

Interview with Clarence Glasrud

Interviewed by Robert J. Loeffler for the Heritage Education Commission

Interviewed on February 8, 1985

Clarence Glasrud - CG

Robert J. Loeffler - RL

RL: This afternoon I am interviewing Dr. Clarence Glasrud, professor emeritus of Moorhead State University in Moorhead, Minnesota. This interview this afternoon with Dr. Glasrud concerns chiefly his association with the Moorhead Rotary as a service organization. This interview is held in the recording studios of the Audio-Visual Center of Moorhead State University.

Well, to start off, Dr. Glasrud, would you tell us something about the origin and the history of Rotary--when it was founded, by whom, and is it a local or a national organization?

CG: Rotary was founded in 1905 in Chicago by a gentleman named Paul Harris who thought there ought to be an association of businessmen from various businesses who could get together for social purposes; and it grew rather slowly at first, but by about 1915 or thereabouts, I suppose it must have had 20 or 30 or something like that clubs that had grown up in this area. Interestingly enough, it became international when the Duluth club brought in the Winnipeg club in this area. There have been other organizations like it since that time--the one closest to it is the Kiwanis club which I suppose we Rotarians consider an imitation; it's the same kind of a club. There are others, somewhat different, like the Lions; but the Kiwanis is very much like Rotary.

Rotary came to Moorhead in 1921. Now, I don't know the exact year that it came to Fargo. It was certainly a few years before, but not very much--some time, I would guess, between 1915 and 1921. There was a member of Fargo Rotary at that time--Norman Black, the publisher of The Fargo Forum--who was very enthusiastic and believed very strongly in the importance of Rotary and the value of Rotary, and he was instrumental in organizing a number of Rotary clubs in this area. I know, for instance, in Detroit Lakes, he was the organizer; and that happened in the very early 20s. In Moorhead, it was 1921; I think Detroit Lakes either 1921 or 1922.

RL: Fine. All right. Membership--who belongs, Dr. Glasrud, and how many, and what are membership requirements, and what is the status of women?

CG: The handbook says, "For active membership, each member shall be an adult male person of good character and good business or professional reputation." I've never faced up to the business of women members. I don't know the present status, and whether there is any activity in that direction. We do have women guests and women speakers sometimes, but women members--not so far.

But to go on about who should be an active member, the requirements say that each of these adult males "shall be engaged as proprietor, partner, corporate officer, or manager of any worthy and recognized business or profession. He should be a person holding an important position in an executive capacity with discretionary authority in any worthy and recognized business profession." Or he can be the acting or local agent or a branch representative of a business or profession. And he must be personally and actively engaged within the territorial limits of the business.

Now, you asked about the extent of it. Again, I don't know the figures. I would guess the international membership of Rotary will run into possibly millions by this time. There are, I think, 1600 Rotary clubs around the world. That's the last figure I remember. And it's gone around the world except behind the Iron Curtain, of course; they are not in Russia, but they are in India, for instance. I made up in Japan, when I was over there about two months ago, and I could have in India. There was a meeting in the hotel we stayed at in New Delhi, and I was tempted to go; but we were leaving the next day so I didn't attend.

I have noticed one important difference between the Rotary clubs in foreign places and in the United States. I made up in Rome one time, and practically all the memberships were very old; they take very seriously that qualification that Rotarians should be the proprietor or partner or corporate officer or manager. It seemed to me you had to be about 84 years old before you qualify for Rotary over there. In this country, we take that with a grain of salt; and as a matter of fact, the Moorhead Rotary at the present time is taking in a great many very young people, and I think that has been very good for the club; but they certainly are not the heads of their businesses.

