

## CHAPTER ONE

### BEGINNINGS

#### ROTARY REACHES AUSTRALIA

THE earliest known attempt to introduce the Rotary movement to Australia was frustrated by the Great War, now known as World War I.

In 1913 Walter Drummond, a Melbourne architect, called at the office of the International Association of Rotary Clubs in Chicago and spoke to Secretary Chesley Perry. He explained that he was interested in learning more about the Rotary organisation, of which he had heard good reports during his travels in the U.S.A.. Ches Perry telephoned Rotary Founder Paul Harris who promptly invited the young Mr Drummond to visit him at home.

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

There were several further suggestions of extension to the South West Pacific recorded, of which some quite interesting correspondence is preserved in the archives, between 1914 and the time of the appointment on February 12, 1921, of James Davidson of Calgary and Layton Ralston of Halifax as honorary commissioners to introduce Rotary to the Antipodes, but none met with any success beyond yielding a list of names of leading citizens who might be interested in Rotary.

The choice of Canadians for the assignment is significant. It was decided (by whom is not known) that Canadians should be involved in the attempt and the idea was submitted to the Canadian Advisory Committee which immediately pledged the support of Canadian clubs, agreed to nominate the commissioners and offered to share the costs. Though no reference has been made to the reasons for the selection, it seems probable that someone on the board of the International Association of Rotary Clubs would have been aware of the close ties of Empire at the time and had judged that Rotarians from a sister Dominion could be assured of a warm

welcome, whereas the attitude of social leaders of the time to U.S. citizens might have been less certain. The Americans were friends and allies; Canadians were "family". (The First Vice President at that time - and president the following year - was Dr Crawford McCullough of Fort William, Ontario, Canada.) Whatever the reasons for their selection, Australian Rotarians owe them and the Rotarians of Canada a debt of gratitude that should be acknowledged.

James Davidson and Layton Ralston arrived in Sydney on March, 22, 1921 and, as someone has so aptly put it, "found it closed!" It was "Show Week" - the ten days during which the country goes to the city in New South Wales for the Royal Easter Show.

From the Carlton Hotel in Sydney, Jim Davidson reported to Ches Perry: "We arrived here at an unfortunate time in one respect. 'Easter Holidays' in Australia are not merely a half-day affair but sort of a two weeks dislocation. Including Sunday the business houses are literally closed for five days - then there is a week preparing for the holidays and a week recovering from them. Meanwhile, however, we have been getting in some interviews with prospects and everything looks encouraging, though there are some features that astonish them. Naturally we do not dwell on such points as are not essential in the beginning - knowing that, in time, Rotary will make them more easily absorbed. I refer to 'first names' etc."

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

In Melbourne they met Sir John Monash, administrator of the Victorian State Electricity Development Authority. One of Australia's great war heroes, General Monash had commanded the forces that breached the Hindenburg Line in August 1918. He agreed to accept charter membership of the proposed Rotary club, of which he was to become the second president. Walter Drummond had also spoken to W.A. Osborne, Professor of Physiology, University of Melbourne, who also accepted the invitation to membership. With the recruitment of these two men of

distinction, the enlistment of others to the ranks was not difficult.

A preliminary meeting was held on April 7 at which an organising committee was formed; and the inaugural luncheon meeting was held on April 21 with 37 charter members. Professor Osborne was elected president. A cablegram was read from the Rotary clubs in the United Kingdom: "Forty Rotary Clubs Motherland greet first in Australia." Greetings were received, also, from the Rotary Clubs of Calgary and Halifax.

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

Having established the Rotary Club of Melbourne, Layton Ralston returned to Sydney while Jim Davidson languished in hospital, for, as he wrote: "Some miserable un-Rotarian microbe had elected this, of all times, to get busy on my pipes."

In Sydney Layton Ralston was equally successful in persuading some of the most influential citizens of the day to become charter members of the Rotary Club of Sydney, including The Hon. Sir Henry Braddon (who became the first president), Professor Sir Edgeworth David (already famous as a geologist and Antarctic explorer) and T. R. (later Sir Thomas) Bavin (a future Premier of New South Wales). The inaugural luncheon, attended by the 35 charter members, both commissioners, three members of the newly-formed Rotary Club of Melbourne and one visiting Rotarian from Calcutta, was held on May 17.

Two days later, Ralston sailed for New Zealand leaving Davidson, still convalescent, in Sydney, to help the new club's officers over their "teething" problems. Thus Rotary arrived in Australia with two clubs and 72 members.

Before they sailed for home, the two commissioners had formed the Rotary Clubs of Wellington (June 7) and Auckland (June 14), leaving the Antipodes with four clubs and a total membership of 163.

AUSTRALIA IN 1921

Australia in 1921 had some five million people, almost all of whose forebears had been English, Irish, Scottish or Welsh with small communities of Germans and Italians, a sprinkling of Chinese, the odd Greek, and a few others of mainly European origin. The original Australians, from whom the land had been unceremoniously stolen only 133 years before, were given hardly a thought except as objects of more-or-less affectionate amusement, with an occasional expression of regret that, as Daisy Bates had assured us, there was nothing we could do for the poor blackfellow but "smooth his dying pillow".

Only a little more than two years ago the gallant diggers had been welcomed home. Australia had recruited 416,809 volunteers for the land and air forces between 1914 and 1918, of whom some 330,000 had served in a theatre of war; and 59,258 of them now lay in foreign soil. Of those who survived, 166,815 had been wounded, some more than once. No country of the Empire had suffered such losses in proportion to its population. The nation was still mourning the loss of so many of its sons but was fiercely proud of their achievements. Australians, in 1921, were convinced that they (with their brothers across the Tasman) were the equal of any race on earth and superior to most; and though the nation was technically only 20 years old, and though the family ties of Empire, emotionally, culturally and commercially, were still strong and, it seemed, unbreakable, no one was in the slightest doubt about the "national identity" over which, 75 years later, it seems to have become fashionable to agonise.

W. M. (Billy) Hughes (the Little Digger) was Prime Minister, as he had been since 1916; but the Federal Parliament was still based in Melbourne and its first meeting in Canberra was still six years in the future.

The nation's wealth depended mainly on rural production, for manufacturing industries were still in their infancy. The Ford Motor Company began assembling cars in Melbourne but the private motor car was still mainly for the affluent.

The Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services (Qantas) had been established in Longreach a year earlier by Hudson Fysh (later to become a Rotarian); Keith and Ross Smith had flown from

England to Australia in only 28 days. Airports had been established at Essendon in Melbourne and Mascot in Sydney and, later in the year, Norman Brearley (also to serve in Rotary) in Western Australia was to begin the first internal airmail service. The Royal Australian Air Force was established with a gift of more than 100 war-surplus aircraft from Britain.

Gladys Moncrieff had made her debut at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne in *The Maid of the Mountains* (and sang the part 3,000 times), W. B. McInnes won the newly-established Archibald Prize and was to win six more before he was done; and in Western Australia Edith Cowan became the first woman to serve in a parliament in Australia.

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

One communicated by letter or, in cases of emergency, sent a telegram. Many country telephone subscribers enjoyed the friendliness of the "party" line at the expense of privacy, while city subscribers were connected through a manual exchange. One travelled on horseback, in sulky, buggy, wagonette or spring-cart. In town there were trams and buses, hansom cabs and an occasional motor taxi-cab, and the country had been served for more than 60 years by a remarkably efficient rail network but with a multiplicity of gauges; so in 1921 a Royal Commission recommended the adoption of a uniform gauge.

There was free primary and secondary education for all with the local equivalent of the British public school system for those who

preferred and could afford it. Universities were well established in the capital cities but a majority of their academic staff, and the principals of many of the private or "great public" schools, were still being recruited in Britain; the result not of a "cultural cringe" of which accusations are now popularly levelled but of a shortage of locally-qualified candidates.

Most Australians lived within walking distance of their work or were less than half an hour's tram or bus ride away. Those men who worked in shops and offices wore three-piece suits (the jacket of which might be exchanged for a black alpaca coat in the office or a dust-coat in the shop), polished boots and a clean collar every day. Few enjoyed the luxury of a daily change of shirt and underwear; and the daily bath or shower, being advocated by public health officials, was regarded by most as an affectation of the affluent or the mildly eccentric.

