

The 1960s Canada Struggles to Find Its National Identity

The 1960s were a time of political unrest in much of the Western world. Canada was working to find its place in the world and dealing with unrest around provincial rights. Prime Minister Lester Pearson recognized Quebec as a “nation within a nation” in an attempt to quell the growing nationalism there. In a move away from British imperialism, the country created a new flag in 1965. It was thought the new flag, with its Canadian symbols, would be embraced by both French and English.

1967 marked Canada’s first Centennial. One of the highlights was the Montreal World’s Fair, Expo 67, with the theme “Man and His World”. The fair did much to instill a sense of pride within our nation and raised Canada’s profile in the world. It was a time when many young Canadians traveled to Montreal to experience Expo and Quebec. In a special Centennial Youth Travel Program, the Rotary club welcomed twenty-four students from New Brunswick into their homes during their tour of Alberta.

In Camrose, the year was full of centennial celebrations and the opening of the Camrose and District Centennial Museum – the region’s centennial project. Many people put together costumes representing the clothing of the 1860s. Camrose even had its own centennial coin in circulation during 1967. The July first centennial celebration was enjoyed by a throng of four thousand people.

Camrose continued on its growth path. The old Canadian Pacific Railway station at the end of main street was replaced by the one million-dollar Camrose Shopping Plaza with Safeway and McLeods as the major tenants. United Feed opened a new feed mill and Alberta Wheat Pool opened a new Seed Plant. At the time, it was one of the largest seed cleaning plant in the world, befitting the agricultural centre Camrose had become.



A steel pipe mill was announced for Camrose that was to employ 300 people. The mill, to be called Camrose Tubes, had a peak production capacity of four miles of pipe per day. The mill would operate on a contract basis. A new concrete block manufacturing plant was also built.

With an increased population and baby boomers now attending school, a massive number of new school spaces were needed. The largest undertaking was building a new high school that would include vocational training as well as academics. The vocational training inclusion was determined by a local survey. The survey found that only a third of pupils reach matriculation, though between 60% and 70% obtain a grade 12 diploma or better. The record shows that 20% of Grade 9 pupils drop out. For these drop outs, and many of the diploma pupils who would prefer vocational training, the board hoped to participate in a greatly expanded vocational training program. Other schools built and opened in the 1960s were Burgess School for Retarded Children, Our Lady of Mount Pleasant and Chester Ronning schools.

Rosehaven and St. Mary's Hospital were both significantly expanded to meet the local and provincial needs.

One of the most involved local projects of the 1960s was the building of CADRECA. Today we know it as the Max McLean Arena and Rose City Curling Rink. A lot of volunteer and city hours were spent assessing community needs and designing an appropriate facility. While generally satisfied with the result, the height of the steps in the arena have always been a bone of contention. There were threats to sue the architect at the time of construction.

One of the most disruptive local projects of the 1960s, was the widening of the highway through Camrose to four lanes including widening the bridge at Mirror Lake



MOVING ALONG

Work on widening the bridge across Mirror Lake has been moving right along for some time, with the result that the roadbed is now more than double its former width, as shown above. The big derrick was all set

to start setting piles across the channel today, so that walls could be erected to hold back the earthwork. It is expected the work will take only a few more weeks before traffic can roll. —Camrose Canadian Newsphoto,

What was Rotary helping with?

Rotary International President of the day, Harold Thomas, is quoted as saying in his year:

"The keynote of Rotary is to build bridges of friendship."

He added, "I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something – and by the grace of God, I will do it!"

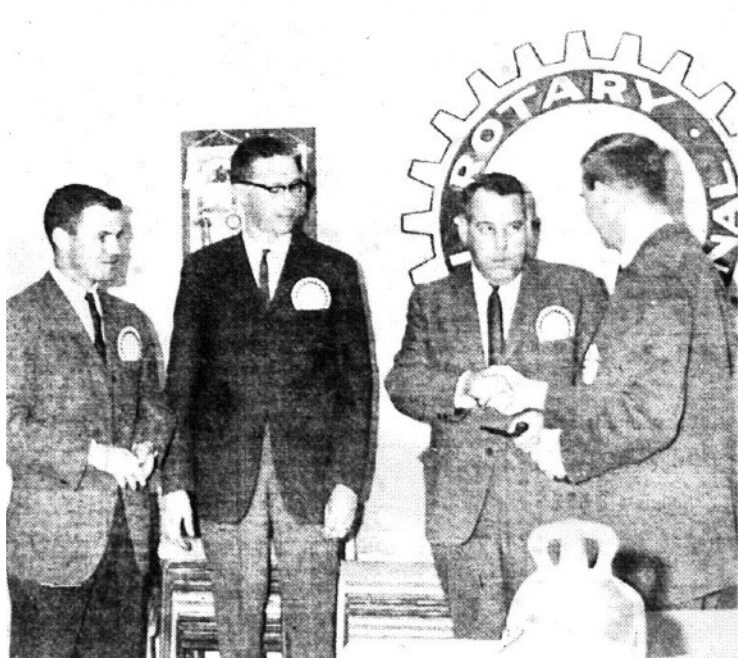
In 1961, the club noted they were supporting eighteen community projects. These were documented in the local paper:

The 1960s saw the club continue to support a number of ongoing youth initiatives. The Camrose Rotary Air Cadet squadron flourished with local cadets achieving their wings and other specialized training. Rotary continued to provide transportation for the squadron and support through the Civilian Committee. A group of girls made a plea to the club demanding to be included as Air Cadettes.

By 1964, the squadron of fifty-two cadets was led by Dennis Twomey. The Civilian Committee of Frank MacMillan, Les Fielding, Les Paton, Lou Glendinning, and chair Dr. Parsons were all Rotarians. Rotary President Dr. Reikie was presented with a certificate acknowledging the club's ten-year support of the air cadets by Squadron Leader Cenick of Namao.

Each Christmas club members presented Christmas gifts for the children at Bethany Home for Children, near Gwynne.

Rotary continued to sponsor an award for the highest overall point score at the Camrose Fair.



Honorary members

Recognizing the tremendous contribution made to the Air Cadets by its continuing officers, the Rotary Club Monday extended honorary membership to the three squadron officers above. Left to right are Dennis Twomey, Steve Shuman and Allastair MacKenzie-Elliott, while President Tom Gregory welcomes them to the club. —Camrose Canadian Newsphoto.



SANTA MAGIC

Rapt attention was rivetted on Santa Claus last Friday evening, when Camrose Rotarians held a Christmas party for their own children and those of the Bethany Home at Gwynne.

Part of the keen interest is shown in the photo above as youngsters watch intently for Santa to turn up their present.

—Camrose Canadian Newsphoto.

As for new initiatives, the club purchased a used school bus for use by various recreational groups. Rotary paid for maintenance, licencing and insurance, while the user groups paid for fuel and wages for a driver. During 1963, the bus averaged a trip per week and included use by Rosehaven, Bethany Homes and Hospital, recreation groups, hockey teams, CGIT, Girl Guides, Scouts, Hi-C, 4H, Kinsmen, Lions, Moose and the Ski Club.

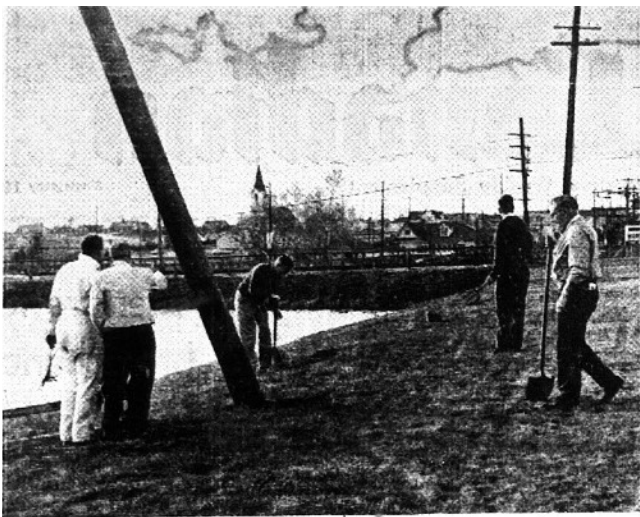
The club sponsored the Camrose Choral Society directed by Jim Neff.

A director of the Battle River Planning Commission spoke to the club in 1962. He encouraged the idea that the entire bank of Mirror Lake be set aside for park development. In the spring of 1964, the club began planting trees in the new Rotary Park along Mirror Lake. The club had agreed with the city to sell the original Rotary Park land and suggested the revenue be used for development of Mirror Lake and Jubilee Park. Rotary held a special flag raising ceremony at Rotary Park in 1967 with the Air Cadet squadron parading the colours after their annual inspection.

In conjunction with an Okanagan flower grower, R.W. Hughes, the club distributed tulips and then peonies to shut-ins and older members of the Camrose community. The June 1960 distribution was noted as the fifth such program and the second of the season. Mr. Hughes provided the flowers and the club identified recipients, packaged and distributed the flowers.