There is one other thing that differentiates Rotary from Kiwanis or any other group and that is its classification system, which says "Each active member of this club shall be classified in accordance with his business or profession. The classification of each active member shall be that which covers the principal and recognized activity of the firm, company, or institution he's connected with; or if he be independently engaged in a business or profession, his classification shall be that which covers his principal and recognized business." Now, that meant that you couldn't have more than one jeweler, for instance, or more than one lawyer, or more than one person involved in the cleaning business. Now that, too, has been liberalized to some extent; and it wasn't one of the original requirements of Rotary, but I was told many years ago--maybe about 30 years ago when I first became a Rotarian--that Rochester, MN, was a horrible example that brought this into being because it turned out to be nothing more than an association of doctors of the Mayo Clinic. They were practically all MDs, and that destroyed the club and they started all over again with this classification system. Now, since then we have perhaps, in the Moorhead Rotary, six or eight or ten college people in the club. The Superintendent of Schools is there, but there are two or three or four members from Concordia and I think several more than that from Moorhead State; but you can break down the classification and say one is a college professor of English and one a college professor of science or something of that sort. By subdivisions, you can break it down.

One other thing--when I first became a Rotarian, the Kiefers, for instance, held the car dealership; and so that was passed on from Jake--he could take in another person in the club and he took in his eldest son, Jake, III. But it did exclude any other car dealer. That, too, has been liberalized; and now that doesn't hold any more. I don't know if there is any change in the international regulations or if the change has come about just because of the feeling of the people themselves. But I have noticed that has broken down; they do take in their competitors now. Originally, they did not. They could pass on; but once they had a classification, they hung on to it and they jealously guarded it.

RL: Well, Kiwanis has something similar, too, now; and it's made up of younger members, too, that they are trying to get.

Now something about purposes in the program. And I'll take these, I think, one by one.

What are the goals and purposes of Rotary?

CG: Well, one important one is to inculcate better international understanding; and they are very much concerned about that. They have a number of programs which encourage exchange between countries. I think there are six people from this area being sent over (I'm trying to think where to); they are not Rotarians, but they are fairly young people being sent over to another country where they are taken in charge by Rotarians over there; and there are Rotary Foundation fellowships which are very desirable and very lucrative. So there is a great deal of competition for those. They pay very well. There is a Rotary Foundation which supports that kind of thing. Some years ago the exchange between the Rotary Club of Moorhead and the Rotary Club in the north of England, around Durham and Newcastle--our Rotarians went over there and their Rotarians came over here, quite a large number of them. They'd be put up in houses of the members and entertained quite lavishly. There is a good deal of that kind of thing. There are more programs, but they've become very extensive.

One thing that made my visit to the Rotary club of Narra in Japan more interesting was that I was placed at a table with three young people--one was a boy from Brazil (I think of Japanese parentage or grandparents anyway), a girl from in Canada (somewheres up in Ontario--one of the smaller towns up near Ottawa), and a very charming girl from Australia (Queensland, northern Australia), and I enjoyed very much talking to her.

RL: Thank you. What services do you provide? I think the Rotary--I'm not sure if that's you.

CG: Rotary does not, like some service clubs, go out of its way to sponsor local things. It does have some things like, for instance, Rotary Career Day, which it takes very seriously. It seems to me it's due about now. It used to be held in November, and it was for many, many years. That's been going on for about twenty or thirty years, but each Rotarian is responsible for one of these classifications (by classification I mean one could deal, say, with newspaper work; another one with secretarial work; another one with college teaching; another one with automobile mechanics, or the military, and so on). The Rotarian has to

find someone in that profession who is qualified to speak about it and talk to the youngsters. That's taken very seriously. I think about thirty years ago a decision was made in the Moorhead Rotary at least that they would not go out and sell brooms or light bulbs or candy or anything of that sort. The members of Rotary would be too busy for that sort of thing. They would offer leadership in the community in all kinds of things. They were encouraged to participate in the United Fund Drives, very actively, but as far as the club carrying on that kind of activity, no. The Moorhead Rotary Club does give scholarships to students of Concordia and Moorhead State--students who want to enter Moorhead and Concordia and I think the Tech School also. The money for that comes from some of the horseplay of the club. They have a pig which is passed and you can be fined for almost anything--for not wearing a tie or for wearing a tie or for wearing the wrong kind of shirt or anything like that, or if you get your name in the paper, you are heavily fined--that sort of thing.

RL: Similar to Kiwanis. Okay. Have the service goals changed over the years; and if so, in what way?

