

Summerland Rotary Club – Community Projects

As Compiled by George Sutton

November, 2015.

The Summerland Rotary Club held the first meeting on November 15, 1945, receiving the official charter on January 21, 1946 supported by the nineteen charter members. Our club belongs to District 5060 which extends from the southern area of Washington State north in B.C. to Clearwater. The executive established our first Rotary Foundation contributions of \$10 per member in 1948.

After WW 11, our club initiated the first community project in the 1950s. They raised funds via personal letters to combat the **local polio epidemic**. They were extremely pleased with the response which was greater than predicted. The members also distributed Christmas hampers to the needy and arranged for The Grad Class to tour Grand Coulee Dam, hosted by members of that club. Then, in 1951, they took over The Red Cross Swim Lessons from The Board of Trade. This program started at Powell Beach but was re-located to the first Rotary Beach at Evans Point in 1954. They not only provided qualified instructors, but also arranged for transportation, and provided better floats. They also supported: Cancer, TB, The Youth Centre, Boy Scouts/Girl Guides and maintenance at the arena. In 1956, Rotary Beach demanded attention to build a retaining wall and clearing the shoreline to create a larger beach. Numerous citizens worked alongside the Rotarians. This program continued there until 1979 when The Aquatic Centre was built. We sponsored numerous youth soccer teams throughout the 70s, directed Grade three students through a Bicycle Safety Course, collected the entrance fees for The Fall Fair and organized the canvassing of the community for The Red Cross for many years. An annual Valentine Day Tea and Radio Auction provided some of the required funds.

Meals on Wheels was implemented in 1981 by Betty Weeks, the Care Assessment Nurse, who was the wife of long time Rotarian, Ted. Two meals per week were delivered to those eligible seniors until 1999, three since. The success of this program obtained needed support from the cooks at Parkdale Place/Kelly Care, later The Summerland Health Centre. His Stuart, Tim Kemp, Dave McIntosh and Kent Israel are previous coordinators; Charlotte Burley, currently.

The original 300 seats for **The Centre Stage Theatre** in our local high school were transported, unloaded and assembled by our members. They are currently in The Cannery Theatre in Penticton.

Parks and Trails. When Highway 97 was widened in 1989 **Rotary Beach** was re-located next to The Raquetball Centre. Our club stepped up to the plate on this project, under the leadership of Gordon Beggs and Bill Genereux. The Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Recreation Commission, Lower Town Residents Association, Water Skiers Group, Yacht Club members, Corporation of Summerland and The Raquetball

Association united forces to complete this project. A provincial Go BC Grant of \$63,333 plus \$63,000 from the Department of Highways as compensation for the loss of the original beach represented the bulk of the \$142,000 total cost. The Department of Highways employees also transported the sand for the beach and rock for the breaker. Two docks, a washroom, an outdoor shower, numerous trees and a parking lot were included. A plaque was mounted to recognize the vast community contribution of Gordon Beggs.

During the 90s, the members continued their efforts. They developed a **Walkway** between Rotary and Peach Orchard Beaches; first, in 1995, then again in 2005 and finally in 2006, in conjunction with the Lion's Club. During the 1930s this walkway area was known as Hobo Point because transient men seeking work used this area to cook over open fires and sleep. About 1996, under the leadership of Ellen Lloyd, we identified a series of walkways within the community (Peach Orchard Trail, Crescent Beach Loop and Giants Head Mountain) and provided signage; then in 2006, we added gravel to the Peach Orchard Road part of that trail as part of our community's Centennial Project (George Nagel organized). In 1996, we planted trees and provided tables/benches in The Don Agur Park on the top of Giants Head Mountain as Don, a long time Rotarian and Sue Eden's father, not only initiated this activity for Canada's Centennial but also provided machinery and labour. We assisted with the landscaping at The Harold Simpson Youth Centre and Parkdale Lodge; supplied the funds (\$10,000) for large wooden display boards north and south of our town to attract tourists to the various festivals; contributed \$30,000 to The Cancer Lodge in Kelowna, part of the district's \$1 million; and assisted Dr. Corrine LeGrand who provided science lessons for students, parents and teachers throughout B.C.

In 2000, we commenced work on the development and maintenance of the **Adams Bird Sanctuary**. We mounted a sign at the entrance and constructed a walking trail. In 2005, we added more trails and two bridges using materials provided by The District of Summerland. Then in 2007, we coordinated with Glenfir School, SADI and The Summerland Parks Department to mount interpretive signs that identify the wildlife within this sanctuary. Glenfir students, members of SADI and Rotarians clear weeds and plant trees/shrubs as ongoing maintenance tasks.