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

In the vast majority of households, the husband and father was the breadwinner and his wife was the home-maker. The recent war had brought many more women into the workforce, but marriage remained the ambition for most, after which all but a few were content to become full-time housewives and mothers, at which respected occupations they became very highly skilled. The 1921 housewife was, at the same time, cook, baker, cleaner, laundress, seamstress, knitter, nurse, pre-school teacher, financial manager, story-teller, pianist, spiritual adviser, communicator, counsellor and mistress; and she still contrived to preserve domestic harmony by convincing her husband that he was head of the family.

After church on Sunday, most families, whether the occupations of their breadwinners were in the professional, commercial, skilled trade or labouring categories - doctor, lawyer, farmer, carpenter, timberworker, fettler - sat down to Sunday dinner, traditionally a hot roast, consumed at midday, wearing their "Sunday best": suits,

collar and tie for men; high-necked, long-sleeved apparel of sober hue for women; and hardly less inappropriate garments for children - summer and winter. On Christmas Day, of course, similarly attired regardless of the temperature, the traditional fare of their British ancestors was ingested; and anyone who had suggested cold turkey and ham with salad followed by cold Christmas pudding probably would have been excluded from decent society forever.

The churches, in 1921, were still social centres for fellowship and service as well as worship. Church members of virtually all Christian denominations were active participants in the social work of the parish, visiting the sick, helping the needy, comforting the distressed or bereaved. A spirit of service, inherent in their church membership but also inherited from recent pioneer forebears who were noted for their mutual support in times of trouble, prevailed throughout society.

Entertainments were simple and largely home-made: reading, playing records on the gramophone, singing around the piano, playing cards or draughts or chess, occasionally visiting the theatre or the (silent) moving pictures, dancing. They watched - and some of them played - cricket, football and tennis. For country people, fishing and shooting (game birds and rabbits) were not only recreational pursuits for men and boys but also provided extra food for the table. In the cities and larger towns they sometimes enjoyed hearing the town band in the park. Sport and entertainment, like life itself, were more sedate than they have become in the last decade of the 20th Century.

There were still "currency lads and lasses" - Australian-born progeny of convicts - distributed widely throughout the respectable population; but the dark secret of this shameful skeleton in the family closet was kept locked away, never to be revealed until the present perverse generation chose to promote its convict ancestry to a sort of antipodean nobility and to acknowledge their heritage with defiant pride. There even must have been some elderly "old hands" still living, for the last convict ship had arrived in Western Australia only 53 years earlier; but they were hardly likely to have disclosed the circumstances of their migration to the

Colonies.

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

#### THE CHARTER MEMBERS

The charter members of the first two Rotary clubs in Australia were business and professional leaders of the "old school". Many of their names, or the names of their firms, are familiar to present-day Rotarians. They were:-

#### In Melbourne

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| D. Avery            | Chemical Engineer                                   |
| A.R. Bailey         | Chemist   |
| J.H.A. Boyd         | Free and Bonded Warehouse                           |
| Herbert Brookes     | Australian Paper Mills Co. Ltd.                     |
| Alexander Cameron   | Chairman, Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board |
| Ben Chaffey         | Pastoralist   |
| Harold Clapp        | Chairman, Victorian Board of Rail Commissioners     |
| W.H. Clarke         | Carlton Brewery                                     |
| Lance Cleveland     | Cleveland Son and Hislop Public Accountants         |
| James Davies        | Commercial Travellers Association                   |
| T.G. Ellery         | Town Clerk  |
| Sir John Gellibrand | Chief of Police                                     |
| Sir Robert Gibson   | Iron Founder  |
| Henry Harper        | Robert Harper & Co. Grocers Sundries                |
| L.J.M. Hooper       | R.G. Dun and Co. Mercantile Agency                  |
| J.G. Latham         | Barrister   |
| Burdett Laycock     | Laycock Son and Co. Woollen Manufacturers           |
| Harrie B. Lee       | Chief, Metropolitan Fire Brigade                    |
| T.C. Lothian        | Publisher   |

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James McDougall  
 Sir John Monash  
 H.E. Morton  
 Dr. Alan Newton  
 H.W. Osborne  
 Professor W.A. Osborne  
 Ernest O'Sullivan  
 Ernest R. Peacock  
 D.H. Ross  
 E.F. Ryall  
 The Hon. Thomas Sammons  
 Dr. Sydney V. Sewell  
 Guy Smith  
 Sydney Stott  
 D. York Syme Jr.  
 Frank Tate  
 W.C. Thomas  
 George Turton  
 J. Sydney Wilson

#### In Sydney

Sir G.Mason Allard  
 A.J. Arnot  
 Thomas R. Bavin  
 (later Sir Thomas)  
 Oscar C. Beale  
 H.M. Blair  
 P. Board  
 The Hon. Sir Henry Braddon

Australian Nail Company  
 Wire Manufacturers  
 Administrator,  
 State Electricity Commission  
 City Engineer  
 Surgeon  
 Western District Factories Ltd.  
 Professor of Physiology  
 University of Melbourne  
 E. & A. Bank  
 Office Equipment  
 Canadian Trade Commissioner  
 General Manager, Mutual Store  
 United States Consul General  
 Physician  
 Hoadley and Co. Pty. Ltd.  
 Jam and Fruit Canners  
 Typewriters and  
 Office Equipment  
 Melbourne Steamship Co.  
 Director of Education  
 W.C. Thomas and Sons  
 Flour Millers  
 Royal Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Actuary

Public Accountant  
 Manager, Babcock & Wilcox Ltd.  
 Steam Engineers  
 Barrister at Law  
 Managing Director, Beale & Co.  
 Ltd. Piano Manufacturers  
 Manager,  
 Melbourne Steamship Co.  
 Director, Education Department  
 Superintendent, Dalgety &

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Co.Ltd. Wool Merchants  
 D.D. Braham  
 O.W. Brain  
 W.G. (Jim) Conley  
 Sydney Morning Herald  
 R.J. Coombes  
 H. Daniell  
 Sir T.W. Edgeworth David  
 H.P. Denison  
 E.J. Doran  
 A.M. Eedy  
 B.R. Gelling  
 R.J. Hawkes  
 W.H. Ifould  
 Charles Lloyd Jones  
 (later Sir Charles)  
 F.H. Lindeman  
 Sir Herbert Maitland  
 A. McVernon  
 C.E.D. Meares  
 Sir Denison Miller  
 Professor A.E. Mills

Editor, Daily Telegraph  
 Chief Electrical Engineer  
 Railways and Tramway  
 Department  
 General Manager,  
 John Fairfax and Sons Ltd.  
 Proprietor, Steel Products (Aust),  
 Steel Shelving  
 Manager,  
 Perdrieau Rubber Co.Ltd.  
 Professor of Geology,  
 University of Sydney  
 Managing Director,  
 Sun Newspapers Ltd.  
 Tramways Executive  
 N.S.W. Tramways  
 Director and General Secretary  
 M.L.C. Assurance Co. Ltd.  
 Farmer  
 Inspector and Manager,  
 English, Scottish and Australian  
 Bank Ltd.  
 Principal Librarian  
 Public Library of N.S.W.  
 Director, David Jones Ltd.  
 Retail Drapers  
 Managing Director,  
 Lindeman Ltd. Wine Growers  
 Surgeon  
 Manager,  
 Queensland Insurance Co. Ltd.,  
 Fire and Marine Insurance.  
 General Manager, Coastal  
 Farmers Co-op. Society Ltd.  
 Governor, Commonwealth Bank  
 Physician

James A. Murdoch  
 (later Sir James)  
 J.M. Paxton  
 T.R. Raine  
 C.H. Reading  
 (later Sir Claude)  
 G. Robertson  
 H.A. Russell  
 F.G. Sargood  
 H.J. Taperell  
 W. Vicars

Proprietor, Murdoch's in Park  
 Park Street, Ltd. Men's Outfitters  
 Ship Broker  
 Land Agent  
 Managing Director  
 British Australian  
 Tobacco Co. Ltd.  
 Chairman of Directors, Angus &  
 Robertson Ltd. Booksellers  
 Solicitor  
 Partner, Sargood Bros.  
 Wholesale Softgoods  
 Editor, Evening News  
 Woollen Manufacturer.

