

There is nothing more evocative than the first-person voice in the telling of history's stories. Harold Chapman's memoirs about the progressive legacy of co-operatives in Saskatchewan lend the subject an air of authority. His accounts of the people who dedicated their lives to the development of co-operatives in the province make this history personal, helping the reader to feel connected to the principles and practice of co-operation. The biggest lesson Chapman teaches us is the importance of education in achieving and maintaining co-operatives. This is especially true for agricultural co-operatives, as farmers have to learn to surrender at least some of their individualism in order to reap the rewards of economic enterprise through co-operation.

Joan Champ, Executive Director  
Western Development Museum

Here is a book by Harold Chapman filled with hope and enthusiasm. It is a memoir by an accomplished and well-positioned co-op leader with a sincere conviction that co-op member and leader development, i.e., co-op education, including about the Rochdale principles, is crucial to the generational survival of co-ops.

Bob Stirling, Professor Emeritus  
University of Regina

Today's young activists and change-makers, fighting to reclaim their histories in an age of mass amnesia, will find a powerful ally in these pages, which show how we've built a co-operative commonwealth in the past, and how we can do so again.

Dave Oswald Mitchell, editor



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Sharing My Life

Building the Co-operative Movement



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Harold E. Chapman

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Harold Chapman with great granddaughter Arden Mary Hagel of Calgary, a month before her fourth birthday.

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Harold E. Chapman

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Harold Chapman  
1204 1825 McKercher Drive  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7H 5N5

Centre for the Study of Co-operatives  
101 Diefenbaker Place  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon, SK, S7N 5B8  
Phone: 306-966-8509 / Fax: 306-966-8517  
Email: [coop.studies@usask.ca](mailto:coop.studies@usask.ca)  
Website: [www.usaskstudies.coop](http://www.usaskstudies.coop)

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*Dedicated to my father and mother,  
William and Gertrude (Barker) Chapman,  
without whose early guidance and their genes  
this book would not have been written.*





# Community Foreword

*By Don Kossick*

Harold Chapman's *Sharing My Life: Building the Co-operative Movement* is a must-read for anyone who wants to know more about the roots of co-operative enterprise and development.

Written from his experience as a co-operative organizer, thinker, policy maker, educator and activist over seven decades, Harold Chapman brings alive the history of how co-operatives have been — and can be — a vital part of the economy and of community economic and social development. The book is a road map to understanding the history and practice of the co-operative movement.

His vivid description of his own life, and how that life experience melded with building a co-operative commonwealth worldview, is an inspiration to all of us.

Harold reaches across the generations to show what can be accomplished by people dedicated to a co-operative society for all.

Harold offers several cautionary tales of the pitfalls of falling away from a co-operative ethic and practice. One of the best examples is how the prairie wheat pools went from being the largest farmer producer co-operatives in the world to private transnational corporations. What happened? How did it happen?

The answers can be found in Harold Chapman's elucidation of the importance of education and action for each succeeding generation.

One of the most compelling parts of Harold's book is the importance he gives to informal adult education and human development. He stresses the absolute necessity of education and awareness building amongst co-operative members and civil society in order to foster an active and informed membership and citizenship.

Harold also traces the threads of internationalism and co-operative solidarity that were a part of the co-operative education programming that he inspired and managed. Those exchanges of the 1960s

and 1970s directly built the base for Canada's civil society role in aid and development.

Most importantly, *Sharing My Life: Building the Co-operative Movement* is a memoir written to help others think, understand and practice co-operativism. It is a major contribution to an alternative view of how citizens can manage their economy and their society in a co-operative way, where people come before profits, and where the social ethic shapes the economic model.

*Sharing My Life: Building the Co-operative Movement* is truly a bridge between generations, and an important tool for anyone concerned with building a society that serves everyone.

# Academic Foreword

By Lou Hammond Ketilson

Harold Chapman's *Sharing My Life: Building the Co-operative Movement* provides significant evidence that co-operative education consistent with their roots is critical to the survival and success of co-operatives. From the creation of the first retail co-operatives in Rochdale, England, to today, co-operative developers have emphasized repeatedly that member and staff education in co-operative values and principles is central to member loyalty and the longevity of the organization. Increasing and maintaining public awareness regarding the distinctiveness of the co-op model is equally important. Unfortunately, the term "co-operative education" has been usurped by others who, in embracing the importance of experiential learning, have transformed the word "co-op" into an adjective — and even a verb in some cases — blurring its meaning and stealing, in some ways, the niche that co-operatives have occupied and enjoyed regarding education.

As the fifth of the seven internationally embraced co-operative principles, education has long been advocated to ensure a clear and consistent understanding of the nature and benefits of co-operation and what it means to be a co-operative. Organizations such as the Association of Cooperative Educators have made it their mission to communicate ideas that strengthen co-operatives and enhance co-operative development across sectors and national borders. Harold himself was instrumental in creating and leading this organization.

Co-operative education as practised and advocated in *Sharing My Life: Building the Co-operative Movement* is essential to answering a question passionately debated by co-operators: what does it matter how a co-operative is defined or understood? There is an important lesson for all co-operators in the pervasive acceptance of Yale lawyer and economist Henry Hansmann's assertion in *The Ownership of Enterprise* that all organizations — even investor-owned firms

— are co-operatives. This view threatens the distinctive identity of co-operatives, creates confusion for policy makers, and undermines the understanding of co-operatives as organizations that successfully redress inequities created by capitalist approaches to wealth creation and distribution. His argument reduces co-operatives to the lowest common denominator of an enterprise defined by ownership, without recognizing the important impact of democratic decision making and control. In the absence of ongoing co-op education, views such as Hansmann's begin to prevail, creating a loss of understanding in subsequent generations as to why it matters that co-ops are different and in what ways. Members become customers, staff become employees, and demutualization is a likely outcome.

In today's world of YouTube and reality television, it is easy to believe that formal co-operative education is unnecessary. *Sharing My Life: Building the Co-operative Movement* reminds us why this is not true. Co-operative education is multifaceted, with many actors holding responsibility. It is needed in the K–12 curriculum as much as at the university level, and universities cannot do it alone. The sector must also be involved and be as committed in their words and actions as they are in their funding to universities and other postsecondary institutions.

Through his writing and his life-long dedication to co-operative education, Harold Chapman is our conscience in this regard, and in writing this book he has made an important contribution to the long-term sustainability of the co-operative movement.

# Preface

Throughout my working years, I experienced widespread commitment to the principles of co-operative education and development. Saskatchewan was known as the banner co-operative province in Canada. This commitment was manifest in countless institutions and organizations including the Saskatchewan Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development, the field staff of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Women's Guild, the Co-operative Institute, the Co-operative College, the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society, the Saskatchewan Credit Union League, Federated Co-operatives Limited, along with the Extension Department of the University of Saskatchewan and others. All gave unified support to co-operative education and development, resulting in a high level of co-operative understanding and activity.

Since the 1970s in particular, this has changed. Although I recognize the important work being done by the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association and the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan, I do not see the unity of support for co-operative education and development that I experienced in previous decades. It was J. J. Siemens of Altona, Manitoba, who first introduced me to the warning of Peter Manniche, the Danish Folk School leader, that "the natural life of a co-operative without an education program is a generation and a half." I feel this is as true now as ever.

Over the years, I was influenced by many people who had a strong co-operative philosophy. These included Barney Arnason, Lewie Lloyd, Harry Fowler, Lorne Dietrick and Wilf McLeod. I summarize this philosophy as having faith that people have the ability to set up and operate organizations to meet their needs and solve their problems. I soon recognized that the application of the philosophy required member education and training for directors and managers.

Recognizing that co-operative members, directors and managers

were adults with varying amounts of education and experience, and so required precise and innovative teaching methods, the staff of the Co-operative College and I worked to develop our own understanding of how adults learn. From this grew a series of courses for people responsible for training and for member education in co-operatives. Field men, directors and managers took the courses and earned certificates in co-operative education.

Neither this program nor the training program for directors and managers of co-operatives, previously conducted by the Co-operative College, still exist.

