

W. Jack Davis: uncommon

by Rex Webster

HERE is an uncommon man, one who has devoted his entire life to worthwhile pursuits; a man successful in business, with business relationships extending over five continents; a church leader who has made his influence felt in many Christian movements; a community leader who has given himself in support of many successful projects and activities; a friend to people in all stations of life, hundreds of whom he has entertained in his home, and an active and enthusiastic sportsman and world traveler. Here is the man who will serve as president of Rotary International in 1977-78.

He is W. Jack Davis of Hamilton, Bermuda. Wilfrid John (always called Jack) Davis was born 68 years ago in the farming community of Foxboro, near the city of Belleville, Ont., Canada, 160 kilometres northeast of Toronto. His father, Cornelius Charles, was a farmer who raised fruit, vegetables, and grain, and also had a dairy herd of Holstein cattle. Jack was an energetic worker, rising early to do the milking and other farm chores before joining the family (his mother, father, and two sisters, Stella and Helen) at the breakfast table. He walked to and from the village public school nearly 10 kilometres away, and had additional duties before the evening meal. As a boy, Jack was active in Scouting. He loved sports and played baseball and hockey. These games remain his favorite spectator sports today.

Jack's parents provided him with a home where love, spiritual values, and appreciation for one another were nurtured.

After graduating from Belleville High School, Jack enrolled in the Rochester Business Institute in Rochester, New York. He worked during the summer holidays of 1929 and 1930 at "Honeymoon Cottages," a tourist resort in Niagara Falls, Canada. The owner, Charles Burland of Bermuda, invited young Jack to spend his vacation at his island home in December 1930.

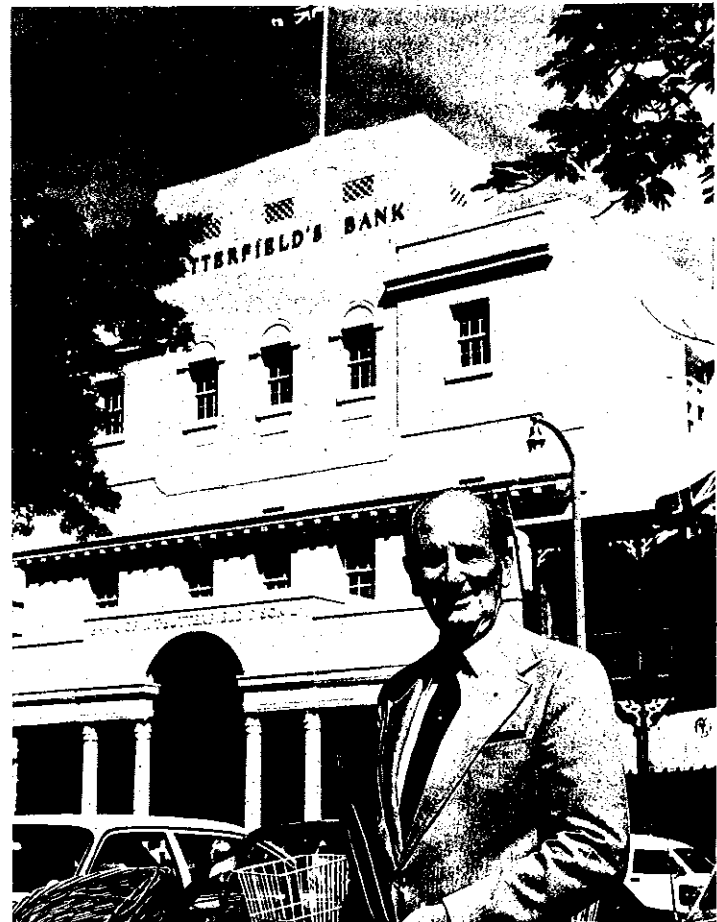
On this visit, Jack met J. Hartley Watlington, who had returned to Bermuda from Canada after receiving his



PHOTOS BY GENE RAY/BERMUDA NEWS BUREAU

Top: Jack and Doris Davis share a carefree moment near the "Moongate," which separates the guest cottage from their main house. The arched Oriental gate, of Bermuda limestone, is one of several Bermudian Moongates through which honeymoon couples traditionally pass to insure the happiness and longevity of their marriage.

