

BOYS' CAMP

The Rotary Boys' Camp was the "brain child" of Rotarian Claude Rogers. It was his inspiration that suggested it, and his initiative that brought it into realization.

The story of the acquisition of the property is an interesting one. Claude knew that Mr. Samuel Bryson owned about three miles of shore line in Dummer Township on the East side of Clear Lake. He also knew that Mr. Bryson had refused to sell a foot of it for any purpose, but in Claude's mind it was an ideal location for the proposed Camp. At that time Mr. Bryson was over 80 years of age. Claude decided to interview him, so on October 19th, 1921, he and secretary Vin McElderry went to Mr. Bryson's home, and put the proposition of selling several acres of land to the Rotary Club for the purpose of building an "underprivileged boys' camp." At first he refused to sell but as Claude unfolded the story — the necessity of such a camp — of Rotary's willingness to build it without any thought of profit, of local contributions already promised, Mr. Bryson became inter-

ally, he agreed to sell, with the remark that it was a good deed he'd like to do before he died. The area was roughly staked out, 300 ft. frontage on Clear Lake by 1500 ft. in depth. Then, what about price? Claude suggested \$500.00 would be a reasonable amount, but the old gentleman said "Oh, No, No, half of that for what you are going to do with it." This was agreed upon, and a deposit of \$50.00 paid. So the beautiful property on which the Camp now stands was acquired for \$250.00. Subsequently a small additional purchase amounting to \$100.00 was made in order to clean up the boundaries. ●

The actual building operations started on May 27th, 1922. The Stoney Lake Navigation Co., and the J. E. A. Fitzgerald Co. brought up scows loaded with lumber and supplies right to the Camp site, where a number of Rotarians unloaded it. Rotarian A. L. Killaly took charge of this work assisted by Rotarians Jack McHardy, G. A. Wood, C. H. Rogers, Fred L. Roy, and others whose names have not been recorded. Rotarian Tom Ephgrave came up the same day with four carpenters. The main building and one bunk house were up by June 22nd, and the first Rotary Camp picnic was held with 100 Rotarians and guests present.

The Camp opened with about 40 boys in July, 1922. While Rotary financed and built the Camp, pledge cards were sent out to the citizens in general, and numerous contributions were received from non-Rotarians. For the first three years of its operation the Camp was self-sustaining so far as food was concerned. Bread, butter, meat, milk and general supplies were all donated to Rotary by the merchants and citizens of Peterborough. Rotarians Jim Juby and E. Bruce Fowler were indefatigable in their efforts to collect the food. They personally solicited and collected this food from Wholesalers in case lots and from retailers in smaller quantities. This was delivered to Peterborough Milk Products and Rotarian George Gillespie assumed the responsibility of its delivery through their trucks to the Camp.

The Rotary Annes contributed largely from their funds for kitchen equipment, dishes, curtains, etc. They also purchased a motor boat and had the fireplace constructed. Herb Mowatt, first Camp Director, was followed by Capt. Doug. Loomis, M.C., as Camp Father, and Mrs. Loomis as Camp Mother. They were responsible for the success of the Camp to a very large degree. Their son Bill Loomis, is literally a Rotary baby for he was born at the Camp. This Camp is another important Rotary activity on which more could be told, but either records were not kept or are not available. Not one fatal accident occurred during all the years the Camp has been in operation, which is a great tribute to the supervisors, first Herb Mowatt, and then for many years, Doug Loomis.