In the meantime, directors of co-operatives continue to carry the responsibility of educating members, but often lack the resources, know-how and support to meet this responsibility.

My experience with co-operative development and adult education, and my commitment to the belief that people working together can control their own destiny, motivate me to take up my pen and go to work on my memoirs. It is my hope that my account can serve the co-operative movement and inspire those committed to the practice of co-operative social change.

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less travelled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

– Robert Frost, *The Road not Taken*

## Chapter One

# Early Influences

**M**y father, William (Will) Chapman, was born in 1888 on a farm near Thomasburg, Ontario, of United Empire Loyalist heritage. When Will was ten, in 1899, his parents and my grandparents, John and Alice Chapman, moved the family west to homestead near Kisbey, Saskatchewan. Dad missed two years of schooling before a school was built in the district. Later, at eighteen years of age, he spent a winter at Brandon College in general education, but returned to farming in Kisbey with his father. In 1912, my father's family sold the successful farm and bought a general store in Lashburn, Saskatchewan.

My mother's parents, Aaron and Catherine Barker, were raised near Pine Dale, Ontario. They came west to Hartney, Manitoba, in 1892, when my mother, Gertrude Barker, was a year old. In 1903, they moved to Kisbey, where her father and older brother homesteaded.

Gertrude was the second youngest in a family of six. She and my father both attended the local public school and church near Kisbey. Her family moved to Arcola, the neighbouring town, in about 1906, to facilitate the children attending high school, leaving the oldest son, Wilbur, on the farm. Her father became a piano salesman. They lived in a large house that was featured in a film adaptation of W. O. Mitchell's *Who Has Seen the Wind* that was filmed in Arcola. It was here that my father courted my mother.





William and Gertrude ( Barker) Chapman,  
married in Arcola, SK, January 1, 1914.

Mother began attending Normal School in Regina in 1910, and later witnessed the Regina Cyclone in 1912. She taught school for several years before marrying Will Chapman, my father, on January 1, 1914.

They had a happy life in Lashburn, participating in the church, sports, and the social life of the community. Their first child, my older brother Jack, was born in 1915. Dad was an outgoing person who enjoyed his work in the store and the community. However, because of my grandfather's poor health, Dad traded the store in the fall of 1916 for a one-and-a-half section farm located about ten miles southeast of Saskatoon. He farmed with his father and operated the farm as a partnership called *J. A. Chapman and Son*.

~

The move to the farm near Saskatoon led to many years of hardship for my parents, in particular my mother. She had lived in town, in relative ease, up to that time. The first shock and disappointment was a fire that destroyed their home in November 1916, shortly after the house had been moved to the farm. The only items that were saved were their piano, a wedding present from the Barkers, and a

china cabinet full of fancy dishes. All family pictures and remembrances, as well as furniture and clothing, were lost. They spent the winter in a renovated chicken house nearby, until a bungalow could be moved from Saskatoon in the spring. We lived in that bungalow until 1927.

I was the second eldest after my brother Jack. I was born in the spring of 1917, followed by Gladys in 1919, Earl in 1923, Charlie in 1925, Bill in 1927, and Alice in 1933. I remember Dad telling Jack and me that our ten baby pigs from a brood sow would be raised to pay the doctor's bill for baby Alice's birth. Incidentally, I was born in the Saskatoon City Hospital, but due to the high cost of medical care my siblings were all born in my grandparents' home in Saskatoon.

At the time Dad bought the farm there were no soil surveys. It turned out to be on a sandy loam soil, whereas just a few miles to the east, the soil was a productive clay loam. We had good crops when there was plenty of rain, but also many crop failures due to drought, grasshoppers, hail and frost.

Mother and Dad raised a large garden each year and had milk cows, pigs and chickens. Mother made butter from the cream each week. We had city customers and took produce to them every Saturday. My grandfather delivered the produce during the summer and my dad delivered it during the winter. Grandpa and grandma had rented a large house in Saskatoon when they left Lashburn. They kept a number of boarders, most of whom were university students.

I enjoyed life on the farm and helped with the farm work as I was able. I remember starting to milk cows when I was eight and driving four horses on the plough on Saturdays, when grandpa was in Saskatoon. I gradually began working with other implements, such as harrows and the hay rake. In 1930, when I was thirteen and my grandfather was eighty, we drove four-horse teams on the two eight-foot binders and cut the crop of about 500 acres. I also enjoyed riding horseback, which was required for herding cattle and getting the mail from our mailbox a mile away.

By 1927, our family had grown to six children, which was too much for the bungalow in which we'd lived for a decade. That summer, Dad arranged to have two two-story houses moved onto a cement basement that he had constructed. A carpenter, hired for the summer, put the two houses together to form an L-shape with plenty of room for the family. It was also large enough to accommodate community socials.

Dad sold the bungalow and it was moved back to Saskatoon. Mr. Grummett, the building mover, used four teams of two horses each to pull the load. I was ten years old and remember hauling the building blocks used to jack up the house in a wagon behind the moving bungalow.

Successive crop failures kept us from painting the new house or installing any modern facilities such as water, toilet or electric lights. Mother, who had lived in a modern home for years, managed over the years to raise her family without benefit of modern conveniences. A chamber pot under the bed, a pail in a cubbyhole under the stairs, and an outhouse about fifty yards from the door constituted our toilet facilities. For Saturday night baths we would place a metal portable tub in front of the kitchen stove. The bathing would start with the youngest and wind up with Dad.

I remember my Grandmother Chapman telling us an amusing story about a travelling preacher that could have applied to our situation. The preacher, the story went, arrived at a farmhouse in time for supper. After supper he was invited to stay for the night. Because of limited space, he was told he would have to sleep upstairs with their little boy. Not wanting to travel further that night, he accepted the invitation. When the preacher and the little boy were ready to get into bed, the preacher was impressed when the little boy got down on his knees on his side of the bed. Not to be outdone, the preacher knelt down on the other side of the bed.

The little boy looked up in some surprise. "What are you doing?"  
Said the minister, "I am doing what you are doing."

"Well," said the little boy, "Mom is going to be pretty mad at you, because there is only one pot under the bed!"

~

Mother and Dad had both been raised in, and were dedicated supporters of, the Methodist church. Our closest church was five miles away, a mile west of the Floral Siding, which had an elevator and a few houses. This church was open only during the summer months and was generally served by a student from St Andrew's College, the United Church seminary in Saskatoon. I was baptized in this church, attended Sunday school there, and joined the church at the age of fourteen. Dad was Sunday school superintendent for a

number of years. About that time, Mother started a junior choir, in which Jack, Gladys and I were members. Ever since then I have sung in choirs in the communities in which I have lived.

Without radio or TV, during those years our custom was to gather around the piano on Sunday evenings and sing old hymns. Mother played for us until Gladys had practiced enough that she could play the hymns on the piano. Over the years, a family chorus has always been part of the program at our family gatherings and celebrations.

In 1925, the United Church of Canada was formed, which meant the merger of the local Presbyterian and Methodist churches. The decision was made to use the Methodist church building near Floral.

There was no basement in the Methodist church, so Sunday school was held at two pm in the church, followed by the service at three pm. Once when I was about seven, and very shy, I found the two hours, including a communion service, too long to sit. I still remember the look on the face of Mr. Musselman, the minister, as he passed the communion elements in my row and noted a puddle under my seat.

We were regular church attendees. I remember one year that we did not drive the car for lack of money, travelling the five miles



Floral Church, Methodist until 1925 and United until closed in the mid 70s. Now owned and maintained by the Floral Community Association.

by horse and buggy while my dad stayed home to look after the chores. I also remember one Sunday when my brother Jack and I went for a well-timed walk shortly before it was time to leave for church. When we returned, Mother and Gladys had left, but Mom had left instructions for Jack and me to be put to bed until she returned. Dad put us to bed but very shortly we persuaded him to let us get up. When Mother returned, we made sure we were back in bed.

