



# CENTENNIAL BEAT

MAY 2012

## PIONEERING PROJECTS

Dear Readers,

*This is the fifth Centennial Beat, a monthly addition to the Voice leading up to our Club's Centennial Year beginning July 1, 2012. The Centennial Beat highlights membership involvement over the past 100 years in projects and activities in our areas of service. Much of the information comes from These Were The Days: The Story of The Rotary Club of Toronto from 1912 to 1999, the Club's Voice collection, and members' recollections.*

*The Rotary Club of Toronto has a distinguished history for seeing a need in its community and finding a way to meet that need. Often our Club members have done so in ways which have never before been tried as you will learn with reading this issue of the Centennial Beat.*

Enjoy.

Bert Steenburgh

### 1938 - The RCT Confronts Polio

Yes, our Club first confronted polio back in 1938! One member involved in raising money to treat polio, Dr. Harry Ebbs, gave special attention at the Hospital for Sick Children to a young girl, Lois, whose legs had been crippled by polio. She was invited to our 1939 Children's Christmas party where her singing delighted her audience. Rotarian John Chantler was so impressed he arranged a scholarship for her training at the Toronto Conservatory of Music. In April 1952 the little girl – now world-renowned Toronto soprano, Lois Marshall – became the second Canadian to win the coveted Naumberg Award in New York. Our Club has been in the forefront of the battle to eradicate this scourge on children ever since. And we are almost there!



Polio survivor and soprano  
Lois Marshall

### 1956 - Care Canada

In 1956, Ken Andras Sr. (Past-President and father to members Ken Andras, John Andras & grandfather to member Will Andras) formed a group, mostly Club members, to establish an advisory board for Care of Canada. The object was to raise money for overseas aid, providing food, farm equipment, water supplies, schools, and hospitals. Ken Andras was chair for many years, followed by Henry Langford. Incorporated in the late 60s, it became Care Canada under current member Vlad Kavan, who became the first President of Care International. Today the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) continues to fund Care's work in developing countries.



The start of Care Canada with Bert Ashforth,  
Ken Andras Sr., and Joe Caulder



### Blazing Trails

Rotarians tend to be pioneers... It's in our DNA as business leaders and entrepreneurs. Our pioneering spirit was there in 1912, evidenced by the very fact that our founding members plunged into the relatively new phenomenon of Rotary. It has continued to the present day. Here are just a few noteworthy highlights.

#### 1918 – The Federation of Community Services: Precursor to United Way Toronto

As Wm. H. (Bert) Alderson of the Gutta Percha & Rubber Co. became President in 1918, Club members spent two meetings deliberating on a new approach to community welfare. The Club decided overwhelmingly to make promotion of the Federation of Community Services its special work for 1918. Over \$5,000.00 was raised so that the Neighbourhood Worker's Association could be the Federation's first council.



Notice in 1918 Voice

#### 1924 – The House of Friendship at RI Conventions

In 1924 Rotary International hosted its first annual conference outside of the United States – in Toronto with The Rotary Club of Toronto as host club. The organizing committee set aside meeting space at the convention for attendees to meet informally to share ideas and promote individual club projects. Thus began the tradition of the "House of Friendship" which today is a major feature at Rotary's annual international conventions. With over 300 exhibits promoting local and international humanitarian, fellowship and community activities, it is always a highlight for new and seasoned convention attendees!



House of Friendship, RI Montreal 2010

# CENTENNIAL BEAT

*What can we do individually and collectively to respond to the needs we see?*

*We have a rich legacy of taking action when need arises in our local and global community.*

*What can you do to continue to shape that legacy?*

*To quote Doug (Soapy) Witherspoon, one of our great past-presidents, "Use the past as a trampoline... not an easy chair!"*

## 1995 - The Rotary Club of Toronto Health Bus

At the June 23, 1995 meeting, member Don Hillhouse introduced Scott Rowland, head of the Wellesley Hospital who talked about a first in Canada, the "Mobile Health Unit": a bus to be designed, equipped and operated by the hospital to take health care to those needing it most in the downtown community. The money, \$250,000.00, was raised by a grant of \$50,000.00 from our Club's Charitable Foundation, Club members' donations, Toronto businesses, and others.

In 1996 the Health Bus was launched. In 1997 the Club received the District's Significant Achievement Award for this project. Another Club grant in 2006 replaced the large bus with two compact buses.



Health Bus, Wellesley Hospital, 1996

## 1999 - The Rotary Club of Toronto Transition Centre, St. Michael's Hospital

December 1999 marked the opening of the Transition Centre for homeless people at St. Michael's Hospital. "A medical problem...becomes incredibly complex when considered within the context of homelessness... [there are] tremendous barriers to health and healing for the homeless patient," said Dr. Dan Cass, Director of Emergency Services at St. Michael's Hospital. The Club donated \$500,000.00 to fund the Transition Centre, the first of its kind in Canada. With a common rest area, four beds, kitchen, shower and laundry facilities, access to telephone and private space for health care consultation, it provides a temporary, safe and welcoming environment.



Transition Centre, St. Michael's Hospital, 1999



The Infirmary, Seaton House, 2002

## 2002 - The Infirmary, Seaton House

In 2002, the Club opened an infirmary at Seaton House following a grant of \$350,000.00 to build and equip the centre. Seaton House is a shelter for homeless men in downtown Toronto. The project is a unique concept which would become a national model for delivering the best healthcare to some of society's most vulnerable people. A key feature would recognize Seaton House as a formal academic training site for medical students, medical residents, nurses and social workers pursuing further knowledge in the area of urban medicine. Thereby, equipping future healthcare providers with the special knowledge required to treat the homeless.

## The Next 100 Years....

There are many more "firsts" in the history of our Club which are not presented here due to space limitations. They include pioneering work with young men in trouble with the law, seniors' housing, and crippled children's camps. Did you know we even hosted a Ladies' Baseball World Softball series! The initiatives listed are examples of our Club's pioneering spirit and "can-do" approach to attacking problems head-on with creativity and boldness. As we look to the next 100 years, let us continue to look closely at the world around us, and identify and reach out to those who are marginalized due to the vicissitudes of life.

## MOVING FORWARD

**How will you get involved?**  
2012-2013

### Sign Up

Join a philanthropic committee

Tour downtown projects

Contact: john-lloyd@lpgraphics.on.ca

Attend fundraising events

Donate to support projects

Donate online: [www.rotarytoronto.com](http://www.rotarytoronto.com)

### For fundraising news, go to

- Friday lunch meetings
- The VOICE

• [www.facebook.com/rotarytoronto](http://www.facebook.com/rotarytoronto)

# 100<sup>4</sup>100

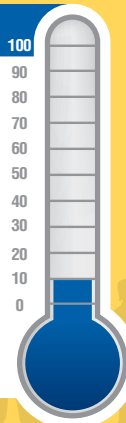
## CENTENNIAL MEMBERSHIP GOAL

"The three biggest surprises I had about our Club's accomplishments were:

- The number of other social service and nonprofit organizations that our Club has launched and spun off over the years.
- The amazing breadth of interest represented by our various activities.
- The size of our foundation, one of the largest in RI.

Take for example YES – the Youth Employment Services. It's an amazing organization providing an increasingly crucial service to over 1500 youth in Toronto every year."

– James Hilborn, new member 2009



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