) spend a day with him and his June at their seaside apartment, which we did, not realising when we accepted the invitation that it was customary for the president's rep. to attend the weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Sydney on the Tuesday after the conference.

After lunch and a swim we were walking along the beach when John surprised me by asking if I'd considered submitting my name to the nominating committee for director, which would be meeting the following October or November. I told him I hadn't – that no one had ever been chosen from Queensland, that Sydney and Melbourne held a mortgage on the office, and that there were others better known than I. I mentioned particularly Sleath Lowrey and Ken Scheller. But the seed had been sown.

I went back home and thought about it, and decided that if anyone were to be elected from Queensland it should be PDG John Peden, who had served on the R.I. Finance Committee, had been Australian President of the Chartered Institute of Accountants, was a polished speaker and greatly respected by all who knew him. He was several years senior to me, both in Rotary service and age. So I approached him, told him of my conversation with John Moon, and suggested he submit his name. His response was immediate. He told me it had already been suggested to him, but that he had declined because he considered himself too old to give significant service beyond his term as a director. (He certainly wasn't too old to have been a very effective director.) "But you're young enough (I was then 47) to be able to continue to serve beyond your term as director, if

to have been a very effective director.) "But you're young enough (I was then 47) to be able to continue to serve beyond your term as director, if you were selected," he said, "and I think you should nominate." And so with that encouragement my club submitted my name, and two years later I was on the Board of R.I.

Here was a whole sequence of unplanned events which led to that conclusion – an eleventh hour appointment to represent at a conference; a visit to the beach when, according to custom, I should have been at a meeting of the Sydney Rotary Club; a young district governor who had greater confidence in my prospects than I had; and an older past district governor who was prepared to sacrifice short term gratification for the longer term benefits of the organisation to which he had given such distinguished service. The John Pedens of this world are few and far between these days.

There are those in our organisation whose drive and enthusiasm commit them to mapping out a path to take them to high office, and who pursue that goal relentlessly. I believe that strategy is almost invariably doomed to failure. I was closely associated with one who, by education, experience, physical bearing and presence had all the qualifications for leadership, but whose naked ambition was transparent, and it operated against him. He made it known publicly that he intended to go "right to the top" – and he could have. But (perhaps quite wrongly) he was seen as one preoccupied with the prestige and personal satisfaction which come from serving beyond the district level, and in consequence he never did.

I'm not suggesting that people should turn their backs on opportunities to serve at different levels that come their way; merely that they should be available to seize those opportunities when they come, rather than establish them as priorities and then deliberately plan and work to create them. I know that isn't easy, when there are so many highly qualified people ready and willing to give further service, who may never receive the call; and particularly when they see others given appointments they would cherish, but who in their opinion are less qualified.

Jack Davis, my predecessor in office, had an analysis done of the pattern of appointments of past officers as representatives of the president to district conferences. The figures amazed me. He discovered that over the previous six years 56 past officers (the same 56) had represented the president at one-third of all the conferences over that period. In other words, less than 1% of all eligible past officers had represented at one out of every three conferences in each of the past six years, leaving 99% to share the other two-thirds – and that in that same six year period there were 70 districts from which no assignments had been made. Armed with these statistics, I determined when the time came, to appoint as my personal representatives to the 282 conferences a high proportion of past officers who had never had that opportunity. In fact, of

the 282 representatives I appointed, 28 were doing it for the first time. I know they appreciated it, for many of them told me so.

The task of utilising the capabilities and experience of the vast reservoir of past officers is, paradoxically, one of the most satisfying and yet most discouraging obligations of the Presidency — satisfying because one is able to reward interest and effort with an appointment, but discouraging because for every such appointment which can be made there are literally hundreds which must be passed over.

In fact, I took out some figures to present to the Institutes during my term on the board, to illustrate the problem. On the basis of a sampling of one district in every three as at June 30, 1977, according to the Official Directory there were 1975 P.D.G.s in 123 districts. Therefore in 369 districts there would be 5,925, or an average of 16 per district world-wide. If we allow for those who have served on the board at eight per year for 25 years, this would total 200, leaving 5,725 (or 96.6%) who have not served on the board. Of the 369 coming 'on stream' each year, only eight will go on the board each year — or 2.16%. Twenty years later the figures are different, but the problem remains — more acutely.

We are currently spending on the international assembly each year in the training of our incoming district governors about \$2.8 million — that's about \$5,400 per governor. They are coming off the assembly line at the rate of 515 per year, so that today we have somewhere between 7,000 and 8,000 past officers in whom we have a total investment, merely in monetary terms, of about \$40,000,000. Little wonder then that the President of R.I., confronted with these facts, must feel a little like the manager of a gold mine who knows that hidden beneath mountains of overburden are great riches waiting to be recovered to add wealth to his enterprise, sometimes discovering it in the most unexpected places. Certainly he won't find it digging year in and year out in the same place, turning over the same material. He must keep exploring for new riches, as must governors and club presidents.

(By now it will have become apparent that this is not a chronological record of my Rotary experiences. I had thought of approaching this assignment in that way, but quickly realised that one does not live life in a series of watertight compartments — that the present and the past are inextricably mixed.)

One of the choicest assignments for any past officer is to be invited to serve as an instructor at the international assembly. I had that privilege in 1967. We were called "group discussion leaders" in those days, which I think better described the task than some of the titles later given — particularly "instructor". Our task was not to instruct, but to have the group find its own answers to the questions raised either by us or participants.

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We met for about a week prior to the assembly, under the leadership of Sam Kissinger, a much older man than any of us. He earned his living as a professional public speaker. In earlier times he had been billed as "The boy wonder orator of the United States". In the Assembly program he was to demonstrate how the district governor would address the clubs on his official visit. Yet, when I read the script for his address, prepared in advance and distributed to all the participants at the end of their training, I was disappointed. I thought it was a very ordinary speech.

I was to have had a "spare" for that session — meaning I would not be taking a class. But at the last moment I was asked to fill in for someone who had become ill, so instead of going into the hall to hear Sam speak, I was in one of the class rooms making frenzied preparations for the session ahead. I was working quite some distance from the auditorium when I heard thunderous applause. When the class came in I asked who had received such an ovation, and was told it was Sam Kissinger. Puzzled, I went to one of the other leaders who had been there, and said: "I believe Sam's speech was great. How did he do it?" "Oh," said my friend, "he didn't give the one that's printed in the book. He gave another. It was brilliant." Sam made his living speaking and he was not about to commit to paper the distilled wisdom of the years, to be studied and copied by earnest governors and others around the world.

I now have some sympathy for his position. Over many years of public speaking one develops certain phrases, uses certain illustrations, and projects ideas in a very personal and individualistic way. Increasingly, I find that the speeches I give today are an amalgam of those I have been giving over the years. I keep a record of where I say what, in the hope I will not be repeating a speech to an audience which has not yet had time to forget it. I am occasionally asked for a copy, but I'm reluctant to comply because in doing so one no longer knows where it will be used. I have had the experience of having a speaker use one of my speeches verbatim in the morning session of a district assembly (at which I was not present) and then giving it myself in the afternoon session, and wondering why it went down like the proverbial lead balloon. So I understand Sam Kissinger's reluctance to put on paper the accumulated wisdom of his years of public performance.

R. I. Director 1970-72

I joined the Board of R.I. a little apprehensively on July 1, 1970. I was from a small club, a small community, and a small business. I imagined I would be in the company of people from much larger clubs, in much larger communities, and running much bigger businesses. Some, of course, were; but most came from backgrounds similar to mine. I was encouraged by this, for it made me realise that here was a board which in background and experience was fairly representative of Rotary world-wide, able to identify with the operations of a majority of its member clubs and their members.

Bill Walk (a judge and former lawyer from California) was my first president. I was rather flattered when he appointed me to the executive committee of the board in my first year – an appointment usually reserved for second year members. In retrospect I realise it was a mistake, for it separated me from the other "new" members of the board, setting me apart as one who had been especially favoured. In fact, as I later realised, he had done it to ensure some element of continuity between his and the succeeding board, on the important issue of the appointment of a new general secretary; if his executive committee comprised only second year board members, none of them (apart from the President-elect) would be on the board the following year when that appointment would be made. But the score was evened in my second year, when I was not reappointed to the executive committee. It's the only time, to my knowledge, that a board member has been demoted from the executive.

George Means was general secretary when I joined the board, but was due to retire eighteen months later. The executive committee of Bill Walk's board was constituted as its personnel committee, and was charged with the responsibility of recommending to the next board a successor. It was an unsatisfactory situation for both boards. Under the terms of our constitution at that time, the 1971-72 board under the presidency of Ernst Breitholtz would have the responsibility of making the appointment, but would have no part (officially) in the selection process. And because that was in the hands of the executive committee of the outgoing board, only two members of that committee (Ernst Breitholtz and myself) would be on the board when it made that important decision.

Without being in any way disloyal or unappreciative of those who had

been staff members for many years, I believed strongly, as did a majority of the executive committee, that we should try to attract someone from outside to head up the permanent staff – someone whose whole working life had not been at the Secretariat; someone with a fresh perspective, able and willing to introduce new methods and ideas.

So we carried out a rather limited search for such a person, and finally narrowed the field down to three prospective appointees. Bill Walk arranged for our committee to interview them in California, breaking our journey for a day on our way over to his convention in Sydney. But the interviews didn't eventuate. I wasn't aware of it at the time, but I assume Bill had by now realised that whatever decision we made as a personnel committee was, in the final analysis, worthless. It was Ernst Breitholtz and his board who would make the final decision, and Ernst had obviously already made up his mind that George Means' successor would come from within the Secretariat. Bill evidently realised this, but didn't share his opinion with others of us on his executive – at least, not with me.

Before he concluded the final meeting of his board prior to the opening of the Sydney convention, I drew attention to the fact that there was one item of unfinished business, and that I thought our board should make its recommendation to the new board. Bill said he did not propose to deal with the matter, but would re-convene the board if three members requisitioned it. I was both mystified and disappointed. I hadn't realised that the die had already been cast. So I set about getting two others to join me in requisitioning a further meeting of the board, to deal specifically with this matter.

Vice-President Roland Richardson, more astute than I was, warned me against it, but I went ahead anyway and succeeded in having another meeting called. For me it was a disaster. I found myself locked in combat with the incoming president, in a battle I had no hope of winning. Although a member of the executive charged with the responsibility of finding a successor, he had steadfastly refrained from disclosing his position. In one last bid to clarify the position I challenged him to declare himself on the issue, and in my futile stubbornness alienated him and most of his board – for who but someone as naive as I would disagree so strongly and so publicly with a president at the beginning of his term?

I had to wait only a few days to have my suspicions confirmed. At the first meeting of his board, after what I thought was a carefully orchestrated discussion, the board voted for the appointment of Harry Stewart as General Secretary, effective January 1, 1972, immediately following the expiry of George Means' term – a decision I'm sure had been determined twelve months earlier.

It was all a time-consuming, futile exercise; but not entirely in vain, for in consequence of the absurdity which had been exposed, (under which

the responsibility for appointment of the organisation's CEO was split between two boards) a subsequent council on legislation amended the constitution to enable that whole process to be undertaken by one board and, in the process, to give it time to conduct an adequate search for a successor.

Bill Walk was a very astute chairman. On some matters on which it was plain the board was united, he would take a straight vote – those for and those against, on the voices. There's a certain degree of anonymity in voting that way – and there are always, on any board, those who are reluctant to make a declaration of their intentions until they have been able to assess how the majority will vote. But if a decision was called for on an issue on which he had a firm opinion (and he didn't ever dominate board discussion to establish that – just enough to make it known) Bill would go round the table and ask each director personally to state his position. It was an effective way of getting the support of the undecided and the fence-sitters, reluctant to be seen to be voting against their president.