Floral Church was a centre for social activities including fowl suppers and other events. This early church experience provided a spiritual base that has been with me all my life, including the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, the 23rd Psalm and the meaning of "love thy neighbour." Of course, regular attendance at church, teaching Sunday school, and participating on church boards and committees and in church activities has also helped me feel comfortable with my church. I do not enter into many arguments on church doctrine. The teachings about peace, love, concern for the less fortunate, and 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you' have given me a base for the practical application of my faith in co-operatives, in charities, in community involvement and in political activity.

~



Melness School, 12 miles southeast of Saskatoon, a typical one-room country school, attended by Harold from 1923 to 1932.

Melness School, two and a half miles away, was another centre of social activity for the community. Dad was on the Board of Trustees for a number of years. For several years, the adults in the district would produce a play. Dad was the director for at least two of the plays.

Dad and Mother took the children to the school dances. I remember attending my first dance at about ten years of age. I loved to dance and am amazed at how many people fit into that little schoolhouse. Often there were several sets of square dancers. I well remember the night a couple of carloads came from Saskatoon to one of the dances. They had been drinking. Dad and another trustee took them to task. I do not remember them coming back.

We had a school baseball team on which I was the catcher for several years. My interest in catching was encouraged by my dad, who caught for the Melness Seniors' team. John Schultz was the pitcher. We played at the annual Beaver Creek sports day. I am not sure we won many games, but we had fun.

I started school in Grade 1 in 1923. I did well in school and always enjoyed it. Mother's help and encouragement were always a positive influence. I enjoyed reading, and read all the books I could find. In each of the years there were from two to six students in each



Harold (12), Jack (14), and Gladys (10), 1929, at Melness School.

grade. I was to be the only student in grade seven, so I was advanced to grade eight.

Students I remember include Minnie Pfeifer, who was with me from Grades 1 to 6. Minnie was a good student and we took turns leading the class. Our hired man, who liked to tease me about Minnie, named a colt born on our farm after her. The Pfeifer family moved to Medstead in 1929. Minnie the horse lived to the ripe old age of twenty-two!

Grade 8 exams were written at Lone Star School, located about seven miles east of our farm. I rode horseback to that school each day, and did well on the exams. Incidentally, I was the first boy to pass Grade 8 at Melness School in over fifteen years. At that time, 1930, it was customary for boys to look forward to their fifteenth birthday, after which they could quit school to help on the farm.

The following year I took Grade 9 at Nutana Collegiate in Saskatoon. I would stay with my grandparents during the week and come home on Friday nights. I was shy in a class of city kids, but enjoyed the year. Memories include getting the top mark in a history exam. The teacher, Mr. Harvey, gave me special recognition. History was one of my favourite subjects thereafter. I was also recruited by Sid Buckwold, who was in Grade 10, to play football. Sid was later the Mayor of Saskatoon and a Canadian senator. I do not remember any of the games, perhaps because I went home to the farm for the weekends.

Though I was a good student, I didn't have a perfect record. I remember one day at noon hour, several of us boys returned early to the Collegiate, which was locked, and found that we could get up on a ledge and open the window into Room Three, my homeroom. I had just climbed through the window, followed by two other boys, when Mr. Cameron, the Principal, walked in the door. The other two were able to rapidly retreat, but I was trapped. Mr. Cameron took me into his office. He made some appropriate remarks and then got out the strap. He did not hit me many times. This was the only strapping I got throughout my school years.

By 1931, the depression had set in. This included low prices for farm products and a series of at least ten dry years. My parents could not afford to send me back to Nutana Collegiate, so we arranged for me to study Grade 10 by correspondence course, which I took at Melness School. The teacher, who was very helpful to me, was Dora Brown.

It was a good year for me. I enjoyed studying and both the teacher and my mother were encouraging and helpful. Gladys, Earl, Charlie and I attended school together. We travelled by horse and democrat in summer and team and sleigh in winter.

My teacher was a good sport and had played first base on a men's baseball team. She gave leadership in forming a girls' softball team that included my sister, Gladys. It played in a girls' softball league. Each team had a boy as catcher, who did not bat. I was recruited to be the catcher for the Melness team, so that spring I played in many ball games. I wrote the Grade 10 exams at Melness School. I did well, but with the depression deepening I had no choice but to drop out of school at the end of that year. This was a disappointment.

I enjoyed working on the farm, however, and my brother Jack and I had quite a good social life. We attended dances at neighbouring schools: Victor, Grasswood, Evansvale, and Clavet. Manny Hauch would provide the music on his piano accordion. The Kirkby Orchestra also performed at some of the dances. We enjoyed a variety of dances including one-step, two-step, waltzes, fox trots, Schottisches, polkas, French minuets and square dances. Money was scarce and the charge to attend dances was very low. Men paid twenty-five or fifty cents, and the ladies brought lunch, sandwiches or cake.

I remember a dance at Grasswood School in which the lunch was a box social. Each lady brought a box of lunch to be auctioned to the highest bidder at lunch time. I had twenty-five cents in my pocket. There was a young lady with whom I wanted to have lunch. I took note of which box was hers, and when her box came up for sale I bid fifteen cents. Another man bid twenty-five cents, meaning that the young lady lunched with him.

In the 1932–33 year, Gladys and I joined the Junior United Farmers Club at Grasswood, seven miles to the west. Mrs. Rose was the leader. I remember participating in a play and a debate, as well as a number of social evenings and dances. I remember that in the play I was supposed to kiss the girl who was my partner. My mother explained to me that I was just to pretend to kiss her. In most cases I followed my mother's advice!

Nineteen thirty-three was also the year I attended my first public meeting. Dad's brother Arthur, who by now was principal of the Kelowna High School, was visiting us. He agreed to speak at a meeting at Melness School. He spoke on behalf of the fledgling Co-operative



Commonwealth Federation (CCF), with whose philosophy he agreed. I have clear memories of one illustration he used, which related to the costs that went into producing a box of puffed wheat. He listed the groups involved and how much each received, ending with the farmers, who got the “puff.” I might say that this was a start for my interest in organizations established by people, especially co-operatives, to help give them a voice in decisions and improve their standard of living.

I mentioned earlier that our soil was a light, sandy loam. It was very productive when there was abundant rain, but when it was dry, the wind would lift the sand into the air. This was the period when the university advocated summerfallow. We summerfallowed about a third of the land each year by cultivating it, but leaving it unseeded. Ours was rolling land, with hills and hollows. With the onslaught of the dry thirties, shortly after seeding, the land would dry out, the wind would blow, and the sand would lift into the air. Russian thistles that got caught in the fences would become covered with sand. On the knolls, the seeds would be exposed and not germinate. For years, the land on the knolls was reseeded with oats for livestock feed. The house would also receive its share of the dust through windows and cracks in the doors.

Sloughs on each quarter section produced hay each year. This was cut and stacked for livestock feed. In 1933, it was very dry and the grain crops produced little straw. Our horses were turned out to pasture for the winter on prairie wool grass, which was a very nutritious food for them. We were short of straw and grain to feed the cows, which had to be fed in the barn, but managed to get through the winter. Many neighbours had to apply for relief from the municipality. That was not acceptable to my parents, so we somehow scraped by without it.

These were depression years, in which all farm families in the area experienced poverty. My family produced butter, eggs and other farm products which were sold each Saturday to regular customers in Saskatoon. This provided money for groceries, clothing and other necessary expenses. The cattle, pigs and chickens provided meat and the garden produced vegetables, so we were never hungry. Although we were able to stay off relief from the municipality, we didn't have finances for education, health services or extra clothing. We saw neighbours and friends become unemployed and

have to apply for handouts from the municipality or relatives. Many also had to do without health and dental services. In our case, any money that Jack and I earned went into the family purse. This experience helped me to understand the value of friends and neighbours working together to help each other.

~

I am sure my parents agonized for many weeks on the decision to leave our farm and community. However, by early 1934, the mortgage they'd taken out in 1916 was greater than at the start. In spite of repeated crop failures, the mortgage company added on the interest each year. Payments had been made in the few years when there were good crops, but the yearly interest only served to increase the principal.