CG: I suppose they have, but I am not aware of any abrupt change. I'm sure they change with the times, but there hasn't been any rapid shift that I can see. It's been surprisingly consistent in the things that it stands for. And occasionally, in recent years, I know some Rotarians feel that we should offer more service to the community and so they have enlisted the help of the Rotary Anns, wives of Rotarians, and put on rummage sales and that sort of thing to raise more money. And the Rotary will give a large sum of money--several thousands of dollars if they have that much money on hand--to various good causes. I can remember when I first joined the Moorhead Rotary club St. Ansgar Hospital was just being built. There was an old St. Ansgar--an old brick building which was built in 1907 by the Swedish group that founded it; and we very badly needed a new hospital. The leadership of the drive for the building of St. Ansgar was financed by Rotarians. And I remember that we had some money saved up and that was all donated to the cause to get it off to a good start.

RL: You don't know how much money?

CG: No, I don't. It won't seem quite as much in today's sense, but it seemed quite a lot then--a few thousand dollars.

RL: Thank you. Now, let's see--finances. I guess maybe you've answered this partly. How have you funded your products and can you tell something about any of these fundraising efforts?

CG: As I say, Moorhead Rotary has not done very much fundraising--only periodically for the local scholarships, which are done by fines which are tied up with the horseplay in the club. But there is a thing called Rotary Foundation and Rotarians are encouraged to pay in extra beyond what their dues are. Part of the dues for Rotary membership goes to the Rotary International and goes to the Rotary Foundation. But beyond that Rotarians who can afford it are encouraged to become members of the Rotary Foundation and put in

extra money, and that goes to those large sums. But local projects, as I say, some members of Moorhead Rotary criticize the club for not doing more of that sort of thing; but I think some of the others feel that probably the members are too busy to give very much of their time to that kind of thing. As a matter of fact, I've always felt that one of the most valuable things that I've gotten out of Rotary, and I've been in about 30 years--maybe a little more, is that I've come to know the leaders and the professional and business leaders in the community which I probably would not know any other way. I would know the members in my own profession, certainly in my own college and some extent Concordia and NDSU, but I would not know the business people except that I go into their stores, or an MD, if I go into his office. But in Rotary you rub shoulders with a great many people in the community whom you would not have any contact with otherwise. And you establish relationships that you could not establish any other way. And, of course, we meet every week. Most clubs of this sort do. And attendance is required. If you do not attend--if you miss too many meetings--you can be eliminated from the club and people are.

RL: They are actually eliminated then.

CG: They can be eliminated, yes, if they miss too many meetings.

I have known some rather preposterous examples of people who have made up--now, you can make up by attending some other club; that is, if you have something that interferes with your meeting which is Tuesday noon for Moorhead Rotary, and you just can't make it, you can go to Fargo which meets Wednesday noon or West Fargo which meets Thursday or Friday noons. Now there's a new Rotary club out at West Acres. But I have known, I think it was Walter Grantham, who drove down to Detroit Lakes in a blizzard in order to make up Rotary. See, he had perfect attendance for so many years. There are some fantastic records. They don't want to break that.

RL: Thank you. Do you have dues, and do you seek or receive grants from any other agencies?

CG: I don't know of receiving any grants; I'm not aware of them. It could be Rotary International does, but we don't in Moorhead Rotary.

Yes, the dues cover both the luncheons and then a little beyond that. There are dues that go. There is a Rotary magazine, a good magazine, monthly. Part of it goes for that. Yes, the largest part of the dues go to paying for your meals; and beyond that, there is a certain portion of them that go quarterly to Rotary International to support their activities.

One interesting thing is that the Rotary handbook says that the club will meet at the best hotel in the city. Now, in Moorhead Rotary, that's not been true. Many years ago, they used to meet at the Comstock Hotel, which was no great shakes at that time. Now, when the F-M Hotel was built, just after World War II--it was finished about 40 years ago--there was a strong move to go to meet there; but the Rotary club had gotten in the habit of meeting at the Moorhead Country Club and they liked it. There was sort of a split in the club for awhile because some of the business people thought it would be very nice just to walk the

street to the F-M Hotel to a meeting, but the rest of us who had to drive anyway and there isn't sufficient parking down there, as long as we had to drive anyway, we'd much rather drive to the Country Club. We were so devoted to the Country Club that we'd beat down any attempts, so we were transgressing that requirement or that admonition of the Rotary handbook which said you would meet at the best hotel in town. [Laughter]

RL: As you talk, all I can think about is Kiwanis and really how similar they are today.