Youth Development. We developed numerous programs to benefit our young adults. Previously, we mentioned the Coulee Dam tours for the grads. Since 1974, we have supported **The Youth Exchange Program** whereby we select a Summerland student who spends about eleven months with host families in another country and host a foreign student here. We sponsored The Camp Rainbow Leadership Program at Camp Boyle which trained 50 peer counsellors for Summerland Secondary School which led to The Student Assessment Development Initiative to improve the citizenship qualities of our young adults. Ellen Lloyd expanded the objectives of SADI by training young adults in the business administration skills, establishing the model present at The Penny Lane Stores. She travelled throughout the province with students so that other communities could also develop these skills. Under her leadership, a committee arranged a conference in 2001 for students in B.C. and our Western Provinces. We continue to support SADI financially and as members of their Board.

Pageant. Each year we sponsor a Grade 11 young woman to participate in The Pageant Program. For numerous years, members assisted the SSS teachers with The Career Preparation course by interviewing

each student for a position as retail business employees, then assessing their performance as an interviewee. We have been supporting the Drama Program by providing funding and lunch for the 300+ students from other schools who attend the annual Shakespeare Festival. We also provide funding (\$2500-3000) for The SSS Leadership Training session at the Naramata Centre each fall. Senior students assist with the instruction for the grade 9 and 10 students. As well, we support The Rotary Youth Leadership program and acknowledge Tony Cooke for his past dedication. We continue to provide a \$1500 bursary annually to a graduating student. Four local students have requested our support as they applied for an Ambassadorial Scholarship; Mary McQuaig, the only recipient to date.

Since 2000, we supplied the funds (\$25,000) to supply furniture for the lounge of Angus Place, an assisted living facility for seniors; later, \$5000 to furnish The Games Room of the expansion to Angus Place. Since 2003, we honour the contribution of our pioneers, those who have lived here for 50 years or more but are 60 years of age or older. In 2003, District 5060 supported those affected by the devastating fire in Kelowna. In 2004, we proposed a major project to expand the usage of Memorial Park; however, the expansion of the soccer/softball fields on Dale Meadows Road had already been approved by our council. Then, in 2008, we raised \$20,000 as well as The Lions Club and \$ 10,00 from Summerland Credit Union to install a gazebo at Peach Orchard Beach. The remaining funds were obtained from a provincial government grant (\$65,000). In 2009, we assisted with the funding (\$10,000) and the installation of an Adventure Playground in Memorial Park, accessible by handicapped youngsters. In 2010, the Rotary Club donated \$8,600 for a manually operating canopy for the new pergola at The Extended Care Unit.

Our club has been involved in the Group Study Exchange Program whereby five non-Rotarians from our district under the leadership of a Rotarian tour a district in a foreign country in order to view/learn about their professions/industries/culture/etc. We also host a team from that country. Don Gibbings and Pat Manders travelled to South Africa in 1985; then Don was the Chairperson for Zone in 1992 and 1993. Brian Noonan provided leadership for the tour in Taiwan in 1988. Doug MacDonald joined the team in 1989 to Zaire and Malawi. Then in 1995 Dr. Bob Mack went to Brazil.

Beginning around 1995, we co-organized **The Telephone Directory** in conjunction with The Chamber of Economic Development and Tourism (SCEDT). A SCEDT employee arranges for the advertising sales and our members verify the names, addresses and phone numbers of residents and businesses, adding and deleting as necessary. This project earned about \$14, 000 in 2008.

Between 2001 and 2008 our club has sponsored numerous social fundraisers to support cancer research, spearheaded by Sue Eden. These successful events have earned nearly \$250,000 which have been directed to The Cancer Lodge in Kelowna. Two events were organized. One, called **The Event**, raised funds for research for all types of cancer whereas the second, **The Ladies Night Extravaganza**, supported research for breast cancer. Some of these socials were held over a two night period. The location varied: Zia's Stonehouse Restaurant, The Summerland Waterfront Resort, Ramada Inn or Sumac Ridge Winery. Several prominent citizens donated time as celebrity waiters/waitresses for most of these fundraisers. Each event featured different characteristics. Members of a

local dragon boat team modelled at a fashion show; Elvis and Kenny Rogers impersonators provided the entertainment at times; Mike Roberts, a noted CHBC TV personnel, served as Master Of Ceremony; Stockwell Day, our Member of Parliament, acted as auctioneer and The Summerland Credit Union became a sponsor.

Now, in 2009, Sue directed a committee to supporting **The Agur Lake Camp** by organizing a Golf Tournament at the Summerland Golf Club, earning \$8,300. The second event was held on August 21, 2010, earning \$10,000. This has become an annual event. In 2010, we committed \$8,600 for two weather shades for pergolas at The Dr. Andrews Pavilion of The Extended Care Unit. We joined forces with the Municipality and Lions Club, providing a family picnic area at Peach Orchard Park; with The Kinsmen Club to construct an Adventure Playground at Memorial Park; then with Kinsmen again for another Adventure Playground at Dale Meadows Field.

We spearheaded the contribution of \$75,000 to scholarships for students attending **Okanagan College** in Penticton- \$25,000 from The Art Sewell family, \$25,000 from The Penny Lane Business and \$25,00 from The Summerland Rotary Club.