Early in 1934, Dad travelled to Meskanaw, where Mother's sister and husband had moved in 1931. This was in the park belt of the province and had not experienced the drought. Dad put a down payment on a half section of Hudson's Bay land, with 30 acres under cultivation. The remainder of the land was covered with trees, poplar and willow. He returned to Saskatoon and signed a "Quit Claim Deed," thus surrendering title to the farm he had operated for eighteen years. I was sixteen years of age and Jack was eighteen. Gladys was in Grade 10 but gave up the year to help. We sold some horses and cattle to cover expenses, and prepared for the move.

Dad arranged for three box cars to be spotted at the Grasswood siding, three and a half miles west of our farm, on the first of April. We were fortunate that there was not much snow. We hauled machinery and equipment, including seed drill, cultivator, binder, hay rake, wagon, sleigh and other miscellaneous items, to the siding and dismantled them. We packed up dishes and furniture and took those to the siding. We then rolled up several miles of wire that was buried in the drifting sand and took that, too.

On the night of April 2, we took eleven horses and fifteen cattle, almost all of which were milk cows, to the siding. The horses were loaded in half of one car, and the cattle in the end of the second car. Machinery, furniture and some building supplies were in the ends of the two cars and in the third car, which was also being used by a neighbour moving to Meskanaw. The cars were loaded by midnight,

and at four o'clock in the morning on April 3, a freight train from Regina added our three cars. Dad, eight-year-old Charlie and I rode in the car with the horses.

The train travelled through Saskatoon to Warman and then on the line to Aberdeen and Wakaw, towards Melfort. The train stopped and shunted cars at each of the many stations. We would get off and greet the local people at each station. In the morning, we milked the ten cows and fed the calves. We also fed the cattle and horses.

We arrived at Meskanaw at four pm. Our cars were shunted to a side track which had a loading dock. We were met by my uncle, Luther Ross; my cousin, Stewart Ross; and my mother's second cousin's husband, Lawrence Reid. The horses and cattle were unloaded and herded the mile and a half to Reid's, where they stayed for about a month. One team was harnessed and hitched to a wagon to start transporting items that had been unloaded from the cars.

It took several days to unload the cars and transport the contents. Some of the furniture was temporarily housed with neighbours.

While we were travelling by train, Jack, Mother, Gladys, Earl, Bill and Alice left Saskatoon by car, a Chrysler, and drove to Meskanaw through Prince Albert, Birch Hills, Hagen and Kinistino. They spent the night with a family at Hagen and continued to Meskanaw the next day on the frozen sleigh roads. Dad and I stayed at the Reid's and looked after the horses and cattle. The rest of the family stayed with Mother's sister Louella Ross and family.

This was the end of our years in the Floral district of Saskatoon and the beginning of our experience at Meskanaw.

Years later, a committee on which I was treasurer prepared a book on the history of the Floral district. I asked Mother to help me write our family's contribution to the book. Her response was, "I cannot think of one happy memory of our time at Floral." Surprised, I reminded her of all the children she had while we were there. We got the story written, though it did emphasize the difficult years she had experienced, with little money, few conveniences and the many crop failures.

I will admit that as a young teenager, I was having a pretty good time at Floral. I did not recognize the difficulties my mother was experiencing.

## Chapter Two

# The Meskanaw Years

Once the rail cars were unloaded, we immediately started moving to our new farm, located three miles east of Meskanaw. The buildings on our half section consisted of a twenty-by-twenty foot granary covered with one layer of rough lumber, and a log barn about fifteen by twenty feet. Tar paper and another layer of lumber were tacked to the inside walls and ceiling of the granary, which, within a couple of weeks, became our new home – Dad, Mother and seven children.

It took us about two weeks to move the cattle and most of the horses to the new farm. Since the stable was very small, we kept the cattle in an open corral and brought them to the stable to be milked twice a day, until we'd built a larger log barn in October. Dad had to buy feed for the cattle and horses until early June, when there was sufficient pasture for them.

In the granary, which was our home for the summer, a 'master bedroom' was constructed in one corner. In this granary lived our family, consisting of Dad and Mother, seven children aged one to eighteen, and during the summer for two months, my grandfather and grandmother from Saskatoon and two cousins from Lashburn. Most of the beds consisted of mattresses put on the floor at night and piled on a bed during the day. My brother Jack and I slept in the barn for most of the summer. The cream separator filled one corner of the house, as we were milking about ten cows. These were the conditions under which Mother kept house until the middle of October.

Since there were only thirty acres under cultivation, Dad rented about 150 acres from the Traill sisters, who lived about two miles from our farm. We had ample machinery and horses to seed our own land and the rented land and also to help Lawrence Reid with his seeding. Jack and I did the field work while Dad looked after the multitude of chores and planning that had to be done.

As soon as we arrived, Earl, Grade 5, Charlie, Grade 3, and Bill, Grade 1, were enrolled in Galabank School, two and a half miles away. The teacher, Mr. Kitchen, was a gruff person. Bill, who was very shy, found the situation difficult. Gladys did not return to school until fall, when she repeated her Grade 10 by correspondence at Galabank School.

As was our tradition, we started to attend church almost immediately. We joined the United Church in Ethelton, where the Reverend Mr. Leitch was the minister. Jack, Gladys and I joined the choir. The younger boys went to Sunday school.

The church leader was Arthur Stevenson, whose family had homesteaded near Arcola and who had known the Chapmans and Barkers in the early days. Our cousin Stewart Ross, who was eighteen years old, immediately introduced Jack and me to dances being held at Ethelton and Meskanaw, so our social life in the community got underway very quickly.

Dad and Mother started immediately to plan for a permanent building site for a proper house. First we needed to find a source of good water. We dug the first well close by, by hand, but were not successful in finding water. Dad then engaged a well driller. His first well, drilled nearby, found water, but it was contaminated with alkali and was undrinkable by man or beast. Two other wells were drilled but none found suitable water. This was a major disappointment, as the drilling was using scarce money and, with fall approaching, we had to start building.

In the meantime, with Lawrence Reid's help, Dad bought building logs sufficient for a house, barn, and chicken house from a farmer living in the hills ten miles west of Meskanaw. The logs were about thirty-five feet long, had been felled by the farmer during the winter and were still lying in the bush. After seeding, about the first of June, we hauled the logs home. This was an interesting and challenging task. Dad, Jack, Lawrence Reid and I left early in the morning with four teams and wagons. The wagons had only the frame: front and back wheels and axles, connected with a 'reach.'

When we arrived at the bush, we found the trees lying where they had been dropped. We took one of the horses, pulling a logging chain, into the bush. The chain was fastened to the large end of a fallen tree and it was pulled out of the bush and placed beside a wagon. In the meantime, the front and back wheels of the wagon were extended out

about twenty feet. Lawrence Reid was very strong and we were amazed at how much he could lift, but still, it took all our united strength to load each log onto a wagon. Five logs were a load.

The trip home was an adventure in itself. The roads were slippery with rain and they had no gravel. There was a deep ravine we had to traverse three miles west of Meskanaw. We hitched two teams to each wagon in turn to get them up the hill. At home the logs were unloaded so that each was resting on lengths of wood, which held them off the ground so the bark could dry out. It took three trips to haul enough logs to build our house and barn. On one of the trips, two loads of logs were taken to Borsa's sawmill where a strip was sawn off two opposite sides of each log. These were to be used as floor joist for both the first and second floors. The logs were left to dry for a couple of months before being peeled in August.

In that first harvest in 1934, 900 bushels of wheat were harvested from the thirty acres we had seeded. This was more than our entire crop in 1933. There was also a good crop on the rented land. However, since these were depression years, the price was very low, so the cash received was meagre.

We found that the pasture for the cattle was also inadequate. Our land was mostly covered with trees, in which there was a lush growth of wild pea vine, but, we discovered, when the pea vine is grazed, it does not renew itself. We wound up herding the cattle onto the road allowance until after harvest. We were fortunate to have Earl, Charlie and Bill for this chore.

