

ROTARY IN THE SEVENTIES

A. B. BREWER



ROTARY IN THE SEVENTIES

*The story of Rotary in New Zealand and the South Pacific
from 1950 to 1981*



ROTARY
IN
THE SEVENTIES

*The Story of Rotary
in New Zealand and the South Pacific
From 1970 to 1981*

A. R. DREAVER

1983

PUBLISHED JOINTLY BY
THE NEW ZEALAND ROTARY DISTRICTS

PRINTED BY WRIGHT & CARMAN LTD.,
UPPER HUTT, NEW ZEALAND

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Abbreviations | vii |
| Preface | ix |
| CHAPTER 1 Rotary in New Zealand – From Beginnings to 1970 | 1 |
| 2 Rotary International in the Seventies | 10 |
| 3 Developing Acquaintance | 28 |
| 4 Service Above Self – The Vocational Ideal | 32 |
| 5 The Well-Trodden Path – The Community Avenue | 39 |
| 6 The International Avenue – Understanding, Goodwill, Peace – Everywhere | 52 |
| 7 The Decade of Youth | 64 |
| 8 The Four Districts | 71 |
| 9 District 292/992 | 81 |
| 10 District 293/993 | 117 |
| 11 District 294/994 | 148 |
| 12 District 298/998 | 181 |
| 13 The Days Ahead | 214 |

10

District 293/993

BY THE LATE SIXTIES it was clear that a new district should be formed. There were 58 clubs in D. 294, reaching from Wellington northwards to Taumarunui, Taupo and Gisborne, while D. 292 included 66 in the rest of the North Island and reaching over the Pacific to Fiji and New Caledonia. D. 298 had a comfortable 44.

During 1967-68 Governors Win Bassett D. 294 and Jack Porter D. 292, after careful consideration, proposed that a new district should be formed in the centre of the Island, and, after general acceptance by the two districts, their successors made a firm proposal to the Districting Committee of R.I. in May 1968. Approval was secured and, in the words of Ian Drabble, "District 293 was born, 1 July 1970, parents A. R. Dreaver and R. C. Dockery (gender not known)". On the map it looked a compact chunk — actually two-thirds of the North Island — about 250 miles north/south and 250 miles east/west as the crow flies.

Governors and other district officers normally travel by roads which climb over some lofty ranges as well as a massive plateau, and they found that the tortuous routes between Waipawa/Waipukurau in the south and Huntly and Thames in the north represented not only a gap of miles but a canyon separating community interests. The Rotarians concerned had good reason to sympathise with the problems of the South Islanders.

The major problem of the early governors was to weld all these clubs into a harmonious fellowship. There were notable assets for achieving this purpose. Towns such as Taupo, Rotorua and Tokoroa are centrally sited for district assemblies. Six vigorous flourishing cities can host conferences, each conferring its special allure upon its visitors — Hamilton, Hastings, Rotorua, Napier, Tauranga, Gisborne. The grand concept of the Golden Jubilee South Pacific Trust united the clubs in worthy service to the Islands. The result has been a permanently beneficent attitude towards active World Community Service, which reached a new level of achievement in response to the hurricane devastation in Tonga in 1982.

For the 75th anniversary of Rotary it was decided to stimulate each club or group of clubs to achieve something special. Here are some of these specials:

Parks: *Thames, Taupiri; Te Aroha, Grandstand Herress Park; Taradale, Gisborne West and Cambridge, riversides; Whakatane, Mokorua Gorge; Matamata, 75 kauris; Paeroa, maritime park; Kawerau, bush walk.*

Cultural: *Waipukurau, cultural centre; Te Awamutu, Railway museum; Gisborne, Museum of Transport and Technology; Putaruru, timber museum.*

Civic: *Whakatane, fountain; Te Kuiti, sound system; Hamilton East, public library; Kihikihi, senior citizens' village; Taupo, Citizens' Advice Bureau; Ahuriri, Napier, Napier West, Greenmeadows and Taradale, Y.M.C.A. \$100,000.*

Trusts: *Taradale, educational bursary; Tauranga South, Memorial Trust; Rotorua and Rotorua Lakes, Charitable Trust \$50,000.*

Youth Facilities: *Otumoetai (22 acres), Waipawa, outdoor education centres; Tauranga and Whakatane West, skateboard ramps; Turangi, skating rink; Te Puke, Girl Guide camp; Wairoa, netball centre \$40,000; Te Awamutu, Otorohanga, Opotiki, Mount Maunganui, adventure play areas; Havelock North, Morrinsville, camping trailers.*

Health: *Hamilton, Fairfield, two equipped ambulances \$100,000; Rotorua West, appeal \$400,000 for Children's Health Camp.*

Organisation

The governor keeps in touch with his clubs through his group representatives, ten or eleven in number. Most district committees are small with some four or five members.

The Student Exchange Committee, in addition, has its own liaison officer with each group. In the years when a G.S.E. team is being hosted, the G.S.E. Committee has six liaison officers to ensure smooth transfer of the team from place to place, and generally to keep a cordial eye alert to see that the purpose of the exchange is being satisfactorily achieved.