It is tempting to set out the achievements of some of these men who accepted Rotary membership so willingly; but where would one stop? Each of them had gained distinction in his vocation and had also made a notable contribution to some aspect of community advancement, which, of course, is why they were chosen for Rotary membership.

#### EARLY EXTENSION

The charter presidents of the first two clubs, Professor Osborne and Sir Henry Braddon, discharged their duties so effectively and with such enthusiasm that, in 1922, they were appointed commissioners by Rotary International (the newly-adopted name for the International Association of Rotary Clubs) to set up clubs in the major cities in all States, the former to be responsible for extension in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia and the latter in New South Wales and Queensland.

These two remarkable men, after only a year of Rotary experience, embarked on what must have been a daunting task. First, it appears, they made discreet enquiries through their business or professional colleagues in other cities. Professor Osborne would write to academics and members of the medical profession. Sir Henry would seek information from senior executives of Dalgetys in

Brisbane and those with whom they did business. Then, having compiled a list of people who might be interested in Rotary, they would travel to the city of their choice (sometimes by train but more often by ship) and privately interview prospects.

In 1945, Bob Morris of the Rotary Club of Hobart provided an interesting account of how the commissioners operated:

"Twenty one years ago this month, two ambassadors from the recently formed Club in Melbourne came to Hobart; Professor Osborne of the Melbourne University and Walter Drummond, the Secretary of the Rotary Club of Melbourne. They came armed with the names of twenty-five Hobart men as prospects.

"My first experience of Rotary was when they called and asked to see me privately. I had a small office, 9 ft. by 9 ft. behind the shop window. This was large enough to contain two seats at an office table. The Professor took one chair and I took the other, Walter Drummond sat on the gas meter. They told me they were going to form a Rotary Club in Hobart, talked about its aims and objectives, its proposals and responsibilities, and said my name had been proposed as a Charter member. Was I prepared to accept membership?

"I was living with my saintly mother at the time, and she had always taught me to be cautious, and to be careful of my associates, and so I asked the Professor what other men in the city were likely to join. Walter Drummond pulled out a note book and said, 'The following gentlemen have accepted membership.' The first name he mentioned was Sir Henry Jones. and I said 'You need not read out any more names; if it's good enough for Sir Henry it's good enough for me. I'll give it a fly'."

Having completed their interviews, the commissioners would invite the acceptors to a meeting, usually over a meal, and the Rotary club was established, constitution adopted and officers elected. The commissioner would then embark on the next steamer for the journey back to his home port.

There is a story told of an incident during one such sea voyage, whether factual or apocryphal is uncertain. It was customary for the shipping office to send the purser a list of passengers with an indication of those who might be eligible for the honour of dining at tables presided over by the various ship's officers. Stealing a glance

at the purser's list, the commissioner was not surprised to see that a brewery manager and a trade union secretary were judged worthy of a place at the captain's table, but was amused at the comment beside his own name: "Rotary Commissioner. We don't know what this means but he is probably an officer of the Salvation Army on circuit. Put him at your own table."

Of the capital cities, Brisbane and Adelaide were formed in 1923, Hobart in 1924 and Perth in 1926. Meanwhile Rotary was being extended to the provincial cities and large towns: in New South Wales, Newcastle in 1923, Parramatta 1926, Wollongong and Albury 1927; in Queensland, Rockhampton 1925, Townsville and Mackay 1926; in Tasmania, Launceston 1924; and in Victoria, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong in 1925. The first club in Canberra, the new National Capital, was formed in 1928, by which time all 17 clubs in Australia had become Rotary District 65 (or, more commonly, the 65th District) which was formed on September 15, 1927 with Fred Birks of the Rotary Club of Sydney as the first district governor.

The work of the commissioners should be remembered. They were both busy men, holding responsible positions of leadership in their vocations, who gave most generously of their time because they saw in this new movement a means through which the spirit of selfless service in men of goodwill could be given practical expression. Those of us who complain about the tedious flight from Melbourne to Perth might pause to consider the commitment to Rotary of the commissioner, who gladly undertook the six-day sea voyage to form a new club.

The new district was administered by Fred Birks for two years. He was followed by Alfred C.C.Holtz of Melbourne, 1929-30, at the end of whose term, the country was divided into two districts: 65, with Leonard Mitchell of Melbourne as governor, being defined as "that portion of Australia including South Australia, Western Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, Northern Territory, the City of Broken Hill and that part of New South Wales south of the Murrumbidgee River". The remainder of New South Wales, Queensland and the A.C.T. were designated the 76th District with Robert Hancock of Brisbane as its first governor.

There were now 30 clubs in the country, and the expansion continued, despite the extreme difficulties experienced by many clubs during the Great Depression of 1930-37 when Rotary International lost 18 clubs in 1931 and 27 more in 1932 accounting for some 2,000 members. By the beginning of World War II in 1939 there were three districts with 76 clubs and about 3,000 members.

From 1939 to 1946, for obvious reasons, the growth was retarded; but still there were those who, in the face of great difficulties, saw it as their duty to continue the extension of Rotary to meet post-war challenges; so that when a new district was formed in 1946, there were 101 clubs as the platform from which to launch the rapid post-war expansion.

The growth continued until, on the 75th anniversary of Rotary's arrival in Australia, there were 23 districts with 1178 clubs and some 42,000 members.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE

While extension was considered important so that Rotary could be brought to as many communities as possible, it engaged the attention of a comparatively small number of Rotarians. The preoccupation of the majority was service. They had volunteered to serve in a society with Service as its principal objective and Service Above Self as its motto; and they were impatient to begin. Even as they learned the rules and the strange procedures of their new organisation, they sought ways of being useful; and they soon identified minor community needs which they decided that they could meet.

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

In Sydney on November 9, 1921, there was an outing for 120 children and their nurses from the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children. At the suggestion of the club president, Sir Henry Braddon,

the members agreed to bring some Christmas cheer to war orphans and soldiers' widows in need. Three years after the end of the "war to end wars", government assistance to war widows and orphans was barely adequate for basic necessities and did not stretch to the provision of such luxuries as Christmas gifts and victuals - far short of the rather more generous pension provided in later years. Legacy, which was to accept responsibility for this bereaved and vulnerable group in society, was yet to be formed (1923 in Melbourne, 1926 in Sydney) and it seemed to the Rotarians of the time, many of whom were returned servicemen, that these families of fallen heroes had been all but forgotten. A list of names of war widows with the names and ages of their children was obtained from the Red Cross Society; and the members made up a Christmas parcel for each family with the usual Yuletide fare and appropriate toys for the children. Each Rotarian then delivered parcels to half a dozen families. Henry Braddon later reported: "It took me ten minutes to get in the door of one house. They thought I was the rent-collector and there was not enough cash in the house to satisfy him . . . In the second case, when I opened the parcel the children danced with glee . . . The widow, to my embarrassment, on getting the message from the club, burst into tears."

As Professor Harold Hunt said in his 1971 history: "An important thing about such efforts by these pioneers was that they did the thing themselves. They didn't give a carrier a few shillings to deliver the parcels: they were personally involved . . ."

As these small tasks were being performed, the Sydney Rotarians were planning a major survey of the city to determine the needs of boys.

It is clear that these early Rotarians were astute in their assessment of needs. Arising from their observations during a Christmas dinner for the children at the Royal Park Neglected Children's Depot, Melbourne Rotary members suspected the existence of some serious problems in the institution. On subsequent visits their fears were confirmed. They were able to identify poor administration, inadequate services and a contemptuous attitude to the inmates combined with a marked lack of compassion on the part of some staff members. The close interest of the Rotarians resulted in a



change in the attitude of staff, more efficient administration and, to express the new philosophy of care, a change of name to the Royal Park Children's Welfare Home.

In 1925 the club received the report of the Boys' Work Committee and adopted its recommendation to raise funds for a Boy Scouts Appeal. Nearly £1,400 (\$2,800) was eventually raised – a considerable sum in those days when a comfortable suburban house could have been bought for about £400 (\$800).