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With fall approaching, but still with no luck in finding water, we had to make a decision. Rather than moving near the spring which was a mile from the road, Father and Mother, after consulting with the family, decided to build near the road and haul our water from the nearest source.

The building site was staked out to provide for the house, barn, chicken house and granary. With the help of Lawrence Reid, who had built many log houses, Dad started to construct the house, which would be twenty by twenty-six feet in size, with two stories and a hipped roof.

We first dug out the soil for a basement. There was no money for cement, so it was a hole in the ground. We then used a horse to skid each log to the site. Two long logs about thirty feet each

were first put in place, with stones placed under them. Then the two end logs, about twenty-four feet long, were hauled into place. With axes, notches were cut into the side logs where the end log would be placed. Then the end logs were turned over and notches cut where they would be placed on the long logs. The planed logs were then notched and fastened in at two-foot intervals to hold the floor of the house. Rough flooring was laid on these logs. Then the next set of long logs was hauled into place. The larger logs were by no means dry, and so were very heavy. Each log in turn was notched and then fitted into place, a job that Dad and Lawrence handled, each taking an end of the log. Lawrence was a big, powerful man, and we were amazed at how he could lift the end of those big logs.

And so the house took shape: the logs were added one at a time until the walls stood eight feet high, then planed logs were again notched into place at two-foot intervals, and the second floor was laid down. Additional logs were then put into place on the sides until they were high enough to add the roof. The location of the doors and windows were then identified, the logs sawn, and the door and window casings nailed into place.

The next step was to add the roof. A hipped roof is designed to allow greater headroom over a larger area, with the rafters cut and spliced so the first section on each side goes up at a steep angle and the upper section levels off to the peak. With the number of people to live in the house, headspace was at a premium. Another neighbour, Bill Stonehouse, helped us get the proper cuts for the rafters.

The roof was then covered with unplaned lumber, tarpaper, and wooden shingles. Each end of the house was finished with smaller logs, fastened to the end rafters, and with window frames for two windows at each end.

With the logs all in place, the next job was chinking. This involved reducing the space between the logs by filling them with split pieces of smaller logs. The chinks were all nailed into place. To help hold the logs solidly in place, two iron rods were driven into each log. The rods were made out of the teeth from an old hay rake. These were straightened and cut into about fifteen-inch lengths by the local blacksmith.

Next came mudding. This involved filling the remaining gaps between the logs with a mud mixture. Dad hired Andrew and Mary Klupychuk, a Hungarian couple from about fifteen miles west of

Meskanaw, to direct this operation. They brought their little daughter, Mary, with them. I was deputized as a 'mudder-in-training' and their assistant.

Andrew and Mary selected a sandy clay loam. We hauled a load and dumped it close to the log house. Leaving a hollow in the centre, Andrew mixed water and soil together. I got on one of our horses and rode it around and around and back and forth to mix the mud. Andrew scattered straw over the mud and I continued riding the horse back and forth until the consistency satisfied our experts. Next we added a supply of horse manure that helped develop a smooth product. The mixing continued until Andrew was satisfied. For smaller quantities, Mary and I took off our shoes and socks and did the mixing with our own two feet.

Using two hands, we would pick up large chunks of mud and slap them on to the holes between the logs, smooth them out by hand, and then slap another chunk of mud next to it. This procedure went surprisingly fast, until the whole outside of the house was covered. The inside of the house was plastered in the same way, leaving a very smooth coat of plaster that was then left to dry.

In the meantime, construction continued. A partition was built ten feet from the south wall of the house. This created a combination kitchen and dining room ten by twenty feet in size, and a family living room that was sixteen by twenty feet. To give access to the basement, a trap door was installed in the kitchen floor. Stairs to the basement were built. The dirt basement provided cool storage for potatoes and other vegetables, sealers of fruit and processed meat, and anything not in regular use.

The upstairs was partitioned to provide four bedrooms, each approximately ten by ten feet in size. A six-by-eight-foot closet was built in which to store clothing and other spare items. The stairwell and small hall occupied the remainder of the space. The hipped roof provided plenty of headroom throughout the second floor.

After about a week, the house was painted inside and out with a whitewash thickened with some sandy soil. This finished the Klupychucks' contract. Now I was on my own for mudding the barn, chicken house and small granary, which were all built late in the fall.

In the meantime, a heater was constructed from a forty-five-gallon gasoline drum that was set up in the front room of the house, with stovepipes going through the roof. This stove took large logs,





Harold, Mother and Earl in front of the log house built in 1934.

which, cut into two-and-a-half-foot lengths, would hold a fire all night.

As soon as the windows and doors were installed and the whitewash had been applied, the furniture, much of which had been stored with neighbours, was moved in. This was early in November. With a great sigh of relief, Mother and the rest of the family moved into the house they were to occupy for the next twelve years. Dad often remarked that it was the warmest house in which he had ever lived.

The year 1934, brought an unusually mild fall, lasting into December. This was extremely fortunate for us, as an early winter would have been a disaster. As it was, it still took most of the winter for the logs and mud to dry.

With no success in finding good water, we had no choice but to haul water from a spring at the south end of our farm. As winter closed in, one of my jobs was to haul water for the family and the livestock in four wooden barrels with a team and sleigh each morning. This was a cold and icy job. The water was stored in the barn, as the barrels quickly froze if left out. The log barns were warm and comfortable for the horses and cattle.

A forest fire many years before had left many partially burned logs, about eighteen inches in diameter, around the property. As our

firewood supply dwindled it became a job for Jack and me to find the logs in the snow, bring them home with a horse and chain, and saw them with a cross-cut saw into blocks about twenty inches long for use in the stove.

Social life that winter included church and dances. I was also invited to participate in a two-hour play in Ethelton. An eighteen-year-old girl and I played the parts of Bobby and Dolly, two mischievous twelve-year-olds. It was a lot of fun and sparked a relationship that lasted a few years. The play was put on in Ethelton and in Beatty, ten miles away. Money was very scarce, so any thought of 'dates' was not feasible.

My older brother, Jack, had a natural aptitude for mechanics. On several occasions he obtained old engines and fairly quickly had them running. One of these provided the power for the saw that cut up our stove wood after our first year in the north.

My interest, meanwhile, was in the livestock. I worked closely with my dad to look after the horses and cattle over the years. Dad arranged for us to have a colt born each year. In the spring of 1935, a colt was born that we called Jim. It was soon found that he had a malady called joint evil. The treatment involved rubbing his joints with an ointment twice a day. I spent a lot of time with Jim and we became good friends. By late fall he had recovered from the malady. In the meantime, I had taught him to shake hands on command, a trick Jim never forgot. Years later, after Dad had sold Jim to a neighbour, I would see him in the pasture and go up to him and say, "shake hands." Up would come his great big hoof for me to shake!

In the spring of 1935, the Traill sisters decided to cultivate their own land with the help of a nephew. With seeding time upon us, we suddenly found ourselves with horses and equipment, but short of land to cultivate and seed.

Dad had bought a large wood-beam breaking plough with a twenty-two-inch mold-board, to be pulled by six horses. We cleared the small brush off an area adjacent to the thirty-acre field, and managed to break about ten acres in time to seed it to oats for livestock feed. During the summer, we cut and burned the trees from another area that was partially clear. I drove the six horses on the breaking plough to bring another twenty acres under cultivation. We were short of feed for the horses so would work a five-hour shift then turn them out to pasture.

That summer we were able to get a lease on a large area of hay land on the dry bed of the Water Hen Lake, about five miles away. Along with my uncle Luther Ross, my cousin Stewart, and Lawrence Reid and his son Bob, we spent two weeks putting up a large amount of hay for us all. We would bring food and sleep on the side of a haystack. It was my first experience with fleas. They would get under your belt and bite mercilessly. In the fall, after harvest, we transported the hay to our respective farms. This was a big help to our feed supply.