The Information Committee has always been an important one, led by well-informed men like Norman Law, Stuart Timpany, Bert Holmes and Stuart Ruck. District information forums, whether in zones for incoming presidents on a district basis, or in groups of clubs, are all the business of the Information Committee.

Committee membership shows a good compromise between a choice of the old dog for the hard road and the new brooms that sweep clean.

Certain stalwarts find their names in the District Handbook year after year. And year after year the district develops its own strong identity and self-confidence.

THE GOVERNORS



1970-71

IAN J. DRABBLE M.B.E., J.P., A.N.Z.I.M.
(CONSTANCE)

Rotary Club of Te Puke 1954 (Charter President),
Whangarei 1956-60, *Hamilton* from 1960;
Furniture retailing.

Secretary: David Thomas (*Hamilton*)

Ian had need of his extensive knowledge, varied experience and deep conviction in the worth of Rotary to face the major responsibility of launching a new district successfully.

He was able to count on the understanding support of recent past governors Bob Dockery and Vel Velvin and sage counsel from the others — Reg Gambrill, Bill Whitlock, Charles Smith, Pat Fagan, Gordon McDowell, Fred Beattie and Joi Thomas.

Ian had prepared himself for his task with typical thoroughness. At the International Assembly at Lake Placid, he had organised his fellow governors-nominee from New Zealand and other odd Kiwis to present a haka on the concert night. Clad in a swishing piu-piu below and sporting an impressive bare torso above, he led the party in a raucous rendition that stole the show. It was a good omen.

On his return home, he found everything in order for the Assembly and the start of the First Year. His printed District Handbook was an invaluable little compilation with much information about the past and the present.

His district organisation laid down a pattern which has been little amended. He appointed seven area representatives to liaise with groups of clubs. The District Advisory Committee of past governors, chaired and convened by the governor as need for consultation and discussion arose, had PDG Fred Beattie as secretary. The D.A.C. also acted as the nominating committee for district governor.

Bill Whitlock chaired the Finance Committee, Bob Dockery the R.F., with its subcommittees for promotion, G.S.E. and educational awards. Vel Velvin was chairman of Information; Rod Dennis, World Community Service; Bob Hamilton, Youth (Interact and Rotaract). George Pacey organised student exchange with impressive flair and dedication, a responsibility he undertook until 1977. Stewart

Boyes prepared a file of maps and club boundary descriptions with such meticulous care that Kendall Young of the secretariat described his copy as "a beautiful work of art. The words 'Thank you' seem rather inadequate, but we do thank you sincerely!"

So did Governor Ian. Not only for the splendid file but for the three new clubs that Stewart and his committee established — *Kati Kati*, *Whakatane West*, and *Fairfield*.

Ian's R.Y.L.A. Committee worked in co-operation with that of District 292 and a joint seminar was held at Dilworth School, directed by Aubrey Baigent (Hamilton) and administered by Hugh Francis and his club, Mount Roskill.

Ian appointed an International Student Hospitality Committee to provide a continuing welcome and helping hand to students at the University of Waikato. The J. R. McKenzie Trust added the new governor and the nominee of the *Rotary Club of Hamilton* to its Board, and Ian appointed a committee to disburse a share of the J. R. McKenzie Youth Education funds.

Finally, the Conference Committee, chaired with nonchalant competence by Alex Gallagher (*Tauranga*). The first ever to be held in Tauranga, it was not the last. There was much "Bridging the Gaps" urged by President Bill Walk. There were present two G.S.E. teams from California and British Columbia, 15 students on exchange, and a party of 32 Rotarians and wives from D. 109 England led by PDG John Proctor, and the President's Special Representative, Past V.P. Steve O'Halloran from Australia.

Major addresses on the theme came from Sir Keith Holyoake. Jock McEwen, secretary of Maori Affairs, Dr Eric Hutcheson, and Professor W. T. Roy.

A most memorable presentation was the Rotary Melodrama "Service Above Self" — or "What's Happened to our Community" — brilliantly devised by Peter Verrall and spectacularly perpetrated by Peter and Company. A melodrama with a moral!

Two other items of news related to conference — the bad news first; Ian's wife, Connie, suffered severely in a motor accident two days before the conference opened. What a preparation for such an occasion! Second, the good news. Nick Carter (*Mount Maunganui*) presented his cheque for US\$1,000 as a donation to the Rotary Foundation — the first in New Zealand to hold that honour.

What else?

There was a host of substantial projects undertaken and completed by clubs. Four new Rotaract clubs were set up. The District promoted the making of donations to the Halls of Residence at the University of Waikato. Most beneficent of all, it was decided to celebrate fifty

years of Rotary in New Zealand by establishing the Golden Jubilee South Pacific Trust in the sum of \$50,000.

It was a full year — a year of most impressive achievement. The district was in good order for the incoming governor, Eric Wiig of the *Rotary Club of Napier West*.