Right: Butterfield's Bank, of which Jack is a director, was the first of Bermuda's four banks. It faces busy Front Street in Hamilton, capital city of the 150-island Bermuda chain. Hamilton is 85 percent a business community: most Bermudians work here and maintain their residences elsewhere along the islands' green and magnificent rocky shores, coral beaches, and sand-frosted coves.



mon international leader



Rotary's new president Jack Davis enjoys water-skiing in the translucent waters of Hamilton Harbour, the "front yard" of his limestone-roofed home, Coolshanah. The average water temperature here is about 21 degrees Celsius. Through this channel, some 90 metres in front of the Davis dockhouse, pass all the ships entering and leaving this beautiful port. The "Tall Ships" have sailed through twice, in 1964-65, and more recently, in 1976, during the U.S. bicentennial. The Davis home is one of the closest residences to the ship's channel in Bermuda.



This is the way a gentleman rides in the automobile-restricted islands of Bermuda. Since each household is permitted only one car, the husband graciously turns it over to his wife, while he—be he shopkeeper or Member of Parliament—goes about via two-wheeled transport. The laws governing motor vehicles, public and private, are strict. All must be kept in good mechanical condition and good physical appearance. The driver stays left and to his advantage obeys the speed limit: 32 kilometres per hour on island roads, 24 kph in the cities.

business education in Jack's hometown of Belleville, Ontario. Mr. Watlington was impressed by Jack's ability and personality and invited him to take a position in the office of the Bermuda Transportation Company, Limited, which operated ferry services, tugboats, passenger tenders, and sight-seeing excursions. This was a subsidiary of Pearman, Watlington & Company, a firm established in 1844 which had many business interests.

In just a few days Jack had become captivated by the beauty of the Island, the friendliness of Bermuda's people, and its very favorable climate, and he accepted Mr. Watlington's offer. He had intended to remain for only about six months, but by the summer of 1931 Jack had decided to make his home in Bermuda. He made a number of close friends including one named Aubrey Manuel, who had a beautiful sister named Doris. Jack was immediately attracted to Doris and she to him, and they were married on October 31, 1932. Jack, now embarked on his chosen business career, was so effective in his management skills that in 1946 he became a partner in the parent firm of Pearman, Watlington & Company.

For more than 30 years, Jack Davis applied his talents in developing and expanding the business interests of the company into several fields, including: automobile distributorships, animal and poultry feeds, fertilizers and allied items; building supplies and hardware; engineering; electrical appliances and electronics; office furniture, supplies, and equipment; a marina; gift stores, and a number of manufacturers' exclusive agencies. His business travels took Jack Davis into many parts of the world; the com-

pany traded with some 200 manufacturers and suppliers in many countries.

His international travels put him in touch with leading business and professional men, some of whom were Rotarians. This, combined with his active participation in the Rotary Club of Hamilton—which receives annually large numbers of visiting Rotarians from many countries—gave Jack a vision and appreciation of the internationality of Rotary.

Jack has been a member of the Rotary Club of Hamilton since 1943. After serving ably as member and chairman of many club committees, he became president of his club in 1948-49.

For the Rotary year 1961-62, he was elected governor of the international District 723 of R.I. He became a director of Rotary International in 1968-70 and its third vice president in 1969-70. He has also served as R.I. information and extension counselor, as a member of the public relations committee, and as a group leader and moderator at the R.I. international assembly. As a vice president of R.I. in 1969-70, Jack Davis was a member of the executive committee of the board of directors and attended the R.I. regional conference in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1969. From 1970-72, he served as aide to President-elect, and then President, Ernst Breitholtz. In 1971-72, Jack was a member of the nominating committee for president of R.I. for 1973-74. In 1971-74, he served on the planning committee of Rotary International and was chairman of the committee in 1973-74.