I sat at the board table between Jose Martin and Pratt Secrest. All board discussion was in English. Jose (from Argentina) spoke no English, but had sitting beside him Alfonso Rubiano, who conducted a simultaneous translation to Spanish. I found it disconcerting at first to have this continuous, low pitched droning beside me, but soon became accustomed to it. It seemed to work remarkably well for Jose, who, in the middle of a discussion, would suddenly raise his hand and in fluent Spanish (at least, it sounded fluent to me) make a point. Before Alfonso had a chance to convey the English translation to the board, Pratt Secrest would whisper in my ear his version of what Jose had allegedly just said. He knew no Spanish, but he had a delightful sense of humour, and in his rich Georgia accent would provide the comic relief so welcome when there is so much serious discussion.

Before I went on to the board Steve O'Halloran (from Wagga Wagga), my Australian predecessor, gave me some good advice. He said: "If there's anything you want to get done during your term, get it on to the agenda of the first meeting. It will take you the full two years to get it through, if you're lucky."

Well, there were two things I wanted to get done. I wanted to have R.Y.L.A. recognised and accepted as an official program of Rotary International, and to have a literature depot established in Sydney. Every piece of R.I. literature at that time was mailed from Evanston, usually surface mail. You had to be desperate (and patient) to want to order any.

I did manage to get R.Y.L.A. (the Rotary Youth Leadership Award program) accepted in time to be announced at the Sydney convention, but only after making myself unpopular with some of the staff. However I

program) accepted in time to be announced at the Sydney convention, but only after making myself unpopular with some of the staff. However I failed on the other one, hoping Ted de Joux from New Zealand, who followed me, would take it up and push it. He didn't. I guess he had other priorities. And there were some in Australia who were less than enthusiastic about it, which I found puzzling.

As mentioned earlier, when 'Sput' Teenstra came to Canberra in November 1965, and realised how effective our Institute was, he persuaded his board to introduce it around the world, so that by the time I came on to the board five years later it was well established officially, although it had been running in Australia for several years prior to that without official status.

When it became official, certain guidelines were established. It was recommended that the director from the zone attend the institute, and be its convener, responsible for the agenda and program – which is the way we operate to-day. Starting from scratch, most other regions had no problem with this, but in Australia we were already doing it our way – and that did not involve having the director as convener. So in my first year on the board I attended with no official standing or authority. When, at that meeting, the decision was being made to set a date for the next institute, I drew attention to the fact that on the suggested date I would be attending a board meeting in Evanston. Those organising the institute (and we had some pretty powerful personalities in Australia at that time) decided that, since this date suited them, the institute should proceed without my being there. I was prepared to take on the President of R.I. when I disagreed with him, but not the powerful local committee; so the institute proceeded without me. However, I had a word with Ted de Joux, suggesting he take charge next year, as provided in the Manual of Procedure – which he did with great enthusiasm.

I decided, during my first year on the board, to send to each past officer in the ANZAO Region (as it was then called) a Director's Newsletter, somewhat similar to the District Governor's Monthly Letter. We didn't then have a data base with all the names and addresses of past officers, so there was much work involved in getting the first one out. But t h e positive response encouraged me. It also worried the president and some members of our board, as I indicated when reporting to an Institute (I think it was in 1973) in these terms:-

Many of you will recall that at the commencement of my term as R.I. Director I sent out to all Present, Past and Incoming officers of Rotary International in the ANZAO Region what I called my ANZAO Memo. No. 1. I indicated then that I would probably send out three or four during my term, depending on the need or the opportunity.

It certainly was not my intention to repeat information already being disseminated. I was also seeking information and opinions from you – and I got them, and appreciated having them. I had already assembled quite a list of topics for inclusion in the second memo. When I became engaged in an earnest discussion among a number of the members of the board concerning the desirability of sending out such letters which, in the opinion of some (and I know President Ernst is one who holds this view quite strongly) tend to create or perpetuate a certain Regionalism in Rotary. There are those who are very sensitive to this – those who are constantly alert to any action being taken which tends to narrow the focus. Even these Institutes are suspect in the minds of some.

This same reluctance to change was evident at that time in resistance to the formation of groups of women associated with Rotary (Inner Wheel, Rotaryannes etc.) and even in relation to Interact and Rotaract. I was at Lake Placid in 1967 when it was suggested that girls be admitted to membership of Interact – and I recall the expressions of disapproval from some very senior Rotarians. But they were admitted, provided there were no more than 50% in any one club. In January, 1970 the Board of R.I. approved the formation of Interact clubs and Rotaract clubs comprising 100% female membership, although still retaining the provision that at least 50% of the membership be male in the case of clubs with mixed membership.

A president usually asks each of his directors to represent at several conferences during his term, for a variety of reasons. They are, at that stage, probably the best informed and most up-to-date Rotarians available; exposure to Rotary in other countries and regions enhances their ability to deal with world-wide issues; and opportunity can frequently be taken of their travel to or from board and committee meetings to break the journey, at minimal cost to Rotary.

We (June and I) represented at several conferences in Australia, one in Japan and one in South Africa. Bill had asked me to represent him at several in Australia. I told him I'd be happy to do it if he insisted, but I thought there were others who had never had that opportunity who should be given it. I was in South Africa when I received a cable inviting me to represent at a conference in Perth. I immediately replied reminding him of my earlier suggestion, and recommended three names from which to choose. Just a few weeks later I was at the International Assembly at Lake Placid when the incoming governor from that district arrived. I asked him how his conference went. "Fantastic!" he said, "you should have heard the president's rep. He was great". Pretending not to know, I asked him who it was. "A fellow named Ron Pate. Never heard of him before, but he was fantastic!"

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Many governors ask for, and hope for, a president's rep. from some distant land, not realising that we have in our own country past governors with the ability to add more to a conference than many of the imports, whose principal attraction on occasions is that they travelled a day and a night to get there, and speak with a foreign accent.

I know that as incoming governor I was as guilty as anyone else when I asked for Richard Evans to represent at my conference. It was a big ask. He was then president-elect, widely acclaimed as the best speaker in Rotary. Instead, I got a New Zealander – PDG Tony Morcom Green – and could not have been better served. He was perfect for us.

The conference in Japan was an interesting experience. Actually it was a joint conference of two districts, recently created with the splitting of one into two. My speeches had to be prepared well in advance. They were then printed in a little book, the Japanese translation on one side of each page, and the English on the opposite side. I decided that, since very few would understand my Australian accent, I might as well deliver it at top speed. The Japanese are meticulous in their planning and timing – and I wrecked their carefully laid plans by finishing a couple of minutes early. So we filled in that time bowing to one another. One governor would step forward, bow to me, and I'd return the compliment. Then we'd repeat the performance with the other governor. It's amazing how many deep bows one can fit into a couple of minutes. Well, we eventually caught up with the program. My hosts then asked me, when delivering the second speech, to speak more slowly, not only because they had allotted a certain time for it, but also because many of the audience were able to follow me in English, with the Japanese translation on the opposite page as an emergency back-up.

One of the real bonuses for us was the fact that, on our frequent visits to the United States, we were able to visit with our two children and their host families. Noel had gone to the States as an exchange student in January, 1970, hosted by the Black family of the Rotary Club of Downers Grove, not far from Chicago. It was very convenient for us. I would see him (even briefly) on my several visits to Evanston, and on occasions June would also be able to spend time with him.

Our daughter Judy had gone to Salem, Ohio, in January 1972 to spend a year as an exchange student. Thus we had the good fortune to be able to spend time briefly with her during the final six months of my term on the board, as we had with Noel during the first six months. So in a way the whole family became involved in those two interesting years.

Noel was due to return home in January 1971, immediately after the January meeting of the board, so I planned to return home via Europe, a round-the-world flight being in fact slightly cheaper than Brisbane-Chicago return, and to have Noel travel with me. We would spend a few days

in each of London, Rome and Athens, where ancient history could come to life for him. When Bill Walk heard of my plans he asked me to make a side-trip to Nigeria. Rotary had been active in that country prior to their civil war, but it was only then emerging from the resultant chaos, and no one knew what the situation was, so far as Rotary was concerned. I told him I was willing to go, but I had planned to have Noel return home with me, and asked if I could have him accompany me, provided there was no additional expense to Rotary. He approved – and then asked that I also first visit Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. Since our route home took us via South Africa, we also spent a couple of days in Johannesburg and Capetown.

I wasn't able to accomplish anything worth while in the short time in Addis Ababa, but discovered in Nigeria that so-called Rotary clubs were being formed, invariably by one of the multitude of chiefs in that country, without regard to the classification principle, and with women being admitted to membership – seven years before the Rotary Club of Duarte in California lost its charter because it admitted three women to membership. It didn't take long to straighten out the situation in Nigeria, where Rotary became re-established and grew rapidly along conventional lines.

For Noel, this must surely have been the perfect way to complete a year as an exchange student, about to enter university – a brief acquaintance with the ancient civilisations of Europe, an introduction to life in the third world, and exposure to the treatment of the black people in Johannesburg under the policy of apartheid then in force. He seemed to be much more sensitive to it, and much more disturbed by it, than I was. I remember our being in a large park near the centre of the city when he said to me: "Dad, do you notice anything strange about this park?" I hadn't. It had well kept lawns, large shade trees and tidy pathways – a typical, well-kept city park. "No," I said, "it looks like any other park, to me." "Except," he said, "that the black people are excluded. Can't you see them on the other side of the tall wrought-iron fence?" There they were – hundreds of them around the perimeter, denied entry while we relatively few whites had the exclusive use of an amenity adequate to have given enjoyment to all of us.

Rotary in South Africa walked a tightrope on the apartheid question. On the one hand, it was contrary to all that we stood for. It failed miserably the Four Way Test. On the other hand, it was the law of the land – and a Rotarian is obliged to obey the laws of his country. I had numerous discussions with concerned Rotarians, and invariably the answer I got was: "We know it's wrong, and we're working quietly and privately to have it changed". And I believed them. I'm sure their persistent, quiet advocacy for change has been a factor in the eventual dismantling of a policy foreign to human decency.

In fact, I attended a district conference in Hermanus (not far from Capetown) at which a black South African was a keynote speaker on the

In fact, I attended a district conference in Hermanus (not far from Capetown) at which a black South African was a keynote speaker on the subject "The Doves" – a service organisation for black people, founded with the help and encouragement of Rotarians, operating along lines similar to Rotary but (without the classification basis for membership) perhaps more akin to Lions. He was an excellent speaker, restrained and dignified; but when we broke for lunch in the hotel dining room he was not permitted, under the laws of the land, to eat with us. The local Rotary club president dined with him privately. Even more disturbing was the fact that he could not share with us in a service of worship in a local church. It certainly was not the wish of the Rotarians. They had no alternative.

I hope I live to see the day when the President of R.I. will be a black man – not a token, elected because he's black, but a leader elected despite it. I believe we're closer to that day than many imagine – and it will be a great day for Rotary.

It was on my visit to Nigeria that I had my first experience of running the gauntlet of a full-fledged press conference. I stepped off the aircraft at Ikeja (the airport for Lagos) to be escorted to a room where about half a dozen, mostly young, local journalists sat with pencils poised waiting to question me on Rotary's answer to the racial biases which were then dividing Africa. They knew I had just come from a meeting of the R.I. Board, that I was on my way to South Africa, and that the president's theme was "Bridge the Gaps". This was a time when Britain was supplying arms to South Africa to be used against its black inhabitants. Here were all the ingredients for an ambush. Innocently they asked what was the president's theme for the year? where would I be going after leaving Nigeria? are there Rotary clubs in South Africa and England? Following their line of questioning, the next question was no surprise "Then what are Rotarians doing to bridge the gaps between the white aggressors and the oppressed black people of South Africa?"

I'm not sure I was entirely convincing in my reply, although Noel later told me he thought I had handled it well. But it was a lesson to me. I knew that, as a board member, I needed to be prepared in advance for the inevitable questioning on sometimes controversial issues.