1971-72

IAN J. DRABBLE

Second Year

On 3 July 1971, Ian received this telegram from the new Rotary International President:

DEEPLY REGRET LOSS OF ERIC WIIG STOP WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD AGREE TO SERVE AS ACTING DISTRICT GOVERNOR PENDING BOARD SELECTION OF DISTRICT GOVERNOR STOP IT WOULD MEAN MUCH TO ROTARY INTERNATIONAL AND YOUR DISTRICT IF YOU WOULD SERVE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IF ELECTED BY BOARD STOP AWAIT YOUR FAVOURABLE CABLE REPLY ERNST BREITHOLTZ.

This was a situation unprecedented in New Zealand, requiring an answer which, from a man like Ian Drabble, could only be one of acceptance. How often have we heard the declaration "A Rotarian never declines a job for Rotary"? How many of us could have said "Yes"?

The Governor was gone! Long live the Governor!

The District Assembly had been held in good order at Taupo, 19 June. The clubs all had their officers, and, one hopes, their plans. The District Handbook was printed. All the committees had been organised and briefed — Ian had helped tremendously in these matters. So what was the problem? It was quite a simple one — How to carry out conscientiously his duty as manager of a very large department store after one disrupted year — and maintain inspirational and counselling leadership to a district seeking unity and action and guidance and the freshness of a new personality. Ian was able to reconcile somehow all the conflicting demands upon him and to satisfy all these needs except the last.

pertinent information and with stimulating thought. Perusal of them gives a vivid idea of the comprehensive and complex aspects of life that are the business of the modern Rotary governor.



1977-78

LEIGHTON PATMORE (SHIRLEY)

Rotary Club of Stortford Lodge from 1966
(charter member);
Tomato Growing
Secretary: Keith Moody

Leighton approached his responsibilities as governor in a tidy business-like manner. He introduced two new elements in the district organisation. The World Community Service Committee was named International Projects Advisory Committee, thus conforming with the Australian practice, and International Student Exchange was given a new chairman assisted by a liaison member in each of the 11 areas. Exchanges proceeded as before, limited to 25 each way and with the obligatory briefing experience for each. Three students were regretfully returned home.

The liaison principle also applied to Rotaract and Interact with the governor appointing a member in each sponsoring club — a policy likewise continued by his successors. A new youth activity was R.I.T.S.E. — the exchange of teams of Rotaractors with D. 950, South Australia. Two new Rotaract clubs were commissioned in *Huntly* and *Morrinsville*, making a total of 18.

R.O.V.E. continued steadily with two reciprocal Australian exchanges and an interesting visitor from Sweden.

The District Conference was a most successful venture — a unique undertaking shared with DG Peter Taylor of D. 992 in that happiest of all conference venues — Rotorua. The imaginative scheme had two special advantages. First, it enabled the sharing of original ideas to produce an unusually interesting programme. Second, it was an opportunity for many old friends to enjoy each others' company.

President Jack Davis had appointed to represent him, Bill Skelton, and his wife Pegg. Leighton and Shirley were captivated by their quiet sincerity and desire to greet and meet people. Bill was later nominated for the presidency for 1983-84.

Friday afternoon was all practical vocational service. Sir Thomas

Skinner spoke about the industrial relations that had been so much his concern for so long. Five men of business continued the discussion. The brief evening official opening led into a participatory musical melange conducted by Russell Garcia.

The two districts had their separate programmes on the Saturday morning. D. 992's interests were W.C.S., Rota Pacific, Student Exchange and Finance, while 993 dealt with classifications, membership and extension. The afternoon was freed for all Rotorua's recreational revelry. The evening was spent in victoriana riotry. Notable on Sunday morning were the refreshing creative ideas on "Serving to Unite Mankind" expounded with wit, humour and wisdom by Harry Dansey (Auckland East) PDG Ali Asgar (Suva) and David Goldsmith (Napier).

Like all governors, Leighton was concerned that Rotarians should know their Rotary. The annual Assembly was organised prior to the incoming governor's departure for Boca Raton but Leighton in addition adopted the practice of calling a meeting of the incoming presidents to prepare them thoroughly for their crucial role. All fifty presidents attended.

He also had printed a new pamphlet on guidelines for student exchange and a district information manual. The district library was well promoted and well used. In addition, the District Institute moderated by Ian Galloway proved as successful as in the other districts.

He related how he made an unforgettable impression on one Rotarian. Leighton says: "I was standing with a group prior to a club meeting when a visitor greeted me, introduced himself and observed that I must also be a visitor. I agreed. My only identification was my lapel badge. He then commented that it would not be much of a programme. He'd been told that it was the DG's visit. I thanked him for the information. Later when I was taken up to the head table wearing the chain of office, I glanced over to where my friend was sitting. Believe me, his face was something to behold. Later, when I visited his club, he told the story against himself and happily contributed to the sunshine box." (Tony Morcom-Green had a similar experience years before.)

Leighton was specially pleased with the support given by clubs to world community service. Consideration was given to the establishment of a District Trust Fund to take over when the Golden Jubilee South Pacific Trust Funds should be liquidated by 1982.

The contributors to the R.F. reached a new high level of over \$6 per Rotarian partly with the honouring of Paul Harris Fellows and adopting the sustaining Fellowships.

He probably regarded the close welding together of the district as his most satisfying achievement.