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

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

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

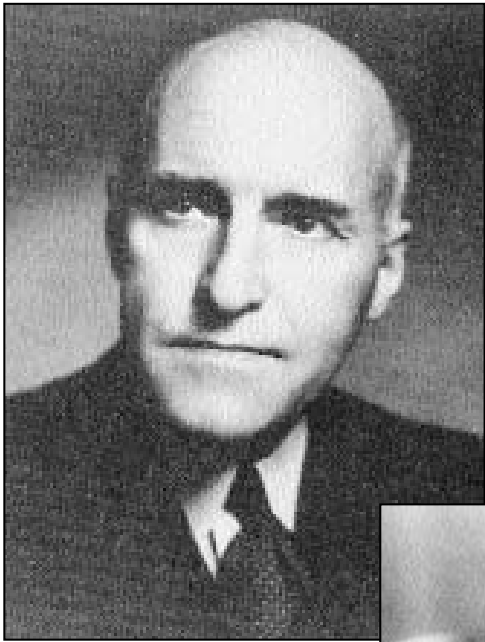
The subjects of the enquiry were:- factories and apprenticeships, sports and playgrounds, technical and commercial schools, libraries, moving pictures, juvenile crime, State children's relief, Boy Scouts and Boys' Brigades; with additional lines of enquiry into the need for dental and optical clinics, treatment and training of handicapped children, kindergarten training, library and debating societies, gambling among boys, effects of military training and camps, and the drift into unskilled work. Under each heading, the subjects to be

investigated were listed.

The outcome of this thorough and very sophisticated survey was a highly successful and widely-publicised Boys' Week which drew attention to the needs of boys and raised funds for the selected project.

With so many worthy organisations in need of support, it had been difficult for the club to decide on which their efforts should be concentrated to ensure the most effective use of any funds provided; but the choice finally fell upon the Boys' Brigade, which was seen to be filling a desperate need with limited resources. The target of £10,000 for a new building and expansion of Boys' Brigade services was exceeded, the final proceeds topping £12,000 (\$24,000); and when the handsome building was completed it was officially opened on January 25, 1926 by no less a personage than the Governor General, Lord Stonehaven.

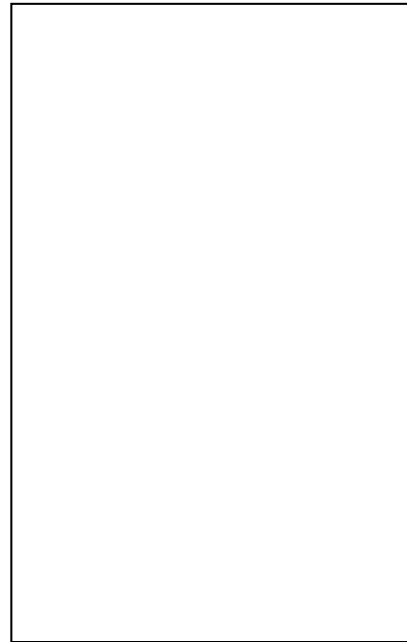
These first tentative flights into the new world of service by the two fledgling Rotary clubs began a story of service that continues to unfold. Three quarters of a century after those first projects were initiated, each of the 1,178 Rotary clubs in Australia and Papua New Guinea records at least one project of greater or lesser significance undertaken during the current Rotary year.



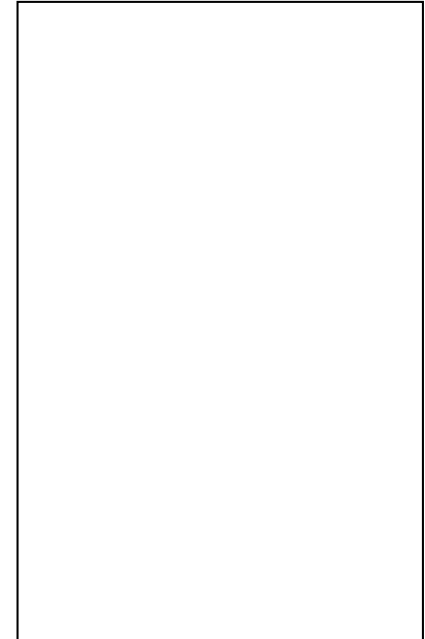
Layton Ralston



James Davidson



Professor W.A. Osborne



Sir Henry Braddon

Members of the Rotary Club of Adelaide about to board the train taking them to the charter meeting of the Rotary Club of Mount Gambier in 1928. The first club sponsored by Adelaide, Mount Gambier was the second club formed in South Australia.

## CHAPTER TWO

### WORKING WITH YOUTH

THE first Rotary clubs in Australia began their service with youth work; and the welfare of young people has remained a preoccupation of all Rotary clubs throughout the years.

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

#### CRIPPLED CHILDREN

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

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

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

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

and care could be given.

Members of the club were able to introduce the committee to people in the medical, health, education and social welfare services. Early consultation was arranged with the orthopaedic section of the British Medical Association in Australia (now the Australian Medical Association), the New South Wales Education Department, the Board of Health, the Civilian Cripples' Association, the Far West Children's Health Scheme, the Problem Child Advancement League, all the major hospitals with orthopaedic equipment and selected nursing homes.

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

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

The committee described its work as a preliminary enquiry and suggested a comprehensive survey. So, once again, the members of the club embarked on a survey of their city. As Sir Henry Braddon recalled in a talk to the club nearly 20 years later: "Nobody knew whether there were 1,000 or 10,000 crippled children in Sydney. It is dreadful to think of the handicapped child that no one took any particular trouble about or cared about . . ."

Overseas surveys, both in Britain and America, showed that there were 2.5 crippled people in every 1,000, 50% being under 16 years old; suggesting that between 2,000 and 3,000 crippled children would be found in the Sydney Metropolitan area, with its

then population of about one million.

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

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

Up to this point, the costs of the survey, including the cost of an office with paid staff for a year, had been met by subscriptions from the members. The club now decided that the task of providing recreational and educational facilities would be beyond its own resources and that the public should be invited to contribute.

A public appeal was launched by the Premier of New South Wales (club member Thomas Bavin) at a public meeting convened by the Chief Civic Commissioner. The premier moved that the meeting resolve to enter upon a campaign to raise not less than £15,000 "to meet the need which Rotary's investigations have revealed". The sum raised was £17,058.17. 8.

Having ascertained the extent of the problem and charted a course of action for its solution, the club felt that, in accordance with Rotary's general policy on community service, a permanent citizens' body should be now formed to implement the program. At a public meeting in the Sydney Town Hall on December 17, 1929, the Crippled Children's Society was formed and the club formally handed over the funds raised by the citizens' appeal together with an outstanding balance of £211.8.2 of funds raised within the club for the preliminary work. The society was admitted to honorary affiliation with the International Society for Crippled Children; and on August 6, 1930, the New South Wales Society for Crippled Children was duly registered with the Chief Secretary under the laws of the State.

Several members of the initial board of directors of what was to become one of the State's most highly regarded charitable institutions were, of course, Rotarians, including Sir Henry Braddon, who

was the first president, serving in that capacity until 1946. Others also served for many years and, indeed, Rotarians, as individuals, remain associated with the Society, now known as The Northcott Society, to the present time.

This was the first of similar activities for the benefit of crippled children throughout Australia, wherein all societies or associations for the treatment and education of crippled children have been initiated by the action of Rotary clubs.

#### SUPPORT

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

This sort of support for existing organisations and agencies is so much a part of every Rotary club's activities that many give them only passing reference in their annual reports, reserving their emphasis for new initiatives in youth service.

Some of these established organisations, like the Crippled Children's Societies, were originally Rotary initiatives; such as the National Fitness Council (and camps) of New South Wales and the Police and Citizens' Boys' (now Youth) Clubs, both early projects of the Rotary Club of Sydney; and the Victorian Young Farmers Clubs;

and the Adventure Camps initiated by the Rotary Club of Collingwood; but so effective was the policy of handing over to the community on the successful completion of any project, that, when the Rotary Club of Newtown, New South Wales, in 1962, adopted provision of equipment for the local Police and Citizens' Youth Club as a project for its first year of service, the members were surprised to learn that the first such youth club had been established in 1935 by their own sponsor Rotary club, Sydney.