Seven years later, as a member of the board which had just withdrawn the charter of the Rotary Club of Duarte for admitting women to membership, and as the president-elect, shortly to become the organisation's official spokesman on such issues, I recognised my inadequacy to cope with them. Some, like Jim Bomar (my successor in office, a former Lieutenant Governor of the State of Tennessee) were experienced and expert in handling the media, but I had had absolutely no experience. (Who would ever want to interview an accountant about anything controversial – we, who are generally painted in shades of grey?)

So I asked for help. The Clement L. Stone organisation (an insurance conglomerate with extensive staff training facilities) loaned us the necessary equipment. We went to the School of Journalism at nearby North Western University and offered them the opportunity for some training on a real live victim, and were able to persuade a television interviewer to hone his skills on a novice ambassador-at-large.

I had a whole day of it – every moment of it recorded and later played back on video. I remember there were five student reporters from the university who fired a whole series of questions at me, the majority requiring me to defend our decision not to admit women. I was coming out of the "bathroom" (as our American friends term it) when I was ambushed by a man with a microphone who said something like this: "You're Mr. Renouf, the President of Rotary International, I believe. You're from Australia?" "Yes," I replied. "Tell me, what's your opinion of our President Jimmy Carter?" I think I said something about his having addressed me as the President of Rotary International, and in that capacity I had no opinion on any world leader – and certainly no mandate to interpret the opinions of its 800,000 odd members in more than 100 countries.

It was an invaluable experience. I learned to ask the newspaper reporters, for instance, under what headline their story would be printed. I remember one of them saying, after having tried in vain to get me to state my personal opinion on the question of women in Rotary – "My headline will be 'Rotary President Vacillates'. "O.K.," I said, "Let's reverse the roles. You're the President of Rotary. What would you say?" That, of course, was another question.

It was an exhausting day. I remember going to my hotel room after dinner, and relaxing in front of TV. A world heavyweight title fight between Leon Spinks and Muhammed Ali was being televised. After ten furious rounds, they were both exhausted – trading punches, but without much enthusiasm or venom. With great sympathy for their dilemma, I called across the room to them: "OK fellows – I know just how you feel." But it stood me in good stead during my term as president. In fact, we decided to give an abbreviated training program to each incoming director, for many of them (probably most of them) are called upon to face the media from time to time, ill-equipped for the encounter. I believe that training has continued to this day.

It was during my term on Bill Walk's board that the 1971 R.I. Convention was held in Sydney. Our facilities were quite inadequate to cope with the larger than expected attendance. Show pavilions would not be acceptable to-day to house such meetings – not even with the facility we had to relay proceedings via remote T.V. to an adjoining building. But the originality and "freshness" of the program and the response of Sydney as

had to relay proceedings via remote T.V. to an adjoining building. But the originality and "freshness" of the program and the response of Sydney as a city and the friendliness of its people compensated for any shortcomings in our facilities. I know June had gone shopping with some of the overseas ladies, and came back enthused at the way shop assistants and ordinary people in the streets had made our visitors feel so welcome. Melbourne, 22 years later, was able to capture that same spontaneous friendliness, which is remembered long after any shortcoming in physical facilities is forgotten (not that Melbourne had any).

My second year on the board, under the presidency of Ernst Breitholtz, had an inauspicious start – dropped from the executive committee; not in favour with the president; one of the three second year members not appointed a vice-president and (as I later discovered) the only member of the board to have told Harry Stewart directly that I had not supported his appointment as general secretary, although I assured him of my full support, since he was the almost unanimous choice of the board.

Before leaving for home, at the conclusion of the board meeting, I had an interview with the president. There were at that time three vice-presidents, traditionally selected by vote of the board. This year, for the first time to my knowledge, the president intervened in that process to influence the result, nominating to selected members of the board the persons he wanted to fill each of those positions. I told him I was aware of what had taken place, and that I would take my place on his board untrammelled by any sense of obligation to him personally but determined to do the very best I could for Rotary. I guess I was feeling a bit sorry for myself, and defiant. But that soon wore off.

Having cleared the decks, I went home with a much more positive attitude, and a sense of freedom and independence. A vice-president may sometimes feel obliged to defer to his president on matters on which he holds a contrary view – if only by refraining from being critical publicly at a time when he cannot conscientiously agree. I know I had that sense of personal loyalty to Bill Walk as a member of his executive committee. But I felt no such obligation during my second year on the board and in consequence I believe I was able to make a much better contribution to its deliberations. If I didn't agree with something the president proposed, I said so. But I also supported him publicly and sometimes staunchly when I agreed with him. I know that's the way it always should be, but in a group such as that, where personal friendships and loyalties run deep, frankness is sometimes a casualty.

So I enjoyed my second year on the board. My relationship with the president improved as the year progressed. He gave me appointments on committees and assignments at meetings and functions which indicated that he held no grudge against me – which was entirely appropriate, for his

The Years Between 1972-1977

Coming off the Rotary International Board in 1972, I was able to get back into the office more or less full time. During the previous two years I had been there only spasmodically, although I really think the year as governor made greater inroads into my time in the practice than did any one year on the board. As governor I was involved with Rotary virtually every week of the year, and most days. As director I had brief periods (a few weeks at a time) when I was out of the country and totally involved, but then would be back home and able to resume a more or less normal life.

I had been back about six months when my two partners in Enterprise Estates Pty. Ltd. (the land development company) decided they had reached the point in their lives when they no longer wanted to be involved in the day to day management of the company. My role had always been to manage the finances. They did the rest - dealing with councils, surveyors, contractors, estate agents and the like. We had a profitable business, and a substantial land bank yet to be realised, but they were getting on in years and were well placed financially. They suggested either that we wind up the company, or that I take over full responsibility for management, for an appropriate fee.

The problem which confronted me was that I could not very well accept this added work load and at the same time continue full time in practice. As a member of the R.I. Board I was absent from the practice intermittently, for relatively short periods of time, and for only two years. I could plan accordingly. But now I faced the problem of being involved in a business which made demands that could not so easily be determined and planned in advance. I concluded it was not possible to do both - but the question was which?

I was not yet 52 years old. I was in partnership in a well established accountancy practice with a partner who, from my point of view, was ideal. We had a happy relationship and a secure and predictable income. Should I trade that for involvement in something less secure (for land development is a very cyclical business), although with the prospect of an equally rewarding income?

After months of careful consideration, I decided to take the plunge. Doug Clarke (my partner) was happy to increase his stake in the practice and take in a new partner, so I sold them my share, and on July 1, 1973, cut

my ties with a practice I had established 27 years earlier, as a young man just out of the air force. It wasn't an easy decision but, as subsequent events proved, it was the right one.

In an accountancy practice (as in most other professional practices) there is little really free time. Appointments made well in advance fragment the days, and tie one to the office. Now I was more or less free of this strait jacket, with greater flexibility to plan my time, and to think about doing other things.

We had built and moved into a new home in Nambour at the time we were married in 1951. It was now no longer modern, although spacious and comfortable. But we were attracted to the idea of building out of town, on a hill with a view down the valley to the sea, so we went looking for land, and almost by accident found what we wanted. It was a corner block (quarter of an acre - 1,000 sq. metres) on a sloping elevated site in Atkinson Road, Bli Bli, about six km. out of town. It cost us \$950. Before we left there 20 years later an adjacent block, not quite as large, and with an inferior view, sold for \$60,000.

By the time we were able to take possession of our land (July 1, 1973) we had engaged an architect, had plans finalised, and were ready to go. But these were difficult times. Builders were extremely busy. I sought prices from four or five reliable former clients, but no one could start for at least eight months. My patience didn't extend that far. So I decided, on the advice of a Rotary friend who was a brick-laying contractor, and with the promised support of my architect, to proceed on a sub-contractor basis. It was quite an experience!

I first spent time calculating how much the place would cost, on the basis of quantities and prices then prevailing. But I hadn't reckoned with the Whitlam government's inflationary policies. Wages and the costs of materials were escalating rapidly. I was buying hardware from a store which didn't adopt the practice (as so many did) of marking up the price of old stock to the selling price of new stock; so I soon learned that you selected from the bottom of the bin or shelf, for the stock least affected by the galloping inflation of the time. And every few weeks there was an increase in the hourly rate paid to workmen. In consequence, the house cost substantially more than my original estimates. The only consolation was that if I had delayed any longer, it would have been even more expensive.

I learned first hand the frustrations of trying to co-ordinate the various sub-contractors, the occasional non-availability of materials at a vital stage of construction, and the vagaries of the weather. I did much of the work an unskilled labourer would normally do. I'd be out on site before the tradesmen at 7 a.m. each day, and would be the last to leave. They were long, busy days, in which I got myself into really good shape physically, doing manual work such as I had never done before, climbing

scaffolds to paint every piece of exposed timber, climbing down behind retaining walls to apply 'black jack' to waterproof them, digging drains and cleaning up after the tradesmen. I couldn't do it today, but it was a period of intense physical activity which came at the right time in my life, although some of it left me permanently impaired.

I had previously wall-papered most of the rooms in our Nambour home, so decided to do the same throughout the new home. In preparing the walls, I was on a plank on a scaffold in the highest point of a cathedral ceiling in the lounge one day when I decided to engage in a manoeuvre I'm sure no acrobat in the Moscow circus would attempt. I crashed to the floor, my right instep hitting the bottom rung of the scaffold. A couple of hours later I discovered I had lost the sight in one eye. I had suffered a retina detachment. Although surgery restored the sight, it was never the same, and caused me a great deal of trouble, especially as several years earlier I had torn the retina in the other eye. For another twenty years I struggled with impaired vision, experimenting with various prescriptions which seemed to give only temporary relief, before a lens implant in each eye in 1993 gave me 20/20 vision and enabled me to discard the spectacles I had worn for 40 years – a surgical procedure not possible at the time of my acrobatic manoeuvres.

Worse than the damage to my eye at that time was the damage to my back. For a time it seemed that I may be permanently crippled, but with exercises and care I have made a good recovery. Any inconvenience I now suffer on occasions is caused by carelessness in lifting, and is easily corrected. The sixty seconds I tried to save in changing position on that scaffold has cost me dearly over the years; but it has also taught me the dangers of impetuosity.

When the opportunity came to me to serve as president I had an adequate income from investment, and involvement in a business which, with a little forward planning, could continue to operate for the year with fairly minimal oversight: I never would have contemplated accepting had I still been involved with the practice. I know others in professional practices have, and I admire them for the financial sacrifice they have made, for the product they sell is their time – and the Presidency of R.I. demands all of one's time for a full year. We had only seven days at home during my term.

The Year as President (1978-79)

Two controversial events, destined to have far-reaching effect on Rotary's future, dominated 1978-79. Paradoxically, in one of them I found myself defending the status quo, and in the other challenging it. Jack Davis's board, of which I was a member, had withdrawn the charter of The Rotary Club of Duarte in California for having flouted the constitution by admitting three women into membership. The board had no option. Its first duty was to uphold the constitution. Like sharks around a crippled prey, the media tasted blood and pressed home their attack at every available opportunity. Suddenly Rotary became news, for the wrong reason – and I spent much of my time defending the board's action and explaining the constitutional requirements for change.

The second event was, of course, the launch of the Health, Hunger and Humanity program, against the entrenched opposition of a group of senior Rotarians committed, it seemed to me, to defending the status quo, fearful of the consequences of what was certainly a fundamental shift in emphasis. In both of these my predecessor and my successor in office played vital roles.

The 3H concept was nurtured in Jack Davis's board. I was given the privilege of announcing it at his convention in Tokyo in 1978. Jack's encouragement and support were vital. And there was no stronger proponent of the 3H program than Jim Bomar. Without his enthusiastic advocacy I doubt it would to-day be a Foundation program. It was he, too, who saw more clearly than most of us at that time the threat to Rotary's future in denying membership to women. I was fortunate to have served with these two great presidents. Someone once said: "If I have seen further it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants." Jack Davis and Jim Bomar were such giants. I and the Rotary world will forever be indebted to them.