CG: Well, they are both very conscious of their status, of course.

RL: Did you say what the yearly dues are?

CG: Yearly? That depends on how much they are paying for their meals, and I can't tell you what it is now. I've been a senior active member for quite a long time because when you have been a member for something like 15 years (I forget what the exact time is), any active member of the club who now has been an active member of this or other clubs for a total of 15 years or more, who is of the age of 65 or more, after having been a member of one of our clubs so long, then you have a great many things that you don't have to live up to any longer. And Moorhead Rotary interprets that very broadly, so I attend when I wish and I pay for my meals as I go and I don't pay any attention to attendance. I want to attend and I want to make up. Now, technically, I think that shouldn't be. If I'm going to be a regular member, I should be required to attend regularly, but the interpretation here is since I'm a senior active, I can make my own rules about attending or not attending as I wish. Now, again, this is not compulsory, but of our own free will we do send in, in addition to that--in addition to paying for our meals--we do send a certain amount of money to Rotary International each year--\$100 a year--and I suspect that's about what active members pay. I can't tell you. That changes, of course, and has fluctuated. And just what it is now I can't say.

RL: Now, you meet weekly, and food is a part of your meetings and programs are also a part of your meetings. And what type of programs?

CG: Programs--I think most Rotarians are an essential part of it. There is also a certain amount of horseplay, not very much, but a little bit--the passing of the pig, for instance, and fines for various things, and kidding each other. And they sing some. I should have mentioned that. Any service club sings songs. They have their own songbooks, and some of the songs seem to an outsider extraordinarily silly--"R-o-t-a-r-y--That spells Rotary" and so on. But they also sing usual popular songs. And if the song leader is active, that can be very good. Some Rotary clubs are very good; some are not.

You were talking about the size of the clubs awhile back. That can vary a good deal--from about, I'd say, 20 people (if you have fewer than 20, I don't think you could organize a Rotary club) up to something like 500. Clubs like that are way too big. Big cities, however, usually have a number of clubs. I don't know how many there are in Minneapolis or St. Paul--I'm sure there must be a dozen in the two cities. But I've noticed in Paris or London, for instance, there would be four or five clubs in each city. To me, the ideal club would be

about between 50 and 100. Moorhead Rotary now is quite big--it's probably just over 100; but I've known it to be much closer to 50.

I have made up at various small clubs, and I've found clubs that are too small; it seems to me that they are just kind of a ragged edge--they don't really work; there are just too few people in the town.

RL: What kinds of programs, then, do you have?

CG: Oh, the programs. Well, the programs can vary a good deal, but nearly always it's a speaker. It can be just entertainment, but nearly always it's kind of semi-educational. They may have some state official or some local official or a doctor. Thinking about recent Rotary meetings, there was an eye specialist talking about new developments in eye surgery and so on. Or some military person might come in or someone telling about his travels. It can be almost anything, but something that has general interest, politically, culturally, or of broad general interest. I have discovered that there is a fairly high degree of political interest. If it gets too intricate or specialized or too partisan, I think there's some objection. I have discovered there is a pretty fair tolerance of cultural programs unless they get too cultural, and if they get too esoteric, there is a general objection to that.

RL: Do you ever go out for a meeting, say to Oak Grove, and the choir sings?

CG: Yes, that will happen. We have had meetings away from our regular meeting place. That may be connected with something else; for instance, if there are some renovations at our usual meeting place as there were this spring, we met at Concordia one time, Moorhead State one time, the Vo Tech School another time. For instance, I can remember one time the telephone office in Fargo when there was some massive rebuilding and we had our meeting over there. Or we might meet out at the National Guard and they would show us around out at Hector Airport; I can remember a meeting of that sort. And very, very occasionally, there would be joint meetings with another club in Fargo-Moorhead. That's more apt to happen with social evenings because there are about three or four or five parties a year. There is a Valentine party about now; I forget what the date is. I'm not signed up for it. There's a pre-Christmas party, the Valentine party; there's a fall party, and there's generally a golf party sometime in the summertime.