In 1935, Dad was able to contract with Mr. Boyd, who operated a general store in Ethelton, and who owned several quarters of farm land, to use our horses and equipment to seed and harvest some of this land. This paid for many of the groceries that we needed. Throughout our time in Meskanaw, we shipped cream to the Melfort Co-op Creamery. The cream cheques helped buy groceries and clothing.

My younger siblings continued with their schooling. From the fall of 1934 to the spring of 1937, Gladys completed Grade 10 by correspondence and Grades 11 and 12 at the high school in Ethelton. In the fall of 1937, she went to Normal School in Saskatoon. Our land was not in the Ethelton School District, so we had to pay a tuition fee of fifty dollars for each year we attended the high school. My younger brothers, Earl, Charlie and Bill, continued to attend Galabank School, which was moved to the centre of the district, a mile from our farm. As they grew, the young fellows became very helpful with chores, including bringing in the cows and milking. They were involved in picking wild raspberries from the large patch on the farm; these were traded for groceries. They also assisted in picking roots and stones.

In 1936, we cleared and broke about twenty acres of land at the south end of our half section. Some was grassland but mostly it was covered with trees. Jack and I grubbed out the trees while Dad drove the six horses on the breaking plough. After the land was broken, it was worked down with a root harrow. This was made of three large logs fastened to make a triangle, with a number of iron rods driven through the logs. Four horses pulled this harrow, which smoothed the rough breaking and tended to either loosen or bury the roots. This was followed by the tedious job of root picking. The roots were put in piles and later burned. In the spring, the land was disked and

seeded. The new breaking produced very good crops, but we continued to suffer from having too few acres in production.

That fall, at the age of nineteen, I was hired by our neighbour Mr. Foster Dexter for stooking and threshing on his large farm. In the middle of harvest I “played out” and lost my energy. I could get up in the morning and walk to the barn, but was able to do no work. The doctor prescribed medicine containing iron. Some thought it was a heart problem, but I think they would now call it mononucleosis. I was too weak to even be frustrated, but I gradually got my strength and energy back. This may have been one of the factors contributing to my decision to go back to school. In any case, I never felt any recurrence of this problem during my life.

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That winter I took part in another play at Ethelton to raise money to help build a community hall. They incorporated the hall as a co-operative, and I took out my first co-operative membership. I remember an older gentleman saying that the voting should be confined to those who would be putting up money, but the high school principal, John Mitchell, supported the idea of younger people being actively involved, as the community had a great need for a community centre. The hall was built and is still being used; one of the few buildings left in Ethelton.

My interest in and experience with co-operatives actually started much earlier. Dad had joined the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool when it was formed in 1924. I remember being with him when he and two neighbours had to shovel their wheat into a boxcar at the siding at Duro because the local agent for the Pioneer elevator would not ship it to the Pool for us. I was with Dad when he and other neighbours bought coal from the Grasswood Bulk Supplies Co-operative in the late 1920s, and unloaded it directly from the railway car into his wagon.

I also remember when the Canadian Wheat Board was formed in 1935. Dad explained that the price paid for wheat in the fall was low when he had to sell to pay taxes and other bills, whereas it was higher in the spring. This was to the advantage of grain companies who had bought the grain, or to others who were able to hold their grain until spring. These experiences helped stimulate my interest

in organizations through which people provided themselves with goods and services at a fair price, and thus improved their life circumstances.

Early in 1937, Dad arranged the purchase of another quarter section about one and one half miles to the north, with a few acres under cultivation and many bluffs of willow trees. Our energies that summer went into clearing the willows and breaking land on the new quarter section. This resulted in a significant addition to our acres of land. We also continued to contract field work for Mr. Boyd.

In the fall of 1937, with the encouragement of Mother and Principal John Mitchell, I started back to school after a five-year absence. I enrolled in Grade II at Ethelton High School, a one-room school with about thirty students. I was twenty years old, embarking on a six-year program, including four years of university. The depression was far from over. We paid the fifty dollar tuition fee each year with cordwood: twenty cords at two dollars and fifty cents each. My motivation for returning to school included the fact that I had done well in and enjoyed my studies. Also, the younger boys were growing up and helping with the chores. We did not have enough land to employ both Jack and me at home, so I found myself working as a hired man for neighbours.

That fall I had a job with a neighbour, Bill Radke, stooking and driving a team and pitching sheaves into his threshing machine. This was a major source of cash, so Mr. Mitchell gave me permission to continue harvesting until early October, a month late for the school year. I quickly caught up and had a good year.

A sad incident at that time was the death of my grandmother, Dad's mother, in Saskatoon, in mid December. She and Grandfather had spent the summers with us. She had been close throughout my growing years, a spunky person, prepared to give guidance to a growing boy and young man. After her death, Grandpa moved to Meskanaw to live with us. He continued to live in our home for eleven years until he passed away in 1948 at the age of ninety-seven. There were no nursing homes in those days.

In 1938, we cleared a further area of our land that was solidly covered with trees. In early summer, we hired a neighbour and friend, John Dexter, to break it. He had recently bought a caterpillar tractor and an iron breaking plough. More land was also broken on the quarter to the north with the six horses on the breaking plough.

We were finally getting enough acres of crop to make it worthwhile, while continuing to contract with Mr. Boyd.

In the fall of 1938, I again worked for Bill Radke, stooking and using one of our teams to haul and pitch sheaves into the threshing machine. Again I started school a month late and we paid the tuition with cord wood. My brother Earl enrolled in Ethelton High School that year in grade 9, so we travelled to school together. I was twenty-one years old. I had a good year in school and did well on the exams. This resulted in winning a fifty dollar provincial scholarship to the University of Saskatchewan for the fall of 1939. This paid much of my tuition fee for the first year.

That summer I worked for Doc Tyerman who owned several sections of land in the Ethelton and Melfort areas. He had his own horses and equipment, and hired men to farm his land. I contracted for twenty-five dollars per month for July and August.

I was now leaving home to attend university after living with the family for twenty-two years, with only short periods working in the community. We could be called a close-knit, harmonious family. Throughout the years I cannot remember Dad or Mother ever raising their voices in anger to each other or to the children. I cannot remember them imposing serious discipline, although I am sure there was some parental guidance. I do remember a pointed remark my mother made in response to a comment about what a great dancer my partner of the previous evening had been. "Life involves a lot more than dancing," she said. I remembered her words, but it did not change my love for dancing. Perhaps it helped to have ten to twelve cows to milk morning and night, and other chores as well, to remind me that life was not all romance.

When it was time to leave for Saskatoon to attend university, Dad took me to the train. We both had tears in our eyes when we said goodbye. My life at home had provided me with values and qualities that have guided me throughout my life.



Harold with Sam and Andy on the caboose in 1938. The caboose was built for comfort with a small stove to keep the occupants warm. It was a necessary way to travel during the winter months when roads were impassable for cars or trucks. We used this caboose to travel to school, local dances, and church.

## Chapter Three

# Wartime Studies

When I arrived in Saskatoon to begin my university studies, the Second World War had just broken out. The war cast a shadow over my studies throughout the three and a half years, as I knew I could be called on to enlist at any time if things took a dramatic turn for the worse. The male students in my class were continuously talking about the war. A number had enlisted at the end of the first year, and some would be war casualties before I graduated.

I enrolled in the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan. Mother had come to Saskatoon and arranged for my board, at twenty dollars per month, with George Martin, a cousin of my grandfather. Mother also helped buy my clothes for university, including the first suit I had ever owned. Until then my clothes had been hand-me-downs from my brother Jack.

Throughout the years, money had been very limited in my family. We had pooled any money made while working off-farm. This early experience prepared me well, as money continued to be scarce throughout my university years. Dad helped me when needed, but I knew the family was sacrificing to permit me to go to university, so I was very stringent with expenditures and took any opportunity to earn a few dollars.

There were seventy-one students in my class, including one girl, Betty Myrick, who got along well with the rest of the group. Most of the fellows had had their education interrupted by the Depression, so we were all in the same situation financially and had to economize to get by. I'm sure these experiences contributed to the unique fellowship maintained over the years that followed – a fellowship I will describe further in a later chapter.