When I speak to people about my term as president, many are surprised to find that it involved living in Evanston for a full year; but they are even more surprised to learn that during the preceding sixty weeks, based in Nambour, I was overseas forty weeks. I don't know of any president who has not spent almost as much time in preparation as he did in the actual office.

It is demanding, continuous work. It takes a large slice of one's life.

Why, then, do people so willingly accept the burden of office? Perhaps it's altruism; perhaps ego; probably some of each. But I think most would admit (to themselves, if not to others) that it is mostly ego; for since 1905 fewer than one hundred of the millions who have enjoyed Rotary membership have been so honoured.

Of course that statistic (one out of millions) can be quite misleading. I wasn't the choice of a majority of the 800,000 Rotarians at that time. Most had never heard of me. All that was needed was to have ten members at a certain point in time judge me favourably - three out of five on the nominating committee for director, and seven out of 12 on the nominating committee for president. Additionally, there were geographic limitations. It was then the custom to select every third president from a country outside North America - now two out of three, in recognition of the growth of Rotary outside the U.S.A. So the limited field from which selection is made in any one year also restricts the competition.

There are many who are capable, qualified and available, who will never get the call for a variety of reasons unrelated to their suitability or willingness to serve. It was a recognition of that fact, no doubt, which prompted Past President Richard Evans to say to Bill Walk (upon his nomination): "Bill, never forget you've been appointed - not anointed." Good advice!

Upon making its decision, the nominating committee telephones the successful candidate to confirm his availability. Usually, as Royce Abbey and Glen Kinross will confirm, that call comes through in Australia in the wee small hours of the morning. I was spared that intrusion into my slumber, for I was in Sydney when they met, unaware of the meeting. They had great difficulty locating me, but finally contacted Doug Biggs (my brother-in-law) who was able to tell them I'd be returning to Nambour mid-afternoon. So they adjourned their meeting to the hotel at which they were staying, and were near the end of a pleasant dinner when I responded to their message to telephone a designated number in Evanston. I knew then that life would never be the same.

Because our daughter Judy had returned home from London to take care of our home and my business affairs, I was able to devote myself fully to the task of the presidency free of distractions. And I needed to be able to do that. Until the call from the nominating committee I had given the appointment no thought, for the chance of selection was really pretty slim.

Now, suddenly, all that had changed. Within five months I would be serving on Jack Davis's board as president-elect, conscious of a whole range of issues to be sandwiched in between seemingly incessant travel. In recent years that has become much more demanding, with the president-elect expected to attend most (if not all) of the Rotary Institutes. I went to very few of them. With the nominating committee now

meeting four months earlier, and a much more adequate budgetary provision for such travels, he is expected to attend.

One decision which needs to be made early is the selection of a theme, for (at least in my experience) it has a significant influence on the development of a program or emphasis for the year in office. I stumbled upon mine, almost by chance. Just a couple of months after nomination I was at a Rotary meeting at Las Vegas, where a youth choir sang a song in which the words "Reach Out" were used repeatedly to emphasise the message. Here was my theme - simple, challenging and adaptable. I could imagine clubs and districts using these two simple words to give emphasis to whatever program was their focus for the year - Reach Out - to the young . . . to the elderly . . . to the homeless . . . to the hungry . . . to the lonely.

Actually, it wasn't quite as straight forward as that. I had two others in mind, so I wrote to two of my closest friends in the U.S.A. (Past Directors Pratt Secrest and Mike Pedrick) and sought their opinions. They both preferred "Reach Out". In my subsequent complete immersion in that theme I have lost beyond recall the words of the other two. Pratt later proved invaluable in development of the theme folder. I had worked on it with staff through about ten different drafts, and when we finally had it down to what I thought was a bare minimum to convey the message, I flew down to Thomasville to spend a day or two with him to discuss it and other matters. His training in journalism soon became apparent. One by one superfluous words were deleted and others substituted, until finally we had a document devoid of redundancy.

Each year the theme developed by the president assumes increasing importance. (It's hard to imagine there was a time when there wasn't one.) Adopted and approved by the board, it reduces to a few carefully chosen words the goals and objectives for the year. Every word in the theme folder is subject to critical scrutiny and evaluation. Before mine was finally drafted I went to our office in Zurich, where there are experts in several languages. I spent an hour or so with them in the morning, when they discussed with me what I was trying to convey in what I thought were two fairly simple words in an uncomplicated theme. When I went back later in the day, they informed me those two words literally translated into French were the motto of the French communist party. So they had to use different but similar words to convey the message.

Having been through all that, I had just presented to the board the final draft of the theme folder when a staff member handed to me a note which said it appeared, from a report of the Lions International annual convention, that they had adopted and announced the same theme. We promptly telephoned their international headquarters, to be assured that when the words "reach out . . . reach out", were used by their president in closing their international convention, he was merely urging his

audience to extend themselves in service. In fact, they didn't have a theme, but a two-year service emphasis. I was later grateful to have discovered this when I did, for just before I announced the theme to the convention in Tokyo I received a cable from someone in Australia informing me that I was copying the Lions International theme. Imagine what that would have done to my morale had I not known better!

Of course, the words I had chosen were meaningless unless matched with action. As I used to say in some of my speeches: "You cannot reach out with your hands in your pocket." So I started to think about a program which would give relevance to the theme, and gradually there emerged the idea which we now know as The Health, Hunger and Humanity (the 3H) Program. It didn't happen overnight. Many had a part in its development. It was controversial to an extent I hadn't anticipated. In fact, had I realised the opposition it would generate I may well have directed my energies elsewhere.

June used sometimes say to me: "Clem, don't you think you're placing too much emphasis on 3H? There are other programs". She was concerned that if this radical (in the minds of some) new idea failed to gain general acceptance, my whole year would be a failure. But I used to defend my single mindedness by pointing out that when a satellite is launched into space, it is at the moment of blast-off that most of the energy is expended, as evidenced by the heat and the gas and the noise - a rather appropriate simile, given the intensity of the opposition of some very influential Rotarians to the program's launch.

I had originally intended to record, in a separate chapter of this book, the story of the birth and development of the 3H program, but because of its historical significance I have been asked to deal with it in greater detail in a separate book, which will be published about the same time as this one. However, since it constituted a major part of my activities during and immediately after my year in office, I have decided to deal with it briefly here.

It was conceived at the February 1978 meeting of the Board of R.I., on which I was serving as president-elect. Jack Davis, the president at the time, was concerned about the toll of preventable diseases on the world's children, and proposed appropriating \$30,000 or more for each of the two or more years to communicate the need to Rotarians. His hope was that the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation would support the idea, but even at that early stage they were unsympathetic to the proposal. Later, they were implacably opposed to it.

Also on the agenda of that meeting was discussion concerning plans to commemorate Rotary's 75th anniversary - then only two years away. We were looking for an idea or project which would make a major impact, worthy of the occasion. But what? We adjourned that afternoon without having made a decision.

That evening, in my office at the Secretariat, I drafted a proposal which I left on Jack Davis' table some time after midnight. He saw me the next day and said he thought it should be discussed by the board - and it was. Any major proposal which comes before a 17 member board is almost certain to emerge in a different form, as this one did. I wanted a permanent fund, with only the income to be spent in perpetuity. The board decided on the expenditure of the fund in total over a period of five years.

But the essential elements of my proposal remained. The money to be raised over a two year period would be used to fund major international projects, beyond the capacity of any one club or district.

And so (as mentioned earlier), at the 1988 Convention in Tokyo, I was given the privilege of announcing details of the new Health, Hunger and Humanity Program, which I launched officially at a camp for handicapped people on Long Island, New York, on my first day in office - July 1, 1978.

It wasn't long before we received from the Philippines our first proposal - to immunise 6.3 million children against polio, at a cost of about \$760,000. Never before, in our long history, had we done anything like this - and it wasn't long before opposition to this radical new idea emerged.

A group of very senior Rotarians, including four past presidents and a former general secretary of R.I. did all they could to strangle the program in its infancy. They declared Rotary had no business trying to solve the world's problems. For 55 years we had operated under a board policy which actively discouraged what was called 'corporate action' - i.e. clubs combining to undertake major projects. Their fear was that the autonomy of individual clubs would be threatened if they joined forces with others to undertake such major projects as were envisaged with 3H.

In consequence, we dissipated our resources on a multiplicity of relatively small and unrelated projects, building walls instead of bridges, when all around us were pressing problems which could only be resolved by clubs combining to undertake projects too large for any one of them.

I was warned that fund raising for such a major program would adversely affect annual contributions to The Rotary Foundation, which then stood at \$12 million. Seven years later, as chairman of The Trustees, I was delighted to be able to report that contributions were then running at twice that rate - \$25 million; that in that seven year period we had received more than twice as much as the total for the previous 61 years, and that our corpus had doubled from \$40 million to \$80 million.

There's a lesson in that which we should never forget - and the PolioPlus campaign later confirmed it - when challenging goals are set (whether at club, district or international level) Rotarians generally will respond generously.

The decision by the Trustees, on the recommendation of Jim Bomar's board, to adopt 3H as an ongoing program of the Foundation; the struggle to

survive against the determined opposition of the influential and highly organised group of senior past officers; the campaign to influence public opinion with letters to the regional magazines, speeches at club and district meetings; the challenges to the program at the Dallas convention and two Councils on Legislation – were a constant threat to the program's survival. Probably never before or since have the constitutional documents of R.I. been so closely examined, in search of technical impediments to continuance of the program.

It was a titanic struggle, recorded more completely for posterity in the history which I have written of the birth and development of the 3H program and (as indicated earlier) published separately.

The final showdown took place at the 1983 Council on Legislation at Monaco, where two proposals were introduced, the passage of either of which would have killed the 3H program. One sought to rescind a resolution of the 1980 Council expressing support for the program and providing for its funding through The Rotary Foundation. The other was a very radical proposed enactment (83-84) which sought to enshrine in the Constitution of R.I. a provision that Rotary International had no right or authority to engage in any activities as a corporate entity, alone or in concert with others. It would be limited to servicing the clubs, districts, their officers and the board of directors – nothing more than an administrative unit.

It was an audacious thrust aimed at the jugular vein of the 3H program which if passed would have destroyed not only the 3H program, but also many other great programs and activities.

Both proposals were defeated overwhelmingly. Finally, five years of conflict came to an end. At last we could get on with the program, at the same time having laid to rest the "corporate activity" bogey to which we had for so long been captive.

As already stated, it was while I was serving on Jack Davis's board as president-elect (Royce Abbey was there too, as second vice-president) that the Rotary Club of Duarte in California admitted three women into membership, in direct contravention of the male-only membership provisions of our constitution. The board therefore had no alternative to withdrawing their charter.

The club appealed against this decision to the 1978 Convention at Tokyo.

Presenting their case to the convention, their representative said: "We are not trying to force females on Rotary International. So let's not confuse that issue. We are only seeking, for our self-determination, women in Rotary – women in a Rotary club on a local option."

In responding on behalf of the board, President Jack Davis said "We have heard from Rotarian McJimpson why the Rotary club of Duarte felt justified in violating the rules. It is significant that the club chose not to use its right to propose an enactment to change the rules. It decided to

women in Rotary – women in a Rotary club on a local option."

In responding on behalf of the board, President Jack Davis said "We have heard from Rotarian McJimpson why the Rotary club of Duarte felt justified in violating the rules. It is significant that the club chose not to use its right to propose an enactment to change the rules. It decided to change the rules unilaterally. In other words, to establish its own rules."