Many Rotarians, of course, have continued their association with these organisations, as individuals, after the completion of the club project to assist. They are to be found serving as Scout and Guide group presidents, Scout district and state commissioners, YMCA leaders, youth club presidents and committee members, National Fitness camp counsellors and the like.

#### INTERACT AND ROTARACT

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

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

In the course of the study, the committee learned of the Wheel clubs sponsored by the Rotary Club of Miami, Florida. While the deliberations of the committee were still in progress, the Rotary Club of Marrickville, New South Wales, sponsored a Wheel club at Newington College (within that club's territory) in 1961.

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

The Newington Wheel Club made the easy transition to become

the first Interact club in the Antipodes in April, 1963. The movement spread rapidly. By mid 1966 there were some 30 clubs in Australian schools and by 1970 the number had grown to 143.

Because Interact clubs were restricted to males, Rotary clubs met the demands of girls to be involved in similar service work by forming Code clubs (Co-operation Obedience Duty Endeavour). The first Code club in Australia was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Auburn, New South Wales, in November, 1965. Interact clubs and their female equivalents often worked together and held joint conferences and symposia until, in 1969, the board of Rotary International relaxed the rule restricting membership of Interact to males. Within a few years the Code clubs had either become Interact clubs in girls' schools or had amalgamated with existing Interact clubs in co-educational schools.

In April 1996 there are only 78 Interact clubs in Australia, many having been lost in recent years.

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

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

The young people who had served in Interact clubs soon began to ask for similar clubs in tertiary educational institutions: at universities, teachers' colleges, agricultural colleges and technical colleges. In 1966 the Australian Rotary Institute recommended to the R.I. board, that consideration be given to the sponsorship of clubs for young adults similar to Interact clubs. Initially this, and similar suggestions from other parts of the world, met with scant success; but the proponents persevered and a worldwide survey was authorised, which resulted in approval to sponsor service clubs for young adults (aged 17 to 25) to be known as Rotaract clubs.

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

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

Growth was rapid; and when the first Rotaract district conference in Australia was held at the University of Queensland in July, 1969, the 10 clubs in that Rotary district (260 - now 9600) were represented and there were visitors from 22 clubs in New South Wales and Victoria.

The rapid growth of the 1960s and 70s began to tail off in the 1980s and, by 1990, the number of clubs was almost static, with disbanding clubs almost equalling new formations, causing grave concern to Rotarian sponsors. A study revealed that part of the problem was the migration of youth from small towns to the larger cities in search of employment. Other factors included the lower level of youth employment resulting from the world recession, preoccupation of students with academic success to improve chances of vocational success and, according to one Rotarian in an address to his fellows, "the encouragement of greed in an increasingly materialistic society". Another suggested reason was the sup-

posed reluctance of young people in the age group (since 1970 18-28) to be identified with a group which was "supervised" by Rotarians.

Rotaract continues to grow with the formation of new clubs; but still very slowly compared with the earlier years. In 1996 there were 181 Rotaract clubs in Australia and Papua New Guinea, suggesting that there is a potential growth (on the basis of one Rotaract club per Rotary club) of more than 999; but it seems highly unlikely that this potential will be realised.

Too numerous to be listed here are the varied and often highly imaginative projects devised and carried out by Rotaract clubs. Just a few of them, reported in Rotary Down Under and Rotaract Yarn over the years are:-

- Local clean-up campaigns in which members, assisted by other organisations (Scouts, Guides), collect litter and dumped rubbish from streets, parks and bushland;
- Collecting funds for charitable organisations in wheel-barrows pushed some 200 kilometres, and occupied by members;
- Rent-a-Santa. For a small fee, members dress in Santa Claus costumes and call on specified families or appear at functions;
- Fund-raising to build a stadium for disabled youth by rafting down the Darling River from Bourke to its confluence with the Murray, a distance of 1600 kilometres;
- Organising working bees to mow lawns, clean up gardens, clear gutters and paint houses for elderly pensioners;
- Holding fêtes, fairs, jumble sales, auctions for a variety of charitable institutions;
- Chopping firewood for elderly and needy people;
- Organising and participating in "walkathons", fun-runs, "swimathons", "workathons", "sitathons" (sitting on a pole for an unconscionable time), "skate-athons" and innumerable other variations on the marathon to raise funds.
- Strengthening local voluntary emergency services, particularly fire-fighting units, with volunteer teams and fund-raising activities;
- Taking disabled children on picnics and other outings;
- Presenting pantomimes for disabled or underprivileged children;

- Working with their sponsoring Rotary clubs on a variety of service projects, particularly those requiring physical effort;
- Exchanging information, audio and video tapes and group visits with Rotaract clubs in overseas countries to advance international friendship and understanding.

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

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

#### RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards)

In 1959 Queensland was celebrating the centenary of its proclamation as a separate colony. The Queen was represented at the festivities by her young cousin, the Princess Alexandra of Kent. The State Centenary Celebrations Committee sought the assistance of Rotary Club of Brisbane President Elect (Sir) Arnold Bennett in arranging a program involving young people; and the idea that finally emerged was what came to be called Gundoo Week, which involved not only Brisbane but also Rotary clubs from all parts of the State.

Rotary clubs selected young leaders, aged 18 to 25, to visit Brisbane for ten days where they would be accommodated in the homes of Rotarians of the Brisbane and suburban clubs. They would

attend a grand ball with the Princess, a garden party at Government House with the Governor as host, an Australian Broadcasting Commission symphony concert, a special church service and a youth rally, visit State Parliament, go to the theatre and the ballet, visit the art gallery, museum, botanical gardens, the law courts, offices, institutions and factories. It was described as "a social, educational and cultural experience" intended to emphasise the importance of youth – and particularly of youth leaders – in this rapidly developing State.

So successful was Gundoo (said to be an Aboriginal word meaning youth or youth corroborree) that many Rotarians thought it should be repeated; and so it was, but in a modified and immeasurably more valuable form.

In 1960 District 260 (9600) Governor Carl Bishop announced the inauguration of the Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA) program as an annual activity of that district.

Each Rotary club was asked to nominate two young leaders, one male and one female aged 17-23, to attend a RYLA Week in Brisbane with a similar format to Gundoo week but including a one-day seminar on youth leadership.

The first RYLA week began on May 2, 1960 and was pronounced a resounding success.

One recommendation from the awardees was that there should be more time devoted to the seminar. The following RYLA program incorporated a two-day residential seminar at a youth camp.

The organising genius behind RYLA was Alex Symons of the Rotary Club of Brisbane, General Secretary of the Brisbane YMCA. A professional youth worker, Alex immediately recognised the potential of a program to encourage youth leadership. He was entrusted with the leadership of the first RYLA committee which was fortunate in having Alan Trist as its able secretary and a group of committed Rotarians to assist.

In 1961 President Eric Armstrong, Rotary Club of Newcastle, making up in Brisbane, was so impressed by reports of the RYLA week that he introduced the program to his own club. District 267 (9670) adopted the plan but extended the seminar in camp to five days with only two days of "home hosting" and visits in the city.

The first seminar was held in February 1962.

Making up at the Rotary Club of Wyong, New South Wales, Gordon Boag from Canowindra listened with interest to the guest speaker, Newcastle Rotarian Harry Smith, as he described the RYLA program and played a tape prepared by the District 267 RYLA Committee with the help of Alex Symons. The Wyong Rotarians were impressed, but it was the visitor from Canowindra who acquired the tape from the guest speaker. Gordon took the idea to his own club and to District Governor Gordon Machin, who was an immediate convert to RYLA, appointing a district committee with Gordon Boag as chairman. When Gordon Machin flew in a light aircraft to each of the zone assemblies being held concurrently in that extensive district, he was accompanied by his newly-appointed RYLA chairman whose job was to "sell" the program to the clubs. The result was that the first RYLA seminar in District 270 was held at Bathurst – a full seven days in camp – in April, 1965.

