

John Albert Kelly

December 5, 1913 - June 7, 2008



Rotary Club of Stettler 1960 - 1984

Rotary Club of Calgary South June 7, 1985 - June 7, 2008

John Kelly, our Friend and **"Unique Rotarian"** passed away on Saturday June 7 in his 95th year. John leaves his wife of 60 years Ione, daughter Amy, sons Jack, Dale and Ron, scores of friends and Rotarians to remember a wonderful man who led a full and rich life of Service above Self.

John was born in Calgary on December 5, 1913 to pioneer electrical engineer George Edmund "Pop" Kelly and his wife Amy. He was born deaf as was his brother Edmund. He attended a special School for the Deaf in Winnipeg before returning to Calgary to become the first deaf student to enroll at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) to study carpentry and metal working; skills that served him well all his active life. John was the founding President of the Calgary Association of the Deaf.

In 1938 brothers John and Edmund Kelly moved to Stettler, Alberta to start farming operations on a half-section of land purchased by their visionary father Pop Kelly. The farm proved very successful, at its peak producing 97,000 dozen eggs annually from a poultry flock of 9,000 layers, pullets and chicks. The Kelly brothers supplied all the local markets and many direct customers in the Stettler area with eggs.

John married Ione Knaus from Sinnett, Saskatchewan in June, 1948. Ione was a wonderful mother and homemaker whose deafness only heightened her dedication to her family and community.

In 1960 John joined the Rotary Club of Stettler; the beginning of a forty-six year commitment to serving His Community and helping others less fortunate. He served as Club Treasurer for six years and with Ione participated in all the Club's activities. John was proud of his 23 years of perfect attendance. When daughter Amy was in Grade 10 she started signing for her father at the Club's regular meetings. Amy was made an Honorary Member of the Club in recognition of her Service.

John and Ione retired in 1984 and relocated to Calgary where John continued his Rotary Service with the Rotary Club of Calgary South. He served on the House Committee, Registration desk and as one of our famous Greeters. He was a natural meeting people with his always present infectious smile and Santa-like sparkle in his eyes. John enjoyed Rotary and life was good! He was a Paul Harris Fellow and was recognized by his Rotary peers as our Club's Distinguished Rotarian for 2000. Although he couldn't hear it, he certainly felt it when his recognition was celebrated with one of the longest Standing Ovations in the Club's history.

John and Ione attended the Rotary International Convention in Birmingham, England in 1984, adding visits to Denmark, Sweden and Norway to their itinerary. They also attended the 1990 Convention in Portland, Oregon, enjoying the bus trip with fellow Rotarians from Southern Alberta.

We'll miss John 's woodcrafts at the Annual New Members Auction, and his enthusiasm at our Dream Home Project. He was always a leading ticket seller, attracting attention with his hand clapping and sealing the deal with his wonderful smile.

Rest in Peace John, you've been a true inspiration to all of us fortunate enough to have known you. *(written by Mel Gray)*



John selling Dream Home tickets at the Stampede



New Members Auction April 2008