By an overwhelming majority – 1,060 to 34 – delegates voted to uphold the board's decision. It was simply that. It was not a vote against the admission of women into our membership. That decision would come later at a duly constituted Council on Legislation, representative of all Rotary clubs.

What a divisive and controversial issue, within Rotary and the wider community! It dogged me the whole of my year in office. As the official representative of Rotary International I was obliged to defend the board's action in upholding the constitution. With the benefit of my previous media training I had developed a technique for diverting the inevitable questioning about "women in Rotary" to the wider issue of our concern for women, and especially for the mothers of the millions of children who were the beneficiaries of our new 3H program. But I soon discovered that what went to air was invariably the fifteen second fragment which highlighted our restrictive membership provisions, with no acknowledgment of our humanitarian programs touching the lives, not just of three women, but of millions.

Delivering the Sir Angus Mitchell Memorial Address at the fourteenth Australian Regional Institute in Hobart in January 1980, under the title "Rotary – the Road Ahead", and with the din of the Duarte battle still ringing in my ears, I said:-

Women will continue to enter the workforce in increasing numbers, and as an increasing proportion of the total work force . . . The trend which is evident to-day is gaining momentum, supported in some countries by legislation which challenges our existing basis of membership. I well remember the first time I heard of a proposal to come before the council on legislation to admit women to Rotary. I couldn't believe the proposer was serious. Now it is a regular item on the agenda of our legislative body, and is progressively attracting additional support as the environment in which we operate gradually changes.

There were some who interpreted that statement as advocacy for the admission of women into Rotary, which it wasn't.

Meanwhile, the battle being fought by the X-Rotary Club of Duarte (as it called itself) raged on, through the courts of California, their cause having been taken up by the Council for Civil Liberties, which provided access to substantial financial and legal resources and media support. It

was, of course, a matter of much greater significance than just the membership of a small Rotary club. An important principle was at stake, the outcome finally decided by the Supreme Court of the U.S.A., in consequence of which the male only restriction on Rotary club membership was abolished in the U.S.A., and ultimately (by decision of the 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.

Almost from the moment of my selection by the nominating committee, I had to start planning my travels, if for no other reason than the number of requests which came in from enthusiastic Rotarians keen to get an early commitment to visit their area or favourite function. The problem is that, after four or five presidents in succession have accepted invitations to a particular annual event, a precedent has been established and the locals expect every president to do so. I found it necessary on a number of occasions to say no to some, so that I could say yes to others who had not seen a president in their area for years.

Because we were launching the 3H program, I decided to concentrate my travels in visits to third world countries, so that I could become personally sensitised to their needs and problems, and give recognition to clubs and Rotarians working tirelessly and effectively to meet those needs. June was wonderful, her genuine concern for people evident wherever we went – and that despite occasional discomfort. In fact, after one trip when conditions were fairly primitive, she said: "Clem, do you plan to spend any time in Europe or Scandinavia?" "Not this year," I said. "We'll go there some other time." I think she was disappointed, but she accepted it willingly. A few years later we went there on a private tour, without Rotary commitments, when we had more time to ourselves and were able to enjoy it to the full; for despite the friendliness and hospitality of our local hosts when we went on official visit, we didn't ever have time just to be ourselves.

Our first trip away from the Secretariat was in October to Brazil, then Argentina, then across the South Atlantic to Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Tunisia and on up to Rome for a planning meeting for the Rome convention. For the first time in our lives, during our week or so in Argentina, we found ourselves under constant protection. Our local hosts were taking no chances on having the president of R.I. kidnapped and held to ransom, so we were accompanied on all our travels by armed guards, even having them stand guard all night outside our hotel room at Mar del Plata.

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Plata.

However, in Buenos Aires we decided to get a little free time to ourselves, so when we'd be delivered to our hotel about 4 p.m., we'd dismiss the guards until they reappeared for whatever night function we had (and there was one every night). We'd then wait a few minutes to give them time to disappear, and set off to wander the streets of the city, exploring the shops and just being ourselves. Reporting later to the board on our visit, I paid tribute to our local hosts for being so solicitous of our welfare, but told them of the way we were able to get away undetected on our own for a couple of hours. "No you didn't," said Jorge Hugo Aletta de Sylvas (the director from the region). "There was someone following you wherever you went."

Some R.I. presidents are multi-lingual. Ernst Breitholtz spoke seven languages – Bob Barth and others from Europe are similarly gifted. But I spoke only English – and that with an Australian accent. So how could I manage to convey a message to a non-English speaking audience? I decided early to learn a little Spanish, since that seemed to be one of the most commonly spoken languages other than English. I bought a Berlitz course, and practised assiduously – to discover, when I tried it out on some of my South American friends, that the Spanish spoken in Spain is quite different from that in South America.

So I abandoned my language training (for which I had no aptitude anyway) and decided to have my speeches translated by one of the R.I. staff, then put on tape. I'd then have them printed, with the English on one line, and the Spanish version phonetically on the next line. Having done this prior to my first trip into South America, Alfonso Rubiano, who had done the translation, said to me: "President Clem, do you mind if I give you some advice? I suggest you not do this." "Why not?" I asked. "Because you will be too concerned with the words. Your personality will not come through." "What you're telling me Alfonso," I replied, "Is not to make a fool of myself." "Exactly," he said. And he was right, for at a district dinner in Argentina, with each of his club presidents present, the governor (who spoke quite good English) turned to me and said, with great pride: "Wonderful onion, president Clem." I hadn't had any onion. It took me a minute or two to realise that what he was trying to say was "Wonderful union" (or unity).

I wonder how many such mistakes I would have made, with my very imperfect Spanish, had not Alfonso Rubiano rescued me and persuaded me instead to deliver my speeches in English, pausing frequently so that the local director could translate, even if he did occasionally embellish them a little. I know he did, for when I spoke at a large meeting in Brazilia the Australian Ambassador came up to me after the meeting, said some complimentary things about my speech, then added: "but the translation was better." I'm sure it was, for even in English (not his native tongue) Paulo

Costa used colourful, dramatic words and phrases. I could only imagine the transformation he had wrought on my speech in translating it into Portuguese.

West Africa was fascinating – and challenging. Small Rotary clubs, with meagre resources, are confronted every day with enormous unmet needs. They are a vital element in their local societies, particularly when they are able to tap the resources available to them through Rotary in World Community Service and 3H Projects, and in the training of their young people through The Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholar-ships.

In each country I was able to meet with the Head of State, always in the company of local Rotary leaders. Thus, I was able to give them the opportunity to tell their story (an opportunity they would not otherwise have), at the highest level of authority in their country. A couple of incidents stand out:-

In Ghana we met with the Head of State – a very stern looking general named Akuffo.

We were scheduled to spend ten minutes with him, but as I told him about the Ghanaian graduates who had studied abroad under our scholarships program, of the focus of our newly developing 3H program, and as the local Rotarians told what they were doing, his severe military bearing gave way to a relaxed, informal discussion which went on for about 25 minutes. At lunch that day, at the meeting of the Rotary Club of Accra, the president announced that we had had a wonderful meeting that morning with the Head of State, who smiled twice. There was rapturous applause. Why? "Because," I was told, "the Head of State never smiles."

Here was a military man who had seized power by force, and (not without reason) suspected the motives of anyone coming to see him. So his guard was always up. I came to him as the representative of an organisation which had no hidden agenda and asked for nothing – but offered much. So he relaxed.

We later established in his country an excellent agricultural training institution. Sadly, he did not live to see it. He went the way of so many military dictators of that time.

In Tunis I was challenged by a journalist with the question: "Why is Rotary so elitist?"

I asked what evidence she had to support that statement. "The Rotarians of Tunis," she replied. So I said to her: "In that case, you'd expect their world president to be representative of that class, wouldn't you?" She agreed. "Well let me tell you he is an accountant who has a small business in a small country town of about 10,000 in Australia, employing fewer than twenty people. Does that sound elitist?"

in a small country town of about 10,000 in Australia, employing fewer than twenty people. Does that sound elitist?"

I think she was surprised. Certainly in a large city such as Tunis, drawing its Rotary membership from the top echelon of the business community, Rotary might well appear to be elitist. But I imagine if she were to get out into the smaller country towns she would find Rotary clubs whose members were of much more modest means (as I found in India, for instance), but who were deeply involved in very significant personal service meeting the needs of their communities.

For me this was a very illuminating encounter, because it reinforced the validity of the statement I had made earlier that "Rotary takes ordinary men and gives them extraordinary opportunities."

Rarely does the president of R.I. attend district conferences, simply because there are too many of them (currently about 515), and also because in attending one it is difficult to say no to others. But I broke with tradition. The governors of the Philippines asked if I would attend a joint conference of their four districts. I agreed to do it. Then the governors of the two districts in Taiwan heard about it, and asked if I'd do the same in Taiwan, if they held their conference immediately after the Philippines conferences. Again I agreed. Then the governor in Sri Lanka asked if I'd attend his conference the following week-end, since this was the fiftieth anniversary of Rotary in Sri Lanka. How could I say no? Then someone said to me: "You can't go into Asia without visiting Japan." So I fitted that in between Taiwan and Sri Lanka.

Because the previous five presidents had visited India I had made a firm resolve not to go there, but relented when I found I had time between Sri Lanka and a planned visit to Israel. So we went to India. They were two crowded days. We departed Colombo on conclusion of the district conference late Sunday afternoon, arriving 55 minutes later at Madras. Then a poolside reception, dinner, a meeting at which I spoke (June's diary says "briefly"), to bed at 11 p.m. Up at 4.15 the next day to catch a 5.55 a.m. flight to Delhi, and a whole round of official engagements – to the Prime Minister who talked about women in Rotary – to the President for a cup of tea and a biscuit – to Mahatma Ghandi's grave to lay a wreath – then an inter-city meeting, a visit to a cancer hospital, fellowship and tea in a large tent, dinner at a city hotel, then a night of traditional dancing. To bed about midnight. The next day (Tuesday) we left Delhi at 9.30 for Bombay, and an equally crowded day which ended late at night at a large inter-city meeting, just in time to enable us to pack our suitcases to catch a 2 a.m. flight for Israel. By this time I was regretting having made the visit to India I had previously vowed I wouldn't make. But I could not, in good conscience, fly over it when I had Monday and Tuesday spare. Those Indian Rotarians knew how to "fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run" and to extract the last ounce of

energy from their president and his wife. Such friendly, hospitable people !

One hour out we had to turn back with engine trouble, eventually leaving at 8.a.m. The fact that we arrived in Tel Aviv six hours late was only a minor concern to the locals. They whisked us straight from the airport to the Knesset to meet and have lunch with the Israeli cabinet (me unshaven, both of us in need of a shower and change of clothes), all the while telling us not to be disappointed at having missed the visits to projects etc. planned for that morning – they would squeeze them in to our already crowded two day itinerary. And they did.

While we found these travels interesting and stimulating, our thoughts turned often to home and family and friends, so we planned to do a quick tour of Australia, culminating in a week in Nambour over Christmas. It was a whirlwind trip. We were away from Evanston exactly five weeks. Our first stop was Paris, for the CENAEEM Institute, then on to Bahrein for a couple of days, from there to Indonesia also for a couple of days – crowded days, with Rotary meetings, visits to dignitaries, and of course inspecting Rotary projects.

At 3 a.m. on Friday December 8, 1978, we arrived at Perth, to commence a tour which took us in twelve days to ten different centres from Perth to Cairns – at each of them never-to-be-forgotten meetings where hundreds of Rotarians and their wives gathered.

We left Perth on the "red-eye special" on Sunday about midnight, just in time to beat the grounding of all aircraft of the major airlines, for this was the beginning of a strike which lasted over the next nine days. We were never quite sure whether we would be able to arrive on time at the next designated meeting – but we always did, using cars or small privately chartered aircraft.