RL: Thank you. Now, leadership. Can you identify people who have played key roles in the program of your organization?

CG: Well, there are certain individuals who make better Rotarians than others, I suppose. Looking at Moorhead Rotary from its inception, it was organized by Fargo Rotary in 1921, as I mentioned, when a couple of Fargoans discovered there were 21 men in Moorhead who would be interested in organizing a club. One of them is still living and is still a member of the club, though he's out in California right now, and that is Jake Kiefer. Jake is getting close to 90 years old, but when he comes back he'll be attending some meetings of the club. And he's talked to us about the early days of Moorhead Rotary. The first President of the Moorhead Rotary club was a lawyer named Garfield Rustad, who was a rather flamboyant

trial lawyer and rather well known and almost notorious, perhaps. Interestingly enough, Oscar Martinson, who had a jewelry store in Moorhead, was the song leader for at least 20 years--the only song leader they ever had for about 20 or 30 years; and rather curiously, Moorhead Rotary had a woman, Mrs. Stan Cowan, who came in to play the piano. There wasn't any Moorhead Rotarian who was a pianist. Now, in the last 20 years, Wendell Buckley, of the Concordia faculty, has been a Rotarian and has played the piano for us; but for the first 30 years, Mrs. Stan Cowan came

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

in. Now, the Moorhead Rotary celebrated its 50th anniversary back in 1971 with a pretty good party at the Country Club. Like Kiwanis, too, there is an organization--it seems to me there are 40 or 50 clubs that are grouped together into our Rotary district. It goes as far as Duluth, takes in a couple of Winnipeg clubs--I mean Canadian clubs; it does not take in Winnipeg, which is a different district; but it does take in Thunder Bay and a couple of other clubs like that and then it takes in all of North Dakota and northern Minnesota. We've had two district governors from the Moorhead club--Jim Deems, who came to Moorhead in 1923 or 1924 as Manager of the new Fairmont Creamery that came into the community at that time and had a very considerable impact on the community, was the district governor of our Rotary district back in 1954. At the present time a Concordia professor named Dr. David Green, Professor of French, is our district governor. The district governor has to go around and visit every club in this district and speaks to them and checks up on them supposedly. These are the only two men who have ever been district governors from our club.

The kind of leadership--well, looking over that list of the original 21 people, there isn't hardly any sign of present-day businesses or professions in that list except for Jake Kiefer. Martinson Jewelry closed in connection with urban renewal; Martinson himself was dead, but the firm went on until about 10 or 15 years ago. W. W. Wallwork was one of the original--now his son, Bill Wallwork, still runs the firm but has moved over to Fargo about 20-some years ago. Hal Harris, I notice, had an implement and car business--automobile agency. Jack Lamb was one of the Lamb family--they were farmers, Democrats and Roman Catholics; and he was a bank president. The Lamb family, as far as I know, died out in Moorhead, though they played a very important role in Moorhead history for nearly a hundred years. The other names--there's Thornby, Rustness, Wheeler (who was a land dealer), Leo Kossick (who had what later on was a bar, but it was a pool hall earlier), Sam Field (who I think was the founder of the Palace Clothing Company. I don't see any others that are names, if you know Moorhead history, will mean something; but otherwise--one other, George Walker. I think Bob Walker is George Walker's grandson--he is a Rotarian at the present time. There were real estate dealers and architects.

RL: There haven't been any mayors that have come out of Rotary?

CG: Oh, yes, there have been a fair number of Moorhead mayors. I can't just offhand tell which ones were, but I know Slim Nemzek was a very prominent Rotarian, and he was mayor about 1948. Looking down the list, I'm trying to think which other ones were. We've

had a few individuals who have stayed on as mayors in Moorhead for a long, long time. There was one other--Frank Hollands was also mayor of Moorhead and he was a president of Rotary. Judge Byron Wilson was a Rotarian for a long time. Manny Marget was one of the most prominent of Moorhead Rotarians, for many, many years. He was very much devoted to Rotary. Martin Johnson, who is responsible for the F-M Hotel and named it after his son. I'm trying to think if there are any other Rotarians who have been mayors since then. Ah, yes, Thornley Wells was a Rotarian.