The RYLA program as it was conducted in District 270 was described in an article published in Rotary Down Under in March 1966, which concluded with an offer to share information with other districts. The offer was accepted by the editor of Rotary Down Under, a member of the Sydney suburban Rotary Club of Newtown, who, after having visited the second (1966) seminar of District 270 at a conference centre/camp near Canberra, not only got a good story and pictures for the magazine but also was so impressed that he persuaded his own club and District 275 (9750) to adopt the program. This was achieved by bringing RYLA Chairman Gordon Boag from District 270 with a group of awardees to speak at the district conference.

After a successful seminar in District 275, a group from that district gave a similar presentation at the conference of the neighbouring District 268 (9690) which also promptly adopted the program and began to arrange its first seminar.

Interested observers at the District 275 seminar were Youth Chairman Royce Abbey of District 280 (9800) and John Mackay of District 245 (9450) Western Australia, both of whom also introduced the RYLA program into their districts in the following year. Also from the District 275 seminar, one awardee was chosen



to visit the Rotary district centred on Auckland (292), the governor of which was Bert Dreaver, a distinguished educationist and enthusiastic Rotarian, who had expressed interest in the RYLA program and had been provided with written material. The result was the appointment of a district RYLA committee for 1968-69 and the introduction of the program to New Zealand with the first seminar held at the University of Auckland in February, 1969.

With RYLA committees now appointed in eight districts, it was suggested to District 260 Governor Arch Campbell, in whose district the program had begun, that he should convene a meeting of representatives of all district RYLA committees to share information and prepare literature for the guidance of others contemplating the introduction of the program. Arch gladly agreed and issued the invitations, but by the time a meeting could be arranged, Arch had passed the "use-by date" for district governors and had achieved the status of a P.D.G. which, as all good Rotarians know, means a rank-and-file Rotarian with a fancy title. His successor, Rod Voller, was pleased to execute the plan and, on October 27 1968, 15 Rotarians representing nine districts (260, 267, 270, 275, 268, 270, 245, 290 and 265) met at Rod's home in Brisbane. They were Rod Voller, Arch Campbell, Orme Olsen, Ed Devenport, Brian Knowles and the Rev. Alan Male (all from District 260), Dr. John Follent (265), Ben Faulkner (267), Keith Williams (268), Gordon Boag (270), Bob Sloman (275 also representing District 245 in W.A.) and Paul Henningham (275 also representing 292 in New Zealand). Ed Devenport was elected chairman.

Among the recommendations of the meeting to all incumbent district governors were: "that all districts adopt the RYLA program; that an identical statement of purposes be adopted by all; that an Australia-New Zealand Committee be appointed to co-ordinate the program and assist in extension work; and that the Australian and New Zealand Institutes be asked to submit a joint recommendation to the board of Rotary International that RYLA be adopted as a world Rotary youth program and that its adoption be announced, preferably at the international convention to be held in Sydney in 1971".

The governors authorised the formation of the committee and

appointed their representatives who convened as the Australia-New Zealand Central RYLA Committee at the University of New South Wales on February 8, 1969, electing Ed Devenport chairman. The committee appointed an information and extension sub-committee (Gordon Machin, Gordon Boag and Paul Henningham) to gather all available literature on the subject from all Rotary districts in which the program was operating and, using this information, prepare a draft RYLA manual for the guidance of district governors, district RYLA committees, RYLA seminar staff and Rotary club youth committees.

On April 19, 1969 at a well-attended meeting in Canberra, the first draft of a manual was considered in general terms and an amended draft distributed to district committees for comment and suggestions. On September 5, 1970 the committee considered the second draft in detail, paragraph by paragraph, and the RYLA Manual was then issued to all districts in Australia and New Zealand with copies to the youth activities committee of Rotary International.

The sub-committee began active promotion of the RYLA program in Rotary Down Under (which was used, quite shamelessly, by the editor of the time who was a member of the committee and who remains unrepentant to this day) and articles were provided for Rotary magazines in other countries, eliciting enquiries from many interested Rotarians.

By 1970 every district in Australia and New Zealand, 17 at that time, was conducting a RYLA seminar.

In July, 1970, the Central RYLA Committee briefed R.I. Director Clem Renouf and R.I. Youth Activities Committee Member John Moon on the activities of the committee and the material submitted to the R.I. Board.

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

RYLA was subsequently introduced to many parts of the world; but, despite numerous attempts to persuade the board of directors of Rotary International to issue the manual prepared for Australia and New Zealand (completely revised and modified for international use by a committee appointed by the Australian and New

Zealand Institutes in 1988 at the request of no less a personage than R.I. President Royce Abbey) and notwithstanding recommendations by several R.I. Youth Committees, no action has been taken to adopt standard procedures. Thus what is known as RYLA in some districts bears only superficial resemblance and is considered of inferior quality to the Antipodean program, while in other countries it is of particularly high standard; a situation found irksome by those responsible for the development of the program and jealous of its reputation as an effective and professionally-conducted youth leadership training scheme.

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

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

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

Many districts appoint a host club to be responsible for the venue, appointment of the administrator, transport of speakers, medical service and, sometimes, catering.

Each Rotary club selects and pays for a male and female awardee aged 18 to 25 years. The club is also responsible for transporting its awardees to and from the seminar venue. Shortly after the seminar, the awardees attend a meeting of the sponsor club to receive their award certificates and describe their experiences of RYLA for the benefit of the Rotarians.

The curriculum varies but every RYLA syllabus should include what are described as "core" subjects, including discussion leading, leadership, group dynamics, chairmanship, public speaking,

communications, human behaviour, recognising emotional and behaviour problems, interpersonal relationships, moral and ethical questions, contemporary social problems, conflict resolution, community resources, world understanding, campcraft, survival and elementary first aid. Listed as optional subjects are physical education, games leading, health and hygiene, stress management, club administration, programming, fund-raising, arts and crafts, amateur theatre and dance, personal image, choosing a career and multi-cultural societies. Obviously there are many more options, the choice of subjects being dictated by the needs of the time and society and the availability of speakers.

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

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

Undoubtedly one of Rotary's most effective youth programs, the development of RYLA has been dealt with in some detail here because it exemplifies the development of a Rotary program from its beginnings in a single club to its adoption by a district and its extension, first by a process of sharing information and later by deliberate promotion around the world.

RYPEN (Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment)

A youth activity that grew out of RYLA is the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment - RYPEN, often thought of as the personal "baby" of Hugh Newman, past governor of District 9710, who played a leading part in its development and promotion.

Devised by the Rotary Club of Canberra-Belconnen, in 1980, the program is a long week-end (three days) seminar for girls and boys aged 14 to 17 years. Awardees are sponsored and paid for by Rotary clubs in the same way as are Rotary Youth Leadership Awardees and, similarly also, the seminar is organised and conducted by a district RYPEN committee.

Those selected to attend a RYPEN seminar are not the high

achievers or outstanding youth leaders of the locality from which they are sponsored but average young people who are likely to benefit from the learning experience. Thus the selection committee in each Rotary club has the unusual and potentially delicate task of choosing candidates who are not necessarily the "best" applicants; of trying to find the "average" student, who is never likely to gain one of the awards for academic achievement, athletic prowess or outstanding leadership potential; and to make such a selection without implying that the student is considered just "average".

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

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

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

#### PEER SUPPORT

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

The Peer Support program began in 1971, the initiative of Mrs. Elizabeth Campbell, a health education officer in New South Wales. Initially confined to a few schools with some State Government funding, it was languishing for want of support when the modest

funding was withdrawn. The Rotary Club of North Sydney decided to support the program in the local high school and it was taken up with enthusiasm by clubs throughout Australia (and New Zealand) with the official support of government health and education departments.

The Rotarian mainly responsible for developing and promoting Peer Support through Rotary is James Dibble of the Rotary Club of Warringah, New South Wales. Jim is a well known and popular former A.B.C. television news presenter who, in his retirement, has used his considerable communication skills to acquaint others with the value of the program which now operates in more than 4,000 primary and secondary schools in all States of Australia.

An interesting development is the extension of the program to Scotland, where its introduction into schools has been adopted by many clubs as a Rotary youth project.