I initially intended to specialize in field husbandry. This would qualify me for work on an Experimental Farm, which was the only agricultural employment I knew about at that time.



My classes in the first year consisted of English, Chemistry and Biology, as well as classes in Agricultural Engineering, Field Husbandry and Animal Husbandry. I enjoyed them all but it took a while to get used to the lecture method of teaching, and the multiple choice questions on exams. I had a shock when I failed the mid term exam in Biology in October. I was acutely aware of the sacrifice being made by Dad and Mother in sending me to University, and I did not want to let them down. I had no more problems and was pleased to win the First Year Scholarship for my class. This amounted to fifty dollars and helped give me incentive to continue for the second year.

I was joined at George Martin's in early October by our neighbour John Dexter, who had enrolled in the School of Agriculture's five-month program. He would later become my brother-in-law and, over the years, my best friend. During that first year we had very little spending money, but an active social life.

I started immediately to attend Third Avenue United Church. Mrs. Morrison greeted and welcomed me. My Grade 10 teacher, Dora Brown, was a member of the choir, and introduced me to the choir leader, Dr. Manly, who invited me to join. I sang with the Third Avenue United Church choir for my three-and-a-half years at university. Choir practice was Thursday night and we sang at both morning and evening Sunday services. Third Avenue United Church also had an active young people's group. We attended the meetings every Sunday night and made good friends there. Later I taught in the Sunday school for two years.

The College of Agriculture students held two formal dances each year. My first formal dance was held in Saskatoon's landmark Bessborough Hotel in mid November. I invited a young lady I had met at the church young people's group. She lived in the Presbyterian residence for ladies, located about five blocks from the Bessborough. When I arrived on foot to pick her up, my lack of social graces became fully apparent when my date for the evening came down in a long evening gown. It was a snowy, blustery evening and I had made no arrangements for transportation! I was extremely grateful when Doug Knowles, a graduate student who was also there picking up a date, bailed me out by inviting us to share the taxi he had ordered. From that shaky start my social education proceeded rapidly.

During the winter we found that the "Agros," as we were known, were very popular at parties held by the Normal School and by the

nurses in training at the Saskatoon City Hospital. I enjoyed the dancing and appreciated that these parties did not cost any money. Thank goodness such frivolous things as flowers were not expected! In most cases we walked or took the streetcar to the dances.

I spent the summer of 1940 on the farm, clearing more land at home and working for Doc Tyreman, before returning to Saskatoon in the fall of 1940 for the second year of my program.

During my second year I became acquainted with senior students who worked on the university's experimental plots. I applied for and was awarded a job with Dr. White, Head of the Dominion Forage Crops Lab. Work began the day after my last exam. A fellow worker was Alan Rugg of Elstow, with whom I rented a one-room suite and "bached." We had very poor living quarters for the first few months, before moving into a large house at 1018 Aird Street, with Mr. and Mrs. Norman Ferrier as our landlords. They were a fine couple and I stayed with them until I completed university. I bought a second-hand bicycle that spring which I rode to work and around the city.

In the Forage Crops Lab we worked with alfalfa, sweet clover, brome grass, crested wheat grass, and other hays and legumes. Graduate students were experimenting with crossbreeding to improve the quality of these varieties. Alan and I hoed weeds, operated a small cultivator, tied bags on flowers to prevent inadvertent crossbreeding, and other tasks. We worked from seven am to six pm, with an hour off for lunch. Our pay was eighty dollars per month. I earned almost enough to pay my way for my third year of studies.

In early July, 1941, I took a few days off to stand as best man at my brother Jack's wedding to school teacher Pauline Getz. They built a small house on the southwest quarter of section three of my parents' land and farmed with Dad and my younger brothers.

That fall I met the woman who would become my wife of 61 years, Mary Bonnett, from Palmer, in southern Saskatchewan. She, too, was caught in the drought and depression. As the eldest daughter in a family of ten, she had dropped out of school and moved out, doing housework on neighbouring farms and then in Saskatoon, where she started working at Eaton's. We got along well from the start. She had a lively sense of humour, enjoyed sports, was a good cook and a hard worker, and, like myself, really enjoyed dancing.

We met at the fall Student Christian Movement corn roast. Mary attended with my good friend Bill Baker. He was President of



Bill, Jack, Earl, Dad, Charlie, Mother, Harold and Gladys with Alice in front, 1941, the whole Chapman family.

the St. James Anglican Young People's and she was Vice President. During the winter of 1941–42 she attended a number of the agriculture student social activities. In the spring of 1942, while working on the forage crop plots, I joined the St. James Young People's softball team as catcher. Mary played first base. She was a very good ball player. I like to say that by end of the season I'd gotten to first base: Mary and I were going steady.

Mary was an excellent salesperson at Eaton's. Members of my family would always drop in to see her when they came to Saskatoon. I continued to have very little money, but Young People's activities at Third Avenue and St. James required very little. Theatre shows with tickets from Mary's landlord, who worked at a theatre, and jitney dances, done to the music of a nickelodeon, gave me more activity than I had time for.

I took every opportunity I could find during the school year to earn money. This included a half day each week with the Forage Crops Lab, working on the projects from the past summer. Other money-earners included herding cattle on Saturdays to the sales ring at the Western Livestock Yards and giving blood at ten dollars per pint.

Late in the winter of 1942, Alan Rugg married his long-time girlfriend Sybil Coffin of Colonsay, and moved out. I was then joined by Ralph Miner from Speers who was just finishing his fourth year in Agriculture. In the spring, Ralph got a job with the Feed Department of Federated Co-operatives in Saskatoon. Ralph and I became lifelong friends.



Mary and Harold, courting days.



University classmate and friend, Bill Baker, summer 1942.

In the summer of 1942, I returned to the Forage Crops Lab, though I increasingly began to feel I was in the wrong specialty. I had met and talked to students who were studying Farm Management, with an emphasis on Agricultural Economics. They were travelling, meeting with and surveying farmers. This appeared more in line with my interests than plant breeding, and so I changed my specialty to Farm Management in my fourth year, which meant that most of my classes were in Farm Management and Agricultural Economics, under Drs. Ernie Hope and Hadley Van Vliet.

I was able to take an extra class in Farm Management in place of writing a thesis. I had noted that some students had been held up from graduating in the spring because they had not completed their research and thesis. I wanted to avoid this fate, as I planned to graduate and join the army. Because I had been allowed to complete university, I felt it was my duty to join up when I graduated.

One of my Farm Management classes focused on co-operatives. This class would open a whole new area of interest and opportunity

for me when I was later recruited, following the war, by the Saskatchewan Department of Co-operatives established by the newly elected CCF government in 1944.

The summer of 1942 offered another challenge. The previous year, with Alan Rugg, I had joined the University Student Christian Movement, and became a member of the cabinet. Many of the members were students at St. Andrews College (United Church) and Emmanuel College (Anglican). I enjoyed the learning, discussions and challenges the experience presented, as well as the social interaction. Doug McMurtry had been elected president of the Student Christian Movement for 1942–43, though because of the war he was unable to serve his term. Doug was a conscientious objector. When conscription began in December 1941, he refused to sign up for military service, so the next summer he was conscripted for non-military service to begin in the fall of 1942. This meant he was unable to continue university.

I was working in the Forage Crops Lab's greenhouse in the summer of 1942 when Doug came to ask me to assume the role of president of the University Student Christian Movement. I thought about it, and with great reluctance said yes. I felt very inadequate for the role, but with the help of the secretary, Bill Clarke, I survived and learned a great deal. This role took quite a lot of time and I am sure it cut into my study time, but it also helped strengthen my confidence and build my skill in working with people.

I completed my studies for a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in the spring of 1943, but only after surviving a health scare. Near the end of March I visited my classmate and friend, Lawrence Iveson, who was sick with the mumps. I had no idea of the hazard. The day I was to start writing my exams, I was put in the emergency ward of the City Hospital with the mumps, where I stayed for ten days. Mary, who was now my fiancée, visited me through the window after work every day. Since I was going into the army, my professors gave me a mark for their classes based on my year's work. I was very appreciative, but regretted not writing the exams, as I felt I might have earned higher marks. I did well at university, and graduated with distinction.