RL: Oh, yes, and he was involved with Clay County a few years, too.

CG: Yes, he was with the County, but he was mayor of Moorhead for a number of years. I think there were some others, but I just can't remember offhand just who they were. They were reasonably involved in politics and all that, but I don't remember any other mayors. Looking at the list of people, there have been members of the Legislature like Neil Wohlwend and who was the other one--I saw another one a little while ago--Clarence Evenson; he may have been mayor of Moorhead, too. It seems strange if he wasn't.

RL: He ran a grocery store, didn't he?

CG: Yes, for a great many years that was a fixture of the town.

RL: Well, Manny Marget must have really livened up your meetings.

CG: Oh, yes, he was a very important member of Rotary. Wayne Peterson, who was the owner of the Moorhead Daily News and published the Moorhead Daily News for many, many years, was a Rotarian. Slim Nemzek, as I mentioned, was a very prominent one. One other curiosity--we have one honorary Rotarian; and I don't believe there is any provision in Rotary bylaws for that. I've never examined them to be sure. But anyway, Dr. Joseph Knutson, who was President of Concordia for a quarter of a century, was made an honorary Rotarian about 20 to 30 years ago--a long time ago. Each club has had to come up with its own traditions, and one of the traditions of the Moorhead Rotary is that the meeting before Christmas we have Dr. Knutson come out to preach a Christmas sermon. Now, he's been doing that for a long, long time; and probably as an outgrowth of that, they made him an honorary Rotarian. When he was President of Concordia, he never attended except for that meeting; but now he does attend quite often. And he enjoys Moorhead Rotary very often. He lives near me and we often go out together so I'm very conscious of that. The present President of Concordia, Paul Dovre, is also a member of Rotary; but Joe Knutson, since his retirement, has found Rotary a very valuable contact.

RL: Well, Soc, I called to mind here when you were here at the University, how many Moorhead State staff were members of Rotary?

CG: Well, I'm trying to think. I see Samuel Bridges, who has a building named after him; he came to Moorhead in 1920 and was Professor of history, was President of Moorhead Rotary about 1928. Dr. Joseph Kise, who also has a building named after him, was a Moorhead Rotarian.

RL: What about Dr. Ballard?

CG: Ballard was not a Rotarian, as far as I know. He may have been a Kiwanian. I know the Presidents of Moorhead State tended to be Kiwanians back at that time. I know that Snarr was and before him, I think MacLean was; but after that, John Neumaier was a Rotarian. He had been President of the Hibbing Rotary Club when he was elected President of Moorhead State, and he was a rather stormy member of the Rotary club. He was much more liberal than most of our members, so he would often tangle with other members; but, of course, during the liberal era, there were some things of that sort. Roland Dille has never been a member of either Rotary or Kiwanis; he said he had a temptation to become a Kiwanian because his father-in-law, Mr. Huffman, was a Kiwanian; but he's never been a member of a service club probably because he is gone so much; he is out of town so much. At one time, we had about a half-dozen members. Joe Kise, as I said, was a very active Rotarian for many years; and Slim Nemzek who was on the MS faculty and a very important one, for about 20-some years from about 1920s until he went into the Army in World War II and after the Army he was very active in the club until his death. Roger Hamilton, of the Mass Communications Department, was chairman of it when it was founded and was for many years, a Rotarian. Jim Condell was a Rotarian, of the Psychology Department. And a number of others. At present, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Bill Jones, is a Rotarian; and Jerry Haukebo, who is involved in public relations, is also the President of the club. At one time there were no members of the faculty except myself, and I had retired. I went up to the college and told them this wouldn't do, that they could not [do this]. They had dropped out; there wasn't a single member of the MS faculty, and I thought that was very, very wrong; and they have changed their ways since then. Now there are three, four, five, or six again. And I know there are Concordians in both clubs.

RL: How does the community see the Rotary?

CG: Oh, I think they have a high respect for both Rotary and Kiwanis. I think it is regarded as an important sounding board for speakers, for instance. I think they value Rotary and Kiwanis. They are aware of the fact that most of the leadership in the community are members in those two clubs and, I think, to a lesser extent, in the Lions. The Lions is a slightly different kind of club. The Lions will get into many smaller towns and are a little different type.