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

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

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

School principals throughout Australia have been lavish in their praise of Peer Support. Typical was this comment from S. R. Cloak

of Belmore Boys' High School: "The effects of the Peer Support program on aspects of school behaviour such as vandalism, bullying and playground violence are of undeniable benefit to everyone . . . The scheme helps to build self esteem in all who participate in it and enables the development of strong school morale and co-operation leading to a much healthier environment for all."

New South Wales Deputy Premier and Minister for Education in 1985, Mr. R. Mulock, said: "I commend the Peer Support program to the people of New South Wales with the suggestion that donations to it would be like buying shares in the future of our youth."

#### SUMMER SCHOOLS

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

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

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

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

In the following year the National Science Summer school was designated, by the Rotary Institute, one of Rotary's contributions to International Youth Year, with all Rotary districts participating; and it then became an annual event. All Rotary clubs were invited to

nominate and sponsor outstanding students who live or attend school within their territories. The competition was keen and those finally selected were seen as having brought credit to their schools – and their sponsoring Rotary clubs. The nation's leading scientists, most of whom enjoy an international reputation, gladly gave their time to encourage the aspiring scientists of the future.

In 1993, when the 10th National Science Summer School convened, it was noted that 2,290 students had passed through the program, many of whom had since graduated with honours and had since gained or were completing their PhD degrees.

The final NSSS under that name was held in 1995, by which time 2,830 students had participated.

In 1996 the name of the program was changed to the National Youth Science Forum. It had been discovered that the word "school" had conveyed a false impression of the program's scope and content to some potential candidates. However, ". . . a rose by any other name . . .", the program in 1966 was no less successful and Liaison Officer Bruce Sharp (Rotary Club of Belconnen and past governor of District 9710) was able to report that the total number of students who had been involved had risen to 3,124, including 100 from overseas.

To maintain close links with New Zealand scientists of the future, six students are selected each year from each country to attend the summer school (forum) in the other.

Because the numbers accepted for the National Science Youth Forum are limited, the Rotary Club of Ballarat, in 1992, proposed and District 9810 adopted the suggestion that a similar program be developed for younger (Year 10) secondary school students. Now known as Siemens Year 10 Summer School, it is conducted by the Australian Science Industry Association and sponsored by Siemens Ltd. Students are selected by local Rotary clubs. Rotary Institute Liaison Rotarian Bob Laslett, a past governor of District 9810 reported that, in 1995, the three-day hands-on program was attended by 3,200 in 23 universities throughout Australia.

Another program, for 125 students from around the country, is the BHP National Engineering Summer School. The students live on campus for a week, attend lectures and visit selected industries.

This is not a Rotary program but Rotary clubs in participating districts assist with the selection of students.

#### CLUB AND DISTRICT YOUTH PROJECTS

Club, district and multi-district youth projects are so numerous that even a list of those initiated in the past year would occupy more space than is available, for it is almost certain that each of the 1,178 clubs in Australia and Papua New Guinea will have included one or more attempts to meet the needs of youth among its projects for the year. The following few, therefore, have been selected as representative of the many thousands of projects, great and small, completed during the past 75 years:-

Planning for a youth camp at Taroona near Hobart, Tasmania, began in 1927 but it was not until 1938 that the land was acquired and cleared, the project having been deferred during the worst days of the world depression that began in 1929. It was not finally completed until 1940 and was extensively used by many youth groups including Scouts, Guides and National Fitness Council until, with urban growth, the site was no longer suitable for a camp. By this time, of course, other camps had been established in country and seaside areas to meet the needs of the youth groups it had been serving. Taroona Camp was sold in 1964 and the funds invested to provide an annual income for allocation each year to various youth organisations by the Youth Welfare Committee.

In the immediate post World War II years, the Rotary Club of South Sydney, in its second year of service and under the leadership of Bert Symons, sponsored a comprehensive social survey of its territory which was carried out by a researcher, Mrs. Vesta Davies, assisted by students from the University of Sydney Department of Social Studies. The survey identified a large number of needs of youth in the area, including a need for assistance to the University Settlement, a voluntary social service organisation following the traditions and methods of university settlements in England. Its aim was to provide educational and recreational experiences after school and at week-ends for children in the depressed areas around the University of Sydney. It occupied some small terrace houses and was staffed by volunteers, most of whom

were staff and students of the University. The buildings were in urgent need of repairs and equipment. The Rotary club, with donated materials and voluntary labour, was able to fully renovate the buildings and install the play and hobby equipment. The club then "adopted" the settlement, providing assistance over a period of several years.

In 1948 the Rotary Club of South Brisbane began an activity that continues to this day: the annual picnic for deaf and blind children (probably now known as auditorily and visually impaired or even "challenged"), in which the Rotarians convey the children to the picnic site in their own cars and appear to take as much pleasure in the outing as their young charges.

A popular project in many Rotary clubs is vocational guidance at schools. The program varies from attendance at a school by Rotary members who are able to assist young people in their choice of careers, or are willing to conduct simulated interviews with "applicants" for employment, to full scale careers "markets" at which representatives of a large number of vocations set up "stalls" from which they offer printed material and provide information about their business, profession or industry. It is not unusual for the armed services, emergency services, police and public transport authorities to provide displays on such occasions. Wonthaggi, Victoria, and Blacktown, New South Wales, were organising such large-scale events annually during the 1960s; and the 22-member Tallangatta club, just south of the New South Wales-Victoria border, managed to recruit 32 counsellors from four clubs to mount a careers conference for 400 students in 1969. In 1980 the Rotarians of Rockhampton, Western Australia, interviewed senior students for mythical jobs and then counselled them on their performances. The Rotary Club of Griffith, New South Wales, in 1989, brought 3,000 students from 18 secondary schools in the Riverina to a huge and highly successful careers market which resulted in selection of vocations by a large number of participants and confirmation of earlier choices by others.

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

groups in the community. One such was the Borambola Camp created by the Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga in 1950. The club acquired a 12 hectare site on the banks of a permanent stream 30 kilometres from the city. The members developed the site in stages. Using donated building materials and disused buildings and their own labour, they provided dormitories (two disused old school houses transported to the site on road trailers), toilet and shower blocks, kitchen and dining hall, recreation hut and lecture room. The camp is used regularly by many organisations, including the Rotary club for its annual camp for school children and the Rotary district for RYLA and RYPEN seminars and youth exchange briefings.

The Rotarians in the border city of Albury similarly built a chalet, 15 kilometres from town on the shores of the Hume Weir for use by local youth groups.

Until 1956 the University of Western Australia (founded 1913) did not have a medical school. Aspiring medical practitioners from the West had to attend universities in Eastern States, adding the cost of accommodation far from home to the already considerable expense of the six years course and also depriving the State of many medical graduates, who all too often remained to practise in the States in which they had trained. In 1955 the Rotary Club of Perth, under the leadership of President Mick Yeates, mobilised the community, gained the support of the government, the British Medical Association, the Royal Perth Hospital, many community organisations and all the Rotary clubs in the State (then the one Rotary district) and set about raising the funds required for the project. The University appointed a committee in March 1955. The final accounts and full report with more than £500,000 (\$1,000,000) were handed over to the University in March 1956. With a State Government grant and further donations, an additional £250,000 (\$500,000) was raised. With subsequent donations and bequests generated as a result of the appeal, the University was able to establish the medical school that has since gained an enviable reputation.

Not all, indeed not many projects for youth are of such magnitude. Most represent a response by a small club to an

identified need in its own community.

The very club that gave Western Australia its medical school, Perth, in its first year, 1926, with fewer than 30 members, concluded that the children of the city needed something to brighten their lives, so they built a statue of Peter Pan in Queen's Gardens, next to Perth Cricket Ground.

The Rotary Club of North Adelaide, South Australia, discovered the special needs of children with specific learning difficulties and helped the local community to establish a centre with an initial donation of \$10,000. The club then paid a deposit on a house to accommodate the organisation now known as SPELD. The South Australian Government paid the balance of the purchase price. This is a good example of Rotary, the community and government joining forces to meet a need.