On Monday December 11, we were in Adelaide, for the biggest such meeting for Rotarians only during the whole of our year: Tuesday at 1 p.m. we had a large meeting at the Moonee Valley Racecourse (Melbourne), another that night at Bendigo, Wednesday we were in Devonport (Tasmania), Thursday Bathurst, Friday Armidale, Saturday Brisbane, Sunday at home, Monday in Rockhampton, Tuesday in Cairns. Fortunately the strike concluded that day, so we were able to fly south to Brisbane and then on home, where we enjoyed the Christmas break for a week, leaving on December 27, on the return journey to Evanston via California and Las Vegas.

Anyone not familiar with the vast distances involved in such an itinerary will not appreciate the difficulties faced by the organisers of those ten meetings, because of the cancellation of airline schedules, particularly as only four of them were in capital cities.

As I look back now, 21 years later, I am surprised that my lasting memory of those hectic days is not of exhaustion, but rather of exhilaration. To

As I look back now, 21 years later, I am surprised that my lasting memory of those hectic days is not of exhaustion, but rather of exhilaration. To be among one's own; to experience the warmth of their friendship and the strength of their support (particularly for the 3H program); to be able to acknowledge that support personally in the presentation of hundreds of 3H banners, was the tonic we needed then, at the halfway point in our crowded year.

There were, of course, many other memorable experiences in our travels, details of which (fortunately) June recorded in her diary. I mention just these few to indicate what is expected of the president and his wife as they travel the world. We spent about half our time in that sort of activity, the remainder of it at the Secretariat, engaged in meetings of the board, committees and general administration.

There is never enough time to do all that could be done at the Secretariat, despite the fact that in my time we had a staff of about 300. My principal contact with the staff was, of course, through the general secretary and his division heads. Whenever possible I met with them at their regular Wednesday staff planning meeting.

But we decided it would be a good idea if we could also meet person-to-person with each member of the staff – not at work, but in the relaxed atmosphere of our apartment. And so I arranged with Jean Ann (my secretary) to draw up a roster and issue invitations to groups of about 30 to spend an hour or two with us after work on days we would be there. June was a good cook, and delighted in preparing a sumptuous afternoon tea (or coffee), using some of her favourite Australian recipes, foreign to most of those attending. Being a good Methodist, she served "Methodist Rum Balls" – with vanilla essence substituted for rum. (We later discovered there's more alcohol in vanilla essence than rum). In a staff of 300 odd many had never met others working in different divisions, until they came to our afternoon teas. Several of June's recipes were in such demand we had them copied and displayed on the staff notice board, near the entrance to the cafeteria. No one asked for the recipe for any of her Vegemite delicacies!

We were there during the coldest snap in Chicago for almost a century. In fact, looking back through copies of letters I wrote to friends in Australia, I found one I had written on February 6, 1979, to Jack Russell, my long time Air Force friend in Melbourne, who for years had suffered my taunts about Melbourne's weather. It paints the picture of conditions at that time:

We certainly have been having it cold here this past month or so. When people ask me if it ever gets as cold as this in Australia I say "No – except in a place called Melbourne". I think this even has Melbourne beaten. Yesterday was the coldest day in Chicago since 1895 – 17 degrees below but somewhere between 30 and 35 below with the factor

from the wind. It hasn't really worried us. We just rug up, and have no trouble surviving in moving from place to place. Our apartment is very well heated, and so is the office, so it causes us very little inconvenience.

The main problem is negotiating the ice covered sidewalks. We have had something over 40 inches of snow in the past 5 or 6 weeks, and all of it is still there. It has never been above freezing point in that time to melt it, so one just walks along on 3 feet of snow which has been compacted to about half that depth of ice. We have learned the goose-step which affords maximum protection against falling over, although that has happened to each of us once, without any very damaging result.

Harry Stewart had been General Secretary since January, 1972, his term expiring on January 1, 1979. Under normal circumstances, if he had been re-appointed, he would have served for another eighteen months before compulsory retirement. The dilemma I faced was whether to recommend to the board his re-appointment for that short period, or the appointment of a new general secretary who could serve during the whole of the anticipated five year life of the 3H program.

I liked Harry personally. He had served in World War II as a B17 bomber pilot over Europe with the U.S. Air Force. He'd been on the R.I. staff for longer than I could remember, much of that time as assistant general secretary. But his health was indifferent (he'd had heart trouble and later by-pass surgery) and I believed his long and close association with the past leadership of R.I. would make it difficult for him to support fully a new program (3H) which, even at that early stage, was being looked on with a jaundiced eye by many influential Rotarians who were his close friends.

Immediately after the Tokyo convention our board had its first meeting at Hakone. One of the first items on the agenda was the appointment of a general secretary, effective the following January 1. We invited applications from the staff (since there was no time to seek anyone outside), and had three applicants - Harry, Phil Lindsay (his assistant general secretary) and Herb Pigman. After a long day, during which we interviewed each of them at length, we finally decided by secret ballot to appoint Herb Pigman. It wasn't an easy decision, but with the impending launch of a major new program which it was then anticipated would run for five years, the board decided to appoint someone who had no close ties with those who were opposed to it, who believed in it, and who would probably be in office during the whole of that five year period.

I realised I was taking a chance. For the first six months of my term I would be working with a man who might well feel aggrieved, and be less than enthusiastic to give 100% support to a president who had made no

than enthusiastic to give 100% support to a president who had made no secret of the fact that he thought the time had come for a change. I needn't have worried. Harry was a true professional. If he had any misgivings about the new direction we were taking, he kept them to himself, and supported me completely in all that we did at this very vital stage in the development of the year's agenda for change.

Herb Pigman took over from Harry on January 1, 1979, and brought to his appointment different skills and experience. Harry was primarily an administrator, having served for many years as Assistant General Secretary to George Means, who was well known and respected as one who "ran a tight ship". Herb came to the position via a different route - originally as a writer on the staff of The Rotarian, his later involvement was with training (he headed up the staff responsible for that function at the time I was trained as a district governor) and in programs. I think it would be fair to say that where Harry viewed Rotary in great detail through a close-up lens, Herb's view was through a wide-angle lens - and at this point in Rotary's history we needed that perspective. I was therefore fortunate to have had the benefit of the leadership of these two different men - in the first six months, in the organisational phase of our program, the experienced and competent administrator; in the second six months the visionary (also possessed of good organisational skills).

Inevitably, I suppose, there are frustrations as well as rewards in serving in the office of president, for as one plans his year in detail it is soon apparent that there are not enough days to do all that one would like to do.

1978-79 was not a leap year, so I had available to me for my year in office only 365 days.

Deduct from this -	Every available Sunday off	5 0
	Travel (49% of the time, in my case)	1 8 0
	Board meetings	2 5
	Committee meetings	2 0
	International Assembly &	
	International Convention	<u>1 5</u>
		<u>2 9 0</u>
	That leaves, for all the other work	
	which has to be done	<u>7 5</u>
		days.

Fortunately, June and I enjoyed good health during the whole of the year. Not once did we have to cancel an appointment or engagement because of illness. I attribute that to the fact that we made a point of putting Sunday aside for rest. We would sleep in, have breakfast just in time to allow us to walk to our local church, walk home, collecting the Chicago Tribune on the way, have a light lunch, then spread out on the bed, read about two pages of The Tribune, and sleep. Refreshed, we were able to face another

week with renewed vigour.

So what did I do with those 75 'spare' days? Many of them were taken up in selecting and appointing representatives to district conferences. I've been told some presidents leave this to staff. I didn't, and I don't think many have. I asked for recommendations from past officers around the world (because no president can possibly know every potential representative) then checked with the director from the region or zone before finally issuing the invitation. It takes time, and has to be planned within a budget - in my case, at an average cost for the 375 districts of US\$617 per district - an impossibly low figure today, with the escalation of travel and accommodation costs.

I found writing The President's Message for The Rotarian and Rotary's regional magazines quite time consuming. I wrote ten of them, invariably based upon some personal experience, so that they were very Australian in character. For example, the August message under the heading "Catch your Wave" was based upon my observations of surf board riders at Noosa Heads, each catching his own wave. In September (youth month) I built a message around a statement I had heard in a recorded speech of the late Rotarian Fletcher Jones - "What we say whispers . . . What we do thunders." The December message was under the title "The Health, Hunger and Humanity Program - Rotary's Snowy Mountains Project". The story of the bark pictures which my mother fashioned so creatively from pieces of paper bark and seaweed, was used in the April issue, under the heading "The quest for hidden talent", to encourage incoming club presidents and district governors to appoint to their committees people who, for various reasons, had never had a real chance to demonstrate their ability.

Of course, these messages had to be written months in advance - which I found very demanding. I used frequently to go back to the apartment, where I had a small typewriter, and in the solitude, away from the distractions of the Secretariat, laboriously tap out my message. The journalist who writes a daily column (or even a weekly column) for the newspapers has my unqualified sympathy and admiration. I would starve if I had to do that for a living, as I would also writing a book such as this.

But by far the bulk of my time was taken up in answering correspondence directed specifically to the president, in following through on implementation of board and committee decisions, in preparation for the next meeting, and of course in defending the 3H program from the mounting opposition of its determined opponents. I have been asked by those who have represented the president at conferences: "Does the president read every report sent to him by his rep.?" I didn't, for two reasons - most of them came in in the last month or two (or even after the end of the year) when preparations for the international assembly and convention demanded a great deal of time, and in any case there were too many of them. (Glen Kinross would have received about 520 reports. If he had spent just 15

ed a great deal of time, and in any case there were too many of them. (Glen Kinross would have received about 520 reports. If he had spent just 15 minutes on each report, that would have taken 130 hours, or about sixteen eight hour days - about 20% of the 75 days I mentioned earlier.) But I did have my executive assistant read each one and highlight matters which he thought should be drawn to my attention - and I dealt with them. Although they're filed in appropriate places within the secretariat, I must confess I didn't ever have occasion to refer to reports of previous years. Others may have.

In organisational terms, there are two highlights in the life of a president of R.I. (apart from selection by the nominating committee and the confirmation of that selection at the following R.I. Convention). The first is the Rotary International Assembly immediately preceding his taking office, when he meets for the first (and only) time with all of the district governors of his year. The second is the International Convention, near the end of his term.

From the moment I received the call from the nominating committee for president, I was constantly alert to gather ideas. I would always carry with me a small card or notebook in which to record them as they occurred - sometimes an idea, sometimes a quotation, or a story. And so it was that in church in Nambour one Sunday, when the minister told the story of John Mihok, I asked him for a copy of it. Here was something I could use in my closing address to the 375 incoming district governors gathered from around the world at the International Assembly at Boca Raton in late May 1978, at the conclusion of their six days of intensive training to serve in what we termed "The Reach Out Year".

I had asked each of them to bring to the assembly a small rock from their own locality, preferably containing a semi-precious gem. These were then pooled, and at the luncheons at which I met with them in groups of about 60 or 70, I would hand to each, one of these stones. "What's this all about?" they'd ask. I told them to wait until the final session, and all would be revealed. It created a good deal of interest, and speculation. I'm sure some thought it a bit bizarre - especially some of the staff, who'd never had to cope with anything like this. Of course, some forgot to bring their rock, and after the first day it soon became apparent that there were very few stones left in the grounds of the Boca Raton Hotel and Club. Nevertheless, we had received, and in turn distributed, hundreds of rocks of all shapes and sizes. Only once did someone draw from the barrel the rock he had brought.

At the final session, each incoming governor was asked to bring his rock. In my closing address I told the John Mihok story, in these words:-

One day a man named Gustaf Gilman was working in his lapidary shop in Chicago when John Mihok entered. He handed to Gilman a rough red stone

and said: "Is this worth cutting and polishing?" Gilman gasped

"Where did you get this?"