RL: Has the organization changed as the community has changed and grown?

CG: Oh, yeah, when they began, they wore blazers--a kind of a uniform--the Moorhead Rotary. And they wore overseas caps with a Rotary emblem on it. There's a picture down at the Clay County Historical Society taken of Moorhead Rotary. One is of the very early years, and here they are with these rather ill-fitting jackets and overseas caps. Jake Kiefer tells me, too, that there was a good deal of horseplay. They played practical jokes on each other to a great extent; and the competition or the interplay between the Fargo and Moorhead clubs was quite considerable; and that would lead to horseplay. He told one time about a tug of war across the Red River and trying to pull each other into the river and

that kind of thing. In the 50th anniversary, they had this little note: "On the night of the charter presentation of the Moorhead Rotary club, the Fargo club, almost 100% strong, marched across the bridge over the Red River carrying torches and proceeded to the Comstock Hotel where the program took place. Norman B. Black sang 'The Bells of St. Mary's' and the tables were arranged as a wheel with a flowing fountain in the center. And Roy Baker, of the Fargo club, presented a charter, #970, dated May 1, 1921." That will give you some idea of the kind of thing it was in the early days.

RL: Thank you. Well, I think you have covered many of these questions already, Soc, but I'll read them through.

When did you join, and I'm sure you said that. Why did you join? I don't know if you told that.

CG: I was told by one of my friends that it would not do for me just to bottle myself up at the college. I had to be involved in the community; I had to know community people because one of the troubles with college faculty members is they just sort of talk to each other and they don't interplay with the community and if they don't interplay with the community, they don't have much impact on the community and the community doesn't have impact on them. Now I know faculty members who think that is all to the good, you know; they think a college should be as much like a monastery as possible and you shouldn't have these kinds of things. I don't agree with them. At first I was horrified by the silly songs we'd sing and the backslapping and name calling. One thing, for instance, and this is true of Kiwanis, I know, if you call a fellow Kiwanian or Rotarian by Mr. Loeffler, for instance, instead of Bob, you get fined. [Laughter] That's the same sort of thing. You've got to be on first-name, or ideally nickname, basis.

RL: Have you held office?

CG: Yeah, I've held all of them. I've been Secretary and Treasurer and Vice-President and President.

RL: When were you President?

CG: I think about 1968. I was supposed to be President in 1964 because I had been brought up through the ranks and was Vice-President. But I got a sabbatical and went to Europe the next year so I escaped [laughter] and got out of the progression, so they had to start over again. I think it was 1967-68 when I was President of Moorhead Rotary.

I also edited the weekly bulletin. I'm sure Kiwanis has one too. And that's an important aspect of Rotary. I edited that for at least 10 years.

RL: Very good. What aspect of the program has been most important to you?

CG: To me, quite frankly, it's the fellowship. The fact that I've gotten to know people in the community that I would only have known across the counter or in the doctor's or dentist's

office. I value that very, very much. I discovered, for instance, from the outside that some of these men have very good brains. An academic person is apt to think that a business person is not very smart because he doesn't have the same kind of know-how that he has; but I've discovered that from the outside, they look and sound alike. When you get to know them at Rotary, there is a great deal of difference. I noted, for instance, that Paul Cook, who was the City Clerk in Moorhead--there were only three City Clerks in Moorhead, I guess, up to the present time. Grant Price was Moorhead City Clerk from 1907 to about 1936, and I think that's when Paul Cook came in for about 30 years, and Ed Lacy since then. I think they are the only three we have ever had in nearly a hundred years--well, not quite that long, since 1907. But Paul Cook was a Civil War buff and he knew more Civil War history than any historian I've ever encountered.

RL: Is he still living?

CG: No. He had a son who was a member of Moorhead Rotary but he moved out of town. He was representing some large firm--NSP or Bell Telephone or something--and he was moved out of town. But Paul Cook came to Moorhead from Bismarck, North Dakota, and he died about 10 or 12 years ago--a very fine man. I valued his association. We talked Civil War history.

RL: Well, now, what event do you remember as being the most interesting?