Internationally, the club adopted a Korean orphan, Kim Ju Woon, and supported him financially for a number of years.

The mid 1960s saw the club venture into the Rotary Youth Exchange program for the first time. During 1965/66 the club sponsored Yoshihichi Sarimochi (Yoshi) from Japan. He stayed with various Rotarians for about a month at a time during his year. Local student Murray Christianson was chosen as an outbound exchange student and spent the 1966/67 year in Poona India. The following year the club sponsored a student from Poona India, Meher Pudumgee. She spent her year with the Christiansons.



ROTARIAN TREE PLANTERS

Monday night was tree planting time in the Rotary park and Rotarians were asked to turn out and do the planting. Frank McMillan is shown busily planting a tree while Einar Overn and Bill Dunbar check the straightness of the row. Rusty Campbell stands ready for the next tree. Dr. Hamp Smith, extreme right, directed the planting of a number of seedlings that were placed in his garden one year ago for the Rotary Park.
—Camrose Canadian Newsphoto.



A scene of beauty

A lovely girl amid the splendor of winter as young Meher Pudumgee relaxes and enjoys her first winter in the snow. Meher is from Poona, India and is a student at Camrose Composite High School. Her stay in Camrose is sponsored by the Rotary Club. —Camrose Canadian Newsphoto.

How was the club raising funds?

The club worked with Ernest Lamm of Calgary to bring in and sell original paintings as a fundraiser in 1961 and 1962. By 1964, the club teamed up with the Camrose Art Club to put on an art sale. Eighteen local artists contributed 50 paintings to the sale, which raised just over \$1,500.

One of the club's fundraisers of the 1960s was the sale of "Jap oranges" for Christmas. Perhaps you remember these lovely oranges, individually wrapped in tissue paper, so easy to peel and so sweet and only available at Christmas. By the 1965 version, the club was assisted by the Air Cadets.

The theme of lady's night in 1965 was Rotary International's Diamond Anniversary. In keeping with the diamond theme, the club raffled a diamond ring as a fundraiser.

The 1965 Camrose Fair was a busy one for Rotarians and their wives. At the request of the Fair Board, the club ran the midway rides and games. The midway was provided by Gayland Shows and consisted of six major rides and several smaller tot rides. In addition to selling tickets on the club draw for a 1965 Pontiac Sedan, club members and wives were busy manning the concessions. There were subsequent car draws at the fair, at least in 1966 and 1968.



ORIGINAL OILS AT AUCTION PRICES

"When you buy an original painting it should be able to speak to you," Mrs. H. L. Martin told Rotarians recently when discussing the auction of original oil paintings done by local artists, and the sample above seems to convey something to nearly everyone who looks at it. The familiar old Heatherbrae Hotel, now just a memory for thousands of people, is only one of about 70 oils which will go under the auctioneer's hammer Friday evening at a Rotary-sponsored function. The

pictures will be shown in the John Russell school auditorium from 7 p.m., with the sale slated for 8 p.m. Tea will be served during an intermission.

A variety of styles and types of painting will be offered, from many members of the Camrose Art Club. Work of the members has drawn high praise in several quarters, and many of the paintings have been selected for travelling exhibits from time to time.

—Camrose Canadian Newsphoto.



FIRST TIME EVER

Her first venture as a winner was a real dandy for Mrs. G. Ferguson, above, shown accepting the keys for the Rotary Club car raffled at the Camrose Fair from President Les Fielding. Committee chairman Ed Shuman looks on, as he completes one of the final parts of Rotary's participation in the Fair.

—Camrose Canadian Newsphoto.

TONIGHT
IS
JAP ORANGE NIGHT ...
*Your Rotarian Canvasser
will meet you
at your door*
BUY A BOX FROM ROTARY.
Proceeds for local community
benefits.



What did these 1960s Rotarians get up to for fun?

The club continued with Ladies' nights. At the 1961 Christmas luncheon Rotarians arrived to see their wives installed in their husband's roles. Was this a pattern, female Air Cadettes and female Rotarians? What was the big deal? The ladies were at it again, conducting the 1962 Christmas meeting. That day the attendance board lit up when the attendance reached 100%, perhaps because the entertainment was provided by children of the club members.

A French Cabaret was the theme of the 1964 Ladies' Night. The Elks donned French style moustaches and French maids served the 150 guests French pastries after dinner. The menu was written in French. Fines were imposed in francs and change was given in franks (frankfurters). Entertainment was provided by the Mavericks and the Santreanos and music for the dance was provided by the Ambassadors.