"My father picked it up in Hungary 50 years ago," said Mihok. "He thought it was a pretty pebble. Then I landed in this country I found it in my baggage. I guess my mother had put it in. It's been lying around our house ever since. The children played with it. My last baby cut his teeth on it. Once a rat dragged it into a hole, but I found it again by accident. I came to look upon it as my lucky stone. In fact, one night I dreamed it was a diamond and worth a lot of money. But I know it's not a diamond; it's red."

"No" said Gilman, "it's not a diamond. It's a pigeon's blood ruby."

"What might it be worth?" asked Mihok.

"Well, I'd say somewhere between \$100,000 and \$250,000" answered Gilman.

And so, Gilman took it and cut it into a flawless ruby of 23.9 carats, believed to have been at that time the largest ruby in the country, if not the world.

You see, John Mihok had been a labourer all his life. Michael Mihok, his father, had been a labourer before him. For 50 years father and son had toiled to keep the wolf from the door, yet all the while they had in their careless possession a priceless gem.

Of course, John Mihok had been a foolish man. Some might even have called him stupid. His whole life, and that of his family, could have been changed had he realised earlier the real worth of that stone. But he took it at face value. He accepted it for what it appeared to be, without question. And then one day he held it in his hand, and looked at it more closely, and wondered. And that day his life was changed.

At the fellowship luncheons during the assembly each of you received a rough stone, quarried from the gem fields of the world. I wonder how many of you have cast it aside, as apparently worthless, as well it might be. I don't know what's inside it - perhaps a ruby; perhaps an opal; perhaps nothing. You have no means of knowing while the stone remains in its present state. And you'll never know unless you do something with it, looking below the surface to explore its secrets.

And you'll never know the real worth of the experience you have shared at this assembly unless, like John Mihok, you pause for a moment, think about it, wonder about its potential . . . dream dreams perhaps . . . and then act. For what you take from this assembly is not the finished product - not the priceless gem, cut and polished. You take back to your district the raw, uncut stone. But you have been given the tools, and you have seen a vision of what Rotary could be, and of what it will be, as you cut it and shape it and polish and fashion it.

I have told this story here, not only because it records one of the significant elements of the international assembly, but also because I think it relates to so many of life's experiences, which we can so easily take for granted until something happens to cause us to look at them again and to realise their real value.

It is now 22 years since I gave that address to the 1978-79 governors, yet many of them have told me (Eric van Leeuwen only last year) that they still have that rock as a symbol of a great shared experience.

The closing moments of any international assembly are always tinged with a certain sadness at the prospect of parting, especially for an incoming president on the threshold of a new experience, buoyed by the sense of one-ness with his team. Years earlier I had read on a Quota district conference program a simple little poem which I had saved for just such an occasion, so I closed the assembly with these words:-

June and I will travel a great deal together this coming year, but we know it will not be possible to be with each of you physically. And so we would leave with you (husbands and wives) as this great international assembly draws to its close, these words by an unknown author; for they express much more adequately than I ever could the feeling that is in our hearts -

We do not wish you joy without a sorrow,
Nor endless day without the healing dark,
Nor brilliant sun without the restful shadow,
Nor tides that never turn against the bark.

We wish you love, and strength, and faith, and wisdom,
Goods, and gold enough to help some needy one.
We wish you songs, but also blessed silences
And God's sweet peace when every day is done.

From Boca Raton we flew to Tokyo for Jack Davis's convention - the largest in Rotary's history, with an attendance of 39,834. Here he gave me the privilege of announcing to that large, world-wide audience, the detail

of the Health, Hunger and Humanity program. It was the perfect launching pad. Others less generous would not have extended that offer; and there would be some hesitant to accept it, preferring to defer it until the commencement of "their year". But we both realised that this was a new program so different from anything which had yet been attempted, that exposure to that large and representative audience ahead of the official launch on July 1, 1978, would give it a head start. It also had the effect of galvanising into action those opposed to it - but that's another story, reserved for the History of the 3H program, published seperatley.

The enthusiasm of the assembly, the spectacular success of the Tokyo convention, and the air of anticipation which surrounded the launch of the 3H program, were exhilarating. I could hardly wait for the convention in Rome - for the opportunity to portray Rotary's commitment to humanitarian service and programs against the background of Rome's long tradition of commitment to those spiritual values of love and concern for others which, it seemed to me, found expression in the 3H program.

Earlier we had had doubts. The President of Italy (Aldo Moro) had been kidnapped. Knee-capping was prevalent. Law and order were the victims of political instability in the country. There was even concern expressed that extremist political groups might seek to gain publicity for their cause by kidnapping the president of R.I. during the convention, and holding him to ransom. (One board member wondered whether or not the Rotary world would contribute sufficient for a Paul Harris Fellow recognition [\$US1,000], to secure his release). Should we persevere with the plans already made to hold the 1979 convention in Rome, or opt for a site less risky and more easily managed? Las Vegas was eager to accommodate us, even at short notice. I went there to inspect the facilities. They were excellent, and there was no doubting the enthusiasm of the local Rotarians and civic authorities to have us.

Meeting at Boca Raton during the international assembly, just twelve months before the scheduled date of the convention, our board had to make a very difficult decision. The seven incoming governors from Italy pleaded with us not to turn our backs on Rome. We would be there during their summer, at the height of the tourist season, and their fragile economy was very dependent on the support of conventions and major meetings such as ours. If we were to pull out, others would - with dire consequences for the economy. We were deluged with cables from everyone who was anyone in Italy urging us not to change our plans. So, a little uncertainly, we made the fateful decision. I must confess I thought Rome would be a more appropriate location than Las Vegas for a convention focusing on the needs of a needy world.

More than 14,000 attended Rotary's 70th. Annual Convention - 430 of them from Australia (a magnificent response from my own country). Most (but not all) left disappointed that we had not made the most of a great

Most (but not all) left disappointed that we had not made the most of a great opportunity.

The opening session on the Sunday night was to feature a dramatic screening of Carl Sagan's The World Room - ideal as an introduction to the presentations for each of the succeeding three days, built around the theme "Rotary Cares" . . . with a special emphasis each day. On Monday - For all Mankind; On Tuesday - For the Hungry; On Wednesday - For the Sick.

On the opening night the failure of the projection equipment which caused the cancellation of "The World Room", and of the sound system which caused voices to reverberate around the cavernous walls of the Palazzo dello Sport, were ominous omens of technical and organisational difficulties with which we battled for the whole of the convention. How could this happen in an organisation staging its 70th international convention? There were many reasons. As in an aircraft crash, some were due to pilot error, some to mechanical failure, and some beyond our control.

The seeds of our problem were sown during the convention in San Francisco two years earlier when the head of our meetings division, with responsibility for staging regional conferences and international conventions, came to Jack Davis and announced his retirement. There really was no competent back-up for him, so Jack persuaded him to stay on, with some adjustments to his compensation. But then, at Tokyo, he again announced his decision to resign. In the company of general secretary Harry Stewart and president-elect Jim Bomar, I met with him and negotiated a deal under which his salary would be increased, travelling and per diem expenses would be paid to enable his wife to travel with him, and in return he would stay at least until the Rome convention, meantime training a replacement. Imagine the shock then, when about three months later I went into my office one Sunday afternoon (something I rarely did) to discover in the middle of the table a photocopy of a note he had written to Harry Stewart announcing his resignation yet again, and with it his keys to the building.

I was waiting for Harry when he arrived on Monday morning. We decided we would not again try to placate him, despite the fact that convention managers are a rare breed and not easily replaced - as we were soon to discover. We advertised, without success - and time was running out. Finally, in our desperation we appointed a staff member with no previous experience of running such a meeting. Had there been competent back-up staff the outcome may have been different.

After the event I wrote a report to the board, in which I said (among other things) -

I believe there were four principal areas of failure -

1. The sound system

2. The air-conditioning
3. The audio-visuals
4. The lack of support generally by the Rotarians of Italy (less than 5% attended). This in no way implies any criticism of the host club committee, who were completely dedicated to their task.

Numbers 2 and 4 were largely out of our control, but the other two were primarily our responsibility. I know that conditions in Rome were far from ideal, and I believe that under better circumstances we would not have experienced the failure of the sound and audio-visual systems; but there is no guarantee that conditions will always be ideal.

We must therefore have trained staff capable of handling difficult situations, with the will and the determination to overcome the difficulties, and not just to accept them as inevitable. They need to be aware of the responsibility they carry, and of the consequences of their failure.

Alternatively, we need to place the management of conventions in the hands of professionals whose livelihood is dependent upon satisfactory performance, and who suffer financially if they fail to perform.

Few people are aware of the magnitude of our failure at Rome. Those who attended the sessions on Monday and Wednesday mornings were aware that we failed on both occasions to screen The World Room. Few knew that we had four other audio-visual presentations which we did not screen because of failure of equipment, despite the fact that we had sent the program producer to Rome for a week in March-April to organise sound and audio-visuals, and to the convention site 16 days ahead of the convention to supervise installation.

We continue to be at risk when a report to the president from the program producer written just 10 days after the complete failure of those aspects of the program for which he had responsibility reads: "All in all it was a humiliation - for the president, for Rotary, and for myself as program producer. But I must say in all candor that Rotarians attending these conventions do not seem to give a damn about the plenary sessions."

I need scarcely add that that man's days on the staff were numbered. I made several recommendations to the board, to ensure that never again would any president or board suffer such disappointment and humiliation - and I acknowledged that there were some things I should have done better, especially in the delegation of specific duties to the aide-to-the-pres-

ter, especially in the delegation of specific duties to the aide-to-the-president and the executive assistant to the president, the R.I. convention committee, and the R.I. board. And I strongly recommended more time for the president in the day or two immediately preceding the opening of the convention, free of meetings with the press and local dignitaries etc.

Of course, it was not all doom and gloom. There were some excellent entertainment features, some great speakers, and fellowship seemed to be strengthened by the difficulties we experienced, just as natural disasters (floods, fires etc.) bring out the best in people and draw them closer together. Certainly I was sustained by a great tide of love and support from all quarters - especially from the loyal Australian contingent, who stood by me through thick and thin. In fact, in the midst of it all I found the words of that little poem The Thousandth Man running through my head, as the Australians continued to uplift my sagging spirits:-

One man in a thousand, Solomon says, will stick more close than a brother
 And it's worth while seeking him half your days if you find him before the other.
 Nine hundred and ninety-nine depend on what the world sees in you -
 But the thousandth man will stand your friend, with the whole round world agin you"

It is customary for the president to make a speech at the conclusion of the convention - usually written months prior to the event, so that it can be given to the interpreters manning the translation booths, and set in print. But I declined to prepare mine so far in advance. How could I possibly predict the circumstances which would then prevail? How could I capture the mood of the moment? And (as it turned out) how hollow would have been those words of lavish praise written in anticipation of a convention which had failed to live up to my high expectations? So I wrote some notes on a piece of paper and spoke feelingly from the heart. The speech was recorded, and I have it on tape. But for some unexplained reason (perhaps because any admission of failure should not form part of the permanent record) it was not included in the official report of the proceedings. So, for the record, here is what I said (with that great Australian contingent seated directly in front of me, under our flag):-

I have come here this morning with no prepared script, because I thought I would come to the convention at its closing stages and say to you what is in my heart - how I feel - as I stand at the close of this convention.

We started this convention on the slopes of Monte Maria (not all of you,

but some of us), as there we dedicated a memorial signifying the planting of 10,000 trees on that barren slope; and I said there, as we stood before the group of assembled Rotarians of Italy, that here we were having a mountaintop experience; that in an act of faith we were planting trees, not knowing the future. We do so many things in faith.

Albert Schweitzer said: "No ray of sunlight is ever lost; but the green which it awakens into existence needs time to sprout, and it is not always granted to the sower to see the harvest. All work that is worth anything is done in faith." And so we have faith that the seeds sown in this convention will bear fruit in the years ahead.