CG: Well, some of the parties were really tremendous. They are really great parties. They don't mean as much to me anymore. But it may be just that my wife and I were new at Moorhead and then getting acquainted with these people. I remember one Thanksgiving party we won a 26-pound turkey [laughter]. We split it even and invited all our friends in, but it seems to me it took us all winter. It was a raffle. And I also remember that party when the English Rotarians [came], quite a lot of them, and we entertained them. We had to offer a toast to the Queen first--you had to offer a toast to the Queen before anybody lit a cigarette or drank coffee or something like that--I can't remember--it was before anyone sat down. There was some kind of protocol involved that I was involved in.

RL: What was the most humorous event?

CG: Humorous? That I can't think of. There were many, many humorous events, but one particular humorous event--I don't know that I can single any one event out. There really wasn't much horseplay anymore--of the old type, not the practical jokes that I'd heard about--but there was some baiting going on and it was always difficult to tell how serious they were. For instance, Joe Young, who was in charge of the Public Service Department, was constantly being baited by Manny Marget and I don't know really if there was bad blood between them or if it was just humorous. And I think between Slim Nemzek and Joe Young. Joe Young was a very thorny individual. One of the humorous things I remember--they used to have him sing "Little Liza Jane" and he had no voice at all--the voice of a bullfrog [laughter], but that was a tradition every time they would sing "Little Liza Jane" and Joe Young would sing the solo.

RL: What is the best illustration of the service you provide?

CG: Service that Rotary provides? Oh, I think the leadership and that St. Ansgar drive--that's the first of the big public drives in Moorhead that I was involved in; and I think the weight of the Moorhead Rotary club behind that was very important. Since then, I can't think of any one particular drive that has been a standout. They have gotten begin--what's that outfit that builds school buildings in Africa--Operation Bootstrap--we were much involved in that for awhile and contributed pretty generously. That one I remember. There must be some others, but they have just sort of slipped my mind.

RL: It is hard to remember everything. What is the most serious obstacle you have encountered as a group?

CG: Oh, I don't know.

RL: There probably weren't any.

CG: The business of the regular attendance which, if it is interpreted very strictly or held to that, I've sometimes found it rather onerous to be required to attend every Tuesday when I was very busy. And clubs have their ups and downs. And at the present time the Moorhead Rotary Club has an up--it has a very good group. They've brought in a lot of new members. There's been a great deal of turnover since I was an active member, but it can slide down and it can get in the doldrums.

RL: Well, the last question, then, is what has given you the most personal satisfaction?

CG: Well, there is no question there--it's learning to know a great many men in the community that I in no way would have gotten acquainted with at all in that way. And that's professional and business people like I illustrated the case of Paul Cook. I valued his friendship very much, and I would never, never have met him or Ing Stenerson, head of the Stenerson Lumber. Talk about mayors--that's another one. Ing Stenerson was a Rotarian and he was mayor of Moorhead; in fact, he could have been mayor of Moorhead forever if he would have wanted to. It took a long time to be able to persuade him to become mayor. He didn't want to, and he was enormously popular. He had to be drafted. I valued getting to know him very much.

RL: Thank you, Soc. Well, I guess this concludes the interview. Is there anything else that you would like to tell the people in the future about Rotary.

CG: Well, to someone from the outside, I suppose, a club like that--you know, it's sort of a figure. You talk about a Rotarian being kind of a stuffed shirt, solid citizen sort of thing. And there's something about that--taking yourself too seriously. And singing those songs. But the Rotarian spirit is the rah-rah-rah spirit. Yeah, you can pooh-pooh that; but it's contributed a good deal to this country and I think that the only way to see it in a different light is to become a member of such a club yourself and then you will see it. I've seen

former students of mine who were pretty insurgent 20 years ago are not fairly prominent Moorhead Rotarians.

RL: I've kind of noticed that with Kiwanis, too. The students today, at least, that I've observed and when I taught, didn't think too much of these service organizations--beneath them or something.

CG: No, they're to be pooh-poohed. They are absolutely the epitome of what they don't like about America. But when they get a little older and settle down and have responsibilities and become important people and have family support, it looks very different.

RL: Well, thank you very much, Dr. Glasrud.

[End of Interview]