Music teacher Ethel Freeman adjudicated a singing contest in 1962. The club sang eight songs contributed by members as Mrs. Freeman listened with her well trained ears. She had several comments about lack of metre, difficulty in rhyming in some instances, and other shortcomings. In the end she took the diplomatic way out and reserved judgement "on such an important matter."

In 1964, the club meeting was a picnic in Jubilee Park. Club members made the trip, from the Anglican Hall where they normally met, in the Rotary Bus. The club president, Dr. Hamp Smith, wanted all members to experience this new project first hand.

With a little help from his Rotary friends, incoming president Dr. Ladd Parsons was gifted everything he needed for a successful presidential year. He had a hat to keep things under, a gag to keep his mouth shut, a ball to carry, a bat for unruly members, shoes to keep him running, and many other such gifts.



Speakers were again a great source of entertainment and information. Here is a smattering of some of the most interesting speakers:

Chester Ronning, now the High Commissioner of India, again spoke to the club in the fall of 1959. As usual, he had first hand knowledge of this country to which he was now posted. Mr. Ronning began, "with Prime Minister Nehru at the helm, it is the largest country attempting to govern its people under the democratic system. The future peace of the world depends largely on the success of this experiment. China and Russia watch every move in India and use to advantage every instance that can throw an unfavorable light on the democratic method of government. Nehru's aims are to establish his people as a great nation and lift the people to a higher standard of living."

Mr. Ronning remarked, "Canada has done more for India than any other country, not only in financial and economic aid, but in sympathetic guidance and technical leadership."

Another speaker in the fall of 1959, spoke of bentonite clay. He noted that the Rosalind area has the largest known reserve in Canada. One of the many uses for bentonite is in drilling mud first used in 1926. Before that time, water was used in the drilling process. The mud is poured down the inside of the drill stem, and mixed with the cuttings from the bit. It then carries these cuttings to the surface, and at the same time, tends to seal off the porous structure of the wall, which helps to prevent fracturing of the structure. A new use for bentonite was noted in making forms for casting in the auto industry.

Another speaker spoke of the need for a Western Canadian Bank for the west to develop to its full capacity. A 1962 speaker noted that Canada has the highest ratio of banks per population in the world with one branch for every 3,700 persons.

A former Japanese prisoner of war spoke of the tough, demeaning life he experienced in the camps. He told of 40,000 allied soldiers on the Indonesian Islands being overwhelmed by 240,000 Japanese troops. The allied troops surrendered. The Japanese didn't know how to consider them as they had no previous conception of surrender.

A 1962 speaker talked about a study comparing dental health of Wetaskiwin and Camrose children. Camrose children needed twice the dental work as Wetaskiwin children did and demonstrated the need to fluoridate Camrose water.

The head of the British Information Service in Edmonton spoke on colonialism and the changing Commonwealth. He shared Britain's record of having brought free, independent, self-government to 630 million people, with only 20 million people controlled for various reasons. He explained that the Commonwealth was an unusual organization, having no dues, no constitution, membership not forced, and members may withdraw at any time. Never the less, it is a powerful force representing one quarter of the earth's surface and over 700 million people.

A 1964 speaker talked about the effects of automation (referred to as cybernetics) on leisure time. He thought it was important to train more recreation leaders to deal with an increased demand as leisure time increased.

At the close of the 1960s, it is perhaps good to see the 1948 Buzz for the inspiration during this decade.

Conversations with senior members lead us to believe, many worthwhile community ventures found their beginning in the local Rotary club: the most recent being the Memorial Swimming Pool and the skating lessons for the children last winter. Rotary does not look for credit in the work they do but the fact remains, the ideas took seed from its untiring drive in community service.

The Rotary members of the 1960s can look back with pride and fond memories. As Rotarians today, we thank them for the solid foundation they built in our community.



Camrose Rotarians and their women attending their District Conference in Banff drew the attention of over 700 delegates Friday noon when they presented the luncheon meeting with a suggested Canadian flag. It had been noticed there were no flags in the banquet room, so the Camrose delegation went to work and produced one. It was paraded into the room during the afternoon. The flag was made by the Camrose High School. Lester Pearson's suggested flag, the Camrose offer was not completely acceptable. It was overshadowed in seconds by the Red Ensign and Rotary flags that were finally rushed into the banquet room. The Camrose flag carried that stripes at each end and the words "Camrose, Alberta" in the center. The name, "Camrose-Rose City" was also included. Mrs. Hamp Smith, left and Mrs. Jim Dabbs were the flagbearers while Elsie Owen, standing right, was club spokesperson. All 4 delegates from Camrose formed the chorus.

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