Realising that children attending State primary schools in very small rural communities (some with enrolments of fewer than 20 representing about a dozen families) were disadvantaged compared with their urban fellows because they lacked the extra equipment purchased by the efforts of large Parents and Citizens Associations, the Rotary Club of Lismore West, New South Wales, in 1971-72, provided musical instruments which could be shared by the 36 schools that were regularly visited by the Education Department's area music teacher.

Giving little spina bifida victims a measure of mobility with an ingenious three-wheeled vehicle propelled by a rowing action was a project of the Rotary Club of Nunawading, Victoria, in 1974. The "Ro-car" was designed and built by Rotarians who then arranged for a toy manufacturer to mass produce the little machine. Most of the units were purchased (at cost) by Rotary clubs for spina bifida victims in their own club areas.

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

the name "Employ Australia" with strong community and government support.

Camps for handicapped children have been organised by several Rotary clubs. Among these is the now well-known "Handicamp". Another is called "Camp Breakaway" which became an annual activity of the Rotary Club of Wyong, New South Wales. Volunteer "carers" attended the two weeks camp with the handicapped children to attend to all their physical needs. A program of games, education and entertainment with maximum participation is arranged. The purpose is to give the children and their parents or usual carers a holiday.

Responsibility for the Portsea Camp was assumed by the Rotarians of Victoria in 1995 when civic funding was withdrawn. Totally renovated, the camp on the Morning Peninsula provides recreational activities for disabled or disadvantaged children.

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

The major world youth project in which all Rotary clubs took part, of course, was "PolioPlus", launched in 1987, the aim of which is to eradicate poliomyelitis plus the other infectious diseases of childhood by the year 2005, Rotary's centenary year. With a target of \$US120 million, Rotary clubs raised more than \$246 million. The Australian clubs received strong public support for the campaign with extensive media coverage and government encouragement. The Australian PolioPlus chairman was Les Whitcroft, whose dedication to the cause was reinforced (if it needed reinforcing) by personal family experience of the ravages caused by polio. Les reported that the World Health Organisation estimates that the eradication of polio will save \$US1.5 billion a year.

When the Lake Cullullaraine Children's Camp was totally destroyed by fire, the Rotarians of Irymple, Victoria, set about re-building it with as much donated material as they could acquire and their own labour. The members of this club are no strangers to manual labour. They had previously planted trees and lawns at the Irymple Technical School.

In 1958-59 the small Rotary Club of Loxton, South Australia, also

made use of members' muscles by establishing an oval at the local high school, complete with lawns and trees. The club went on over the next three years to provide further amenities for the young people by constructing the town pool.

The Rotary Club of Kingston Park, South Australia, carried off the award for best fund-raising project two years in succession for its Easter Appeal for the Adelaide Children's Hospital, involving the personal efforts of all club members and the co-operation of two television channels.

In addition to the regular simulated job interviews at three local high schools and its sponsorship of an International House at James Cook University, the Rotary Club of Ross River in North Queensland presents an award to the top student in the hospitality course at the local College of TAFE and awards a scholarship to work on the Barrier Reef to a senior high school student aspiring to a career in Marine Science, thus making a contribution, through its youth service, to tourism and the marine environment.

In 1970 the Rotary Club of Broadmeadows, Victoria, embarked on an ambitious project to convert a dilapidated former prisoner-of-war depot into one of the best-equipped youth camps in the State for the use of local schools. The Rotarians lined the walls of the buildings, painted them throughout, re-built the kitchen, tiled floors, renovated toilets and bathrooms, renewed bunks and mattresses, built a "commando" course, beautified the surroundings and provided housing for permanent staff. The facilities have been enjoyed by some 20,000 young people from the area and the project earned the club a Rotary Significant Achievement Award.

It is estimated that 376,000 Australian children suffer from nocturnal enuresis (bed-wetting). The Rotary Club of Mosman Park, Western Australia, in 1992, adopted promotion of public awareness of this distressing complaint. The club produced a video describing an effective treatment.

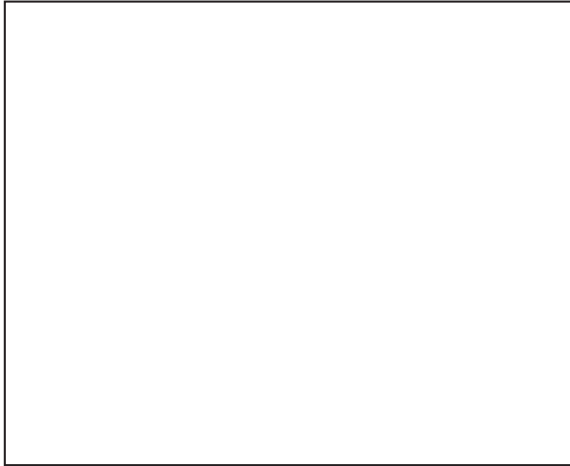
Crime prevention workshops, involving police and high school students in a 1995-96 initiative of the Rotary Club of Padstow, New South Wales. Early indications were that the program would be highly successful.

As suggested earlier — and as demonstrated in this chapter —

most Rotary clubs place youth service high on their priority lists and are zealous in their investigation of the needs of young people, often showing considerable ingenuity and imagination in planning to meet the needs identified.

Further youth activities are discussed in those chapters covering community service and international service.

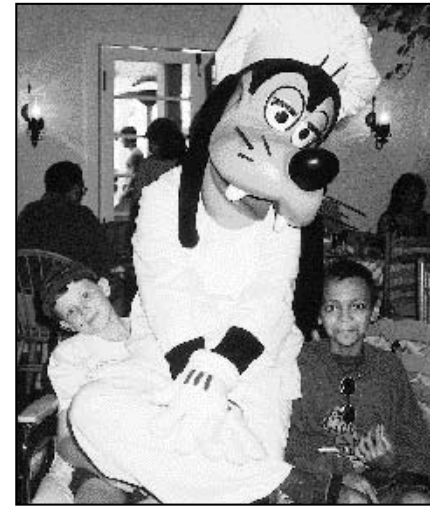
Beverley and Gordon Moyes are pictured after Gordon's keynote address to the Melbourne Convention.



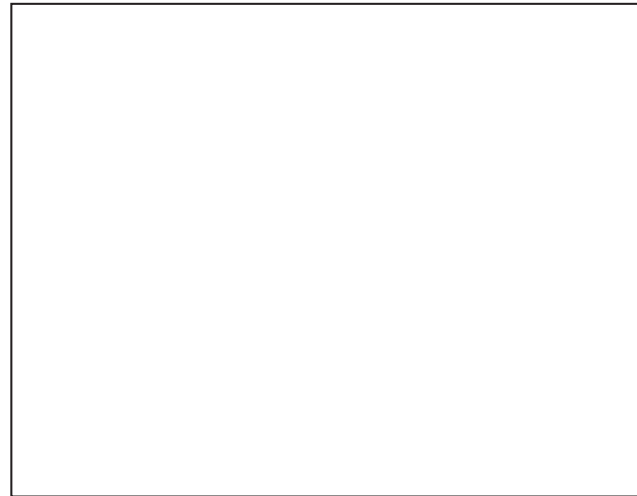
Director Ralph Le Laen counsels one of the young visitors to StreetSmart, a youth outreach centre established by the Rotary Club of Sydney, N.S.W., in an association with the Wesley Mission and located in the heart of the city. The mural in the background was painted by young graffiti artists who are street kids.



Actor David Hasselhoff, of the Baywatch television series, and Katrina who was a member of the Rotary Club of Guildford, N.S.W., project for patients from the New Children's Hospital at Westmead, N.S.W.



Goofy lived up to his name when he met Christopher and Pascol, members of the Rotary Club of Guildford, N.S.W., project for patients from the New Children's



An artists impression of The Rotary Wing of the New Children's Hospital being built in Sydney, N.S.W., Australia



## Adventure in Citizenship



A busy basement printing shop revealed the possibility of photographic design using computer technology to Cobar student, Clare Russell.



Brett Smyth and James Griffiths discovered that life on a tourist boat was no



Working high in a city skyscraper gave Lori Taylor of Nyngan a taste of architecture.



Delegates to Adventure in Citizenship were given a personal guided tour of Government House by the Governor General Sir William Deane.