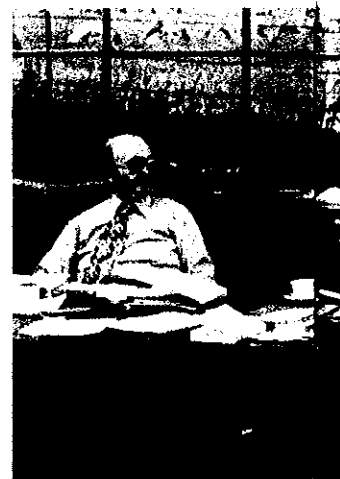
He and Doris have attended 19 R.I. conventions—17 of

While in Japan for a meeting of the R.I. convention committee in Tokyo in October 1976, Jack and Doris (below) are served "youth-giving" tea and other Japanese delicacies at the District 359 conference in Yokosuka. During their Asian visit, the Davises also attended a conference of R.I. District 375 in Daejeon, Korea.



THE ROTARY-NO-TOMO

At the 1969 South American regional conference of R.I. in Montevideo, Uruguay, Jack—then R.I.'s third vice president—discusses a bit of conference business with Past District Governor Aquiles Guerra of Montevideo (left) and conference chairman Raimundo Oliveira Filho of Fortaleza, Brazil.



WILLMON L. WHITE

which have been the most recent conventions—and have traveled extensively, visiting some 40 countries on company or Rotary business. They have made countless Rotary friends in these countries and throughout the world. Jack has served as the R.I. president's representative in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, Canada, and the United States.

"USCB" in Rotary administrative parlance refers to the United States, Canada, and Bermuda, and it is one of the service-to-clubs departments staffed in the R.I. secretariat at Evanston. Thus it is significant that Jack Davis, president of Rotary International for 1977-78, was born in Canada, has lived in Bermuda since he was 22 years of age, and has been in the U.S. so much during his lifetime that he has developed many of the characteristics of an "American," even though he is a Canadian citizen. He is Rotary's first president from the British Colony of Bermuda.

Bermuda, that lovely group of coral islands in the North Atlantic Ocean, lies midway between Nova Scotia and the West Indies, about 1,080 kilometres from New York City. Tourism is the colony's major source of income. Bermuda's mild climate, natural beauty, luxurious

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● Rex Webster, a dedicated Rotarian (since 1941) of Lubbock, Texas, has served R.I. in many capacities: as director and third vice president; liaison director for the public relations committee and for the Rotary Volunteers Abroad program; Rotary information officer; committee chairman and member, and song leader. During the coming Rotary year, he will serve as aide to R.I. President W. Jack Davis.

GARY EMEIGH



Above: Daughter Marny—Mrs. Kenneth L. McAllister—and her family: son Mark (standing at left), husband Ken, and son Scott (seated on arm of chair). The McAllisters live in Dover, Delaware, and Ken is a member of the Rotary Club of Camden-Wyoming.



Above: Daughter Libby—Mrs. John R. Webb—and her family: daughter Terri (left), husband John, and daughter Cheryl. The Webbs live in Andover, Massachusetts, and John is a former member of the Rotary Club of Boston.



Above: At the February 1977 meeting of the R.I. board of directors in Evanston, Jack Davis has the attention of fellow directors, Treasurer John H. Edwards (left) of Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, and Roberto Boccardo of Genova, Italy.

Below: At a banquet commemorating the 100th anniversary of the congregation of Wesley Methodist Church in Hamilton, of which he is a steward, Jack Davis chats with (from left): Dr. A. C. Forrest of Toronto, Ont., Canada, editor of the United Church Observer; The Honorable, His Worship Graham Gibbons, mayor of Hamilton, and the Reverend Ross Bailey, pastor of the Wesley church.

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