I said we started on a mountaintop. A mountaintop is only a mountaintop if there are valleys, and of course, we have walked through the valleys. We have had technical and organisational difficulties. I would suggest nevertheless that those things which I will take permanently from this convention will be the mountaintop experiences I have had; for, surely, we take from the altars of the past the fires and not the ashes.

What have been for me, and what have been for you, some of those mountaintop experiences? The Monday night ballet and orchestra – what a marvellous experience; yesterday afternoon (for those of you who were there) – Italia in Piazza, a wonderful experience of the exuberance of this friendly nation of Italy; the response which came from so many people yesterday at the conclusion of the panel discussion on the

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H
program; the thought-provoking addresses by so many distinguished speakers – those who spoke here this morning, and others; the great efforts which have been made to overcome the technical difficulties which we have had, not always successfully, but sometimes; the people who tried desperately to turn the tide when things went wrong; members of the host club committee, members of the R.I. convention committee; some members of the staff who demonstrated their real concern.

In fact, I had a very touching personal experience which I would like to share with you. I think it was about Sunday night. One of the young girls on the staff handed me this little note. She said: "Hang in there, we staffers are all with you and think you're great." You can imagine what that meant to me, at that point.

I want to thank the district governors-elect particularly, and the past officers, for the great meetings which I had with them briefly yesterday, and for the enthusiasm they indicated for the program of Rotary,

for the 3H program, and for all that has been their personal experience at this convention.

I want to thank the Australians up here in the stands for holding high the Australian flag. We have had little time to be together, but in each session, as I have seen the Australian flag and knew that in front of it were so many of my personal friends from back home, I gained a strength which you won't ever appreciate or fully understand.

On a stormy night in 1860 the *The Lady Elgin*, a paddleboat steamer, was plying across Lake Michigan, not far from the headquarters of Rotary International, when it was rammed by a lumber ship and sank. Into the ice-cold waters were thrown 393 passengers, 297 of whom drowned. On that dreadful evening a young man named Edward M. Spencer, without any regard for his own personal safety, plunged into the ice-cold waters and swam out seventeen times to that stricken vessel and towed back to safety seventeen people. Today on the grounds of Northwestern University, just a couple of miles from the headquarters of Rotary International, is a plaque commemorating that event.

The story I want to tell you is the story of a newspaper reporter who, many years later, recognised in the crippled body of Edward Spencer the hero of fifty years before, who in his efforts to save those seventeen people wrecked his own health and was confined to a wheelchair. He went up to him and said: "Tell me, what is the most enduring memory you have of that fateful night on the shores of Lake Michigan?" And Spencer replied: "Well, the thing I remember most is that of the seventeen people I rescued, not one came back to say thank you."

Today I'm here to say "thank you". I am here to say "thank you" to all of you, who by your great spirit have made this convention come alive. I have talked with you in the halls, I have met you in the hotels, I have been sustained and encouraged and supported by the spirit of the people who have attended this convention, by the friendliness and cordiality of our hosts, by the great concern of so many that the program of Rotary shall go on. This great 3H program, in which we are engaged, will be for all time a monument to this convention.

I said forty-eight hours ago that the emphasis of this convention would be the needs and problems of the disadvantaged people of the world, and that the purpose of this convention would be to seek the means by which we can share the burden, by mobilising our resources worldwide.

The question I now ask is: "Will we achieve this purpose?" Of course we

will. Someone said: "Don't ask the Lord to guide your steps unless you are prepared to move your feet." I believe we have at this convention people who are prepared to move their feet.

I had a very touching experience just a few days ago which I would like to share with you. A man (a past president of Rotary International), referring to the Health, Hunger and Humanity program, came up to me, placed one hand on my shoulder and with the other clasped me by the hand and said: "You (and when he said 'you' he meant Rotary International) will be blessed beyond time and space in the prayers of the mothers of the children of the Philippines." And I believe that.

I believe that this convention has given a focus to world needs and that arising from this convention will be a greater awareness of Rotary's opportunity to do something significant to meet those tremendous needs in the world around us. And so I have great faith and confidence in president Jim's program for the year ahead - one of the most significant surely to this point, and destined to be the most significant year in our Rotary history, our 75th. Anniversary Year, under the leadership of a president who aims high, and who has the capacity and the will and the determination to attain the goals he has set; who has given us a theme which challenges us to act, and inspires us through service to light the way for people everywhere, whatever their needs may be.

Forty years ago King George VI of England concluded his Christmas broadcast with these beautiful words - words which I would like to commend to you president-elect Jim, and your team (so many of you sitting in this balcony who will be serving during this next great year of opportunity for Rotary around the world). He said in this broadcast address to the people of the world: "I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown'. And he replied 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light and safer than the known way.'"

Now, as we leave this convention and go out more aware of the needs around us, let us put our hands into the hand of God, and look to the light which is before us to show us the way to continue to serve this great organisation.

Ladies and gentlemen, it has been a great privilege to have been associated with each of you, to have felt the warmth and spirit of this convention, and to know that June and I have in each of you friends for a

convention, and to know that June and I have in each of you friends for a lifetime. This surely is why we come to a Rotary convention - to meet and to greet, to share and to plan, so that the program of Rotary next year will be greater than the program of Rotary in any previous year.

And so I would say to you: "Do not lead me, I may not follow. Do not follow, I may not lead. Walk beside me, and be my friend."

We had hoped to have Pope John Paul II participate in the convention, but we were not able to secure any firm commitment until well into the convention, when he agreed to our meeting with him on Thursday - the day following its conclusion. It was a wonderfully inspiring meeting, with somewhere between 8,000 and 12,000 (depending on who you talked to) attending.

Although strict protocol had to be observed, this did not intrude to dampen our enthusiasm or to detract from the sense of reverent exuberance I felt in the presence of this great man. Realising that the convention had left me little time to prepare my brief address for the occasion, our public relations department had written one for me. It was a fairly typical press release, full of statistics, the Object of Rotary etc., factual but not very warm or inspiring. It was a thoughtful gesture, but I decided not to use it. I had been in Rome at the time of the Pope's election, and in the following words (an extract from my speech) was able to draw upon that experience to identify our mutual concern for people in need.

I was here at the time of your election. Many of us remember your having said, in those exciting hours immediately after your election: "We would like to reach out our hands and open our hearts in this moment to all people".

They were prophetic words for this convention, for we have come (more than 14,000 of us from 104 countries of the world) to seek ways in which we may more effectively help solve some of the pressing problems of our time.

The theme of the convention has been "Reach Out - Rotary Cares". We have focused upon the needs of the sick, the hungry, the illiterate and the poor. This year, in seeking to give practical expression to the theme "Reach Out" we have launched a new program - the Health, Hunger and Humanity program

The Pope's response, delivered in readily understood English, was magnificent, and did much to allay the fears of many Roman Catholics that

Rotary was somehow allied to Freemasonry, and therefore not entirely acceptable to people of their faith. Here are a few extracts from that speech –

Your presence here today indicates a great power for good. You come from many different nations and backgrounds. You bring with you vast experience in the economic, industrial, professional, cultural and scientific fields. In the solidarity of your association, you find mutual support, reciprocal encouragements, and a shared commitment to work for the common good. To one who observes you with deep interest and keen attention, it seems as though you are offering, with sincerity and generosity, your talents, your resources and your energies to the service of man. And to the extent that you pursue this lofty ideal of reaching out to people everywhere, I am certain that you will continue to find satisfaction and human fulfillment. Indeed, in your very act of giving, of assisting, of helping others to help themselves, you will find enrichment for your own lives. And in your efforts and endeavours for the good of man, you can be assured of the understanding and esteem of the Catholic Church"

Permit me to add a word of particular encouragement for your current program encompassing your concern for "Health, Hunger, Humanity". . . May this program, so conceived, be a lasting contribution to man on the part of Rotary International. The three words themselves open up extended areas and suggest so much to the ingenuity of your spirit of service.

As the modern world succeeds in producing more and more quality medicine, vast numbers of people are still in dire need of basic medical care . . . Widespread hunger remains today one of the telling expressions of man's uncompleted quest for progress and for the mastery of creation. Millions of children are crying out to the world, pleading for food . . . The human being hungers to be understood; he craves freedom and justice, and true and lasting peace . . . And whatever other challenge remains in the quest for human advancement can be grouped under your third category: humanity – the betterment of humanity. To work for humanity, to serve men and women everywhere, is a splendid aim, especially when the motivation is love.

These are just a few extracts from a speech which set the seal on a convention which held so many disappointments, but had moments of greatness – none greater or more memorable than this.

From Rome we travelled to Cairo, to present recognition as a Paul

From Rome we travelled to Cairo, to present recognition as a Paul Harris Fellow to President Anwar Sadat. Unfortunately affairs of state required his being in Alexandria at the time we were in Cairo, but we had the honour and the privilege of having afternoon tea in his home, with his wife – a very charming lady, heavily involved in service to the community. The President's subsequent assassination touched us deeply, for although we had never met him, having visited his home and spent some time with his wife we felt we had an understanding of the type of caring couple they were.

We spent a little time sight-seeing (who could go to Egypt without visiting the pyramids?) and were the guests of honour at a very well attended district banquet – the last of so many during a year now rapidly drawing to a close.

On Friday June 29, 1979, June and I met with the staff to thank them and to say farewell. General Secretary Herb Pigman, made a little speech in which he said his association with me over the year had revealed the secret of my seemingly inexhaustible energy and drive.

"I have it here in this bag," he said. "It looks terrible, it smells terrible, it tastes terrible. It can be used to grease wheels or to tan leather, and has many other uses." And from the bag he produced a jar of Vegemite, to the delight of the staff who had sampled it at the get togethers we had had in our apartment, and found no reason to disagree with him.

It was an occasion both sad and joyous. So much yet to be done, but so much achieved. Now we could go back to our home on the hill in Nambour, grateful for the opportunity which had come our way, and for the thousands of friends we now had around the world.

For Rotary does take ordinary men and women, and give them extraordinary opportunities to do more with their lives than they had ever dreamed possible.

pic 1

About to go to war – Flying Officer Clem Renouf.

pic 2

Flight Lieutenant Renouf (right), with his father, brother and sister in World War Two uniform.

pic 3

Collecting fresh fruit from the natives. Clem (second from left front) and friends in wartime Papua New Guinea.

pic 4

Clem takes a practical interest in a club project during his presidential year.

pic 5

Newly installed Rotary International President Clem Renouf and June – July, 1978.

PIC 6

Clem meets with General Akuffo, then head of state of Ghana, during his Presidential tour.

pic 7

A Presidential honour – special audience for the President of Rotary International with His Holiness Pope John Paul, The Vatican, Rome, 1979.

pic 8

R.I. Past Vice President Royce Abbey (left) presents Clem with an Australian sculpture representing the "Reach Out" theme.

pic 9

Clem with PDG Brian Maguire – the "father" of Australian Rotary Institutes and the official portrait of Angus Mitchell.

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pic 11

Rotary International President Clem Renouf inducts United States President Jimmy Carter as a Paul Harris Fellow.

pic 10

Clem Renouf presents Hiroji Mukasa, R.I. President 1982/83, with a 3H plaque.

PIC 12

The venue of the 70th Annual Convention of Rotary International in Rome, Italy.

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pic 13

Rotary Garden Village – the senior citizens village in Nambour, Queensland – inspired and initiated by Renouf generosity.

pic 14

Always interested in the lives of others, June Renouf's concern is focused on a small child who is hearing impaired.

pic 15

The small boy amused Clem, June and friends with his riddles. This one: "What's yellow and sings?" "Banana Mouskouri".

pic 16

Three "partners in service" – all R.I. Past Presidents. From left, Glen Kinross, Clem Renouf and Royce Abbey.

pic 17

"Reach Out . . ." Rotary International theme for 1978/79.

pic 18

The official Clem Renouf cover to Rotary Down Under, July, 1978.