I went home to Meskanaw to recuperate from the mumps. While there I picked roots and prepared twenty acres of newly broken land for seeding. I then seeded the crop with four horses on the

seed drill. That would be my last field work on the farm, for I was off to join the army. I was twenty-six and broke – this was my first full-time, paying job, as money from work off the farm had been placed in the family purse over the years, and money from the work on the university plots had gone directly to pay tuition and other expenses while attending university.



Harold Chapman graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (BSA) with Distinction in May 1943.



## Chapter Four

# Wartime Service

In the fall of 1940, I joined the university's Canadian Officer Training Corps (COTC). This involved military training for an evening each week, and a week of concentrated training at Dundurn Army Camp in the spring. I joined because it was widely expected that all able bodied students at the university would take military training. My friends all joined the COTC at that time. I was not aware of any who did not join until I found that those who hadn't had been forced to leave university.

The war in Europe was not going well for the Allies. The Germans had overrun the Allied troops in Europe and the retreat from Dunkirk had taken place. There was the threat of Britain being attacked at any time, so in the fall of 1941, conscription was brought in for all men of military age in Canada. For university students this involved joining the army but being given leave to complete their program. Conscientious objectors were conscripted to do non-military work such as building roads and work in the forest. Many of us were sympathetic with the conscientious objectors who were prepared to take an unpopular stand against war, though we felt it our duty to support the war effort.

I continued training in the Canadian Officer Training Corps one evening a week until the spring of 1942, when there was another week of training at Dundurn Camp. I also volunteered for a week of non-commissioned officer training. In the fall of 1942, I became a Sergeant in the Canadian Officer Training Corps with a platoon of thirty men to oversee.

Upon graduation in the spring of 1943, I was ready to join the army to begin my training as an officer, but because of the mumps, I was given several weeks for recuperation. In early June, I received the letter to report to the Recruitment Depot in Regina. I reported on June 10, joined by a number of my fellow Agriculture graduates, as



well as other University of Saskatchewan alumni. We were designated Provisional Second Lieutenants, and throughout our training received a number of perks, such as eating in the Officers' Mess. Since I didn't drink, the other officers had the benefit of using my liquor card. We were given white epaulettes to wear on the shoulders of our uniform to indicate our rank as provisional second lieutenants.

We quickly found that the army was well stocked with officers and that we would be trained as reserves until needed. Our first assignment was to Chilliwack, B.C., to what was called an Officer Training and Appraisal Centre. At the end of July, we were sent to the Basic Training Centre at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. After the six weeks of Basic Training we were dispersed to various centres for advanced training.

I had opted for the Reconnaissance Corps, and was sent to Dundurn for concentrated training. This included light army vehicles of all types and their weapons, radio, and map reading. We were able to take a bus to Saskatoon each Friday night, returning to the camp on Sunday evening. While in Saskatoon, Lawrence Iveson and I stayed at Mrs. Thorne's on Temperance Street.

At the time, Lawrence was courting her daughter, Sybil. Mrs. Thorne was a motherly person, and eager to give guidance. Lawrence and I both talked about our desire to go back to the farm after the war, but she strongly disagreed with this idea, saying we had been educated to give leadership in some aspect of Agriculture, and not to "waste" it by going back to the farm. Her husband had been a doctor in a small town and knew the desperate conditions on the farms during the depression. She also knew there was a need for technically trained people in the field of agriculture.

Soon after we arrived at Dundurn we met the Salvation Army Education Officer, Rev. Mr. Heffelfinger. He had heard about the young Agriculture graduates who had recently arrived in camp, and enquired about our interest in volunteering to teach courses for soldiers in the camp. I volunteered to teach about the Veterans' Land Act, which had recently been proclaimed. This gave me the opportunity to visit the VLA office, recently established in Saskatoon, and to become knowledgeable about this Act, which would play an important role in my later efforts to help veterans to form co-operative farms.

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On New Year's Eve 1942, my girlfriend and future wife Mary and I attended a Young People's Party at the First Baptist Church on 25th Street and 4th Avenue. After the party, the church burned to the ground, which was one of two reasons that it was a memorable night: I asked Mary to marry me that night and she accepted, even though my future was uncertain, as I could have been conscripted at any time.

Mary had not yet been to my home at Meskanaw nor met most of my family, so in mid May, on the Victoria Day long weekend, while I was recuperating from the mumps and with my deployment looming, she took the train to meet me in Ethelton where there was a dance. After the dance we went to my family home for the weekend.

There were four bedrooms upstairs, with very thin partitions between them. Mary slept in a room with my ten-year-old sister Alice. Grandfather slept in an adjoining room. He was stone deaf, and still lonesome for my grandmother. He would wake up in the night and break into some of the old Methodist hymns such as "When the Roll is Called up Yonder I'll be There"! Fortunately, Mary withstood the midnight hymns and did not drop me after the visit. My family was impressed with her. In addition to being beautiful and a good dancer, she was an excellent cook. This satisfied my mother, who had once admonished me, "There is more to married life than dancing!"

On my train trip to Regina to sign up for the army I had a stop-over of a few hours in Saskatoon. Though we had been engaged for several months, it was only then that I was able to give Mary an engagement ring – which she had paid for! It is still difficult to remember how broke I had been for so long.

In October, while I was at Dundurn, we decided to get married. At that time, people had the quaint idea that one had to be married before living together. Even though we had been engaged for many months, I had to request permission to marry from the Commanding Officer of the training camp. He interviewed me and said yes. I did not ask permission of Mary's father, for I had not met him – an oversight for which I think he forgave me.

We were married in St. James Anglican Church on November 27, 1943. Mary's friend Dorothy Holmland was bridesmaid. My best

man was my brother, Earl. He was too young at twenty to sign the certificate, so that was done by my friend, Bill Baker. My father and mother and several of my siblings came from Meskanaw and attended the wedding. None of Mary's family was able to attend. She was given away by a friend, Mr. Eastoe. Following the wedding we had a reception in the King George Hotel, attended by my family and many of our friends. Mary wore a beautiful white gown. I was in my officer's uniform, with its Sam Browne belt.



Harold Chapman and Mary Bonnett were married November 27, 1943.



Harold and Mary with his parents, William and Gertrude Chapman, at the wedding reception.

Later, the bridal party attended the Supper Dance at the Bessborough Hotel, where we spent our honeymoon. I made the error of inviting the group up to our room before going for dinner. When we returned after the dance, I found "Amateur Night" scribbled in lipstick on the bathroom mirror! The charge by the Bessborough was only five dollars per night for the two nights – I would not believe it now if I did not still have the receipt.

I was given an extra day as marriage leave, and reported back to Dundurn Camp on the Tuesday morning, a married man. Thereafter, other married soldiers and I whose wives lived in Saskatoon would take an old bus to Saskatoon on Friday evenings, and get up at four am on Monday morning to catch the bus back to camp for six o'clock.

I have always marveled at the chance Mary took in marrying a soldier, who expected almost at any time to be drafted overseas, with no guarantees for the future. However, it must be recognized that many soldiers came back with overseas brides and Mary did not want this to happen to us.

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In mid February 1944, we completed our Reconnaissance Corps training at Dundurn, and were sent to the Officers' Training Centre in Brockville, Ontario. There we took the training that qualified us as Second Lieutenants. We were joined at this time by a number of soldiers who had been overseas in the army for some time as non-commissioned officers. At first they showed some resentment towards the Provisional Second Lieutenants who had gone into the army direct from the university.

The officer overseeing our training designated me to be in charge of our platoon of about thirty. This involved marching them to training assignments and on some of the route marches. The training at Brockville repeated much of the training we had received before but was more intense, teaching us to instruct for drill and other subjects. In any case, it was a relief to be on our way towards completing our training.

Somewhat lonely after three weeks in Brockville, I persuaded Mary to give up her job at Eaton's and come to Brockville. I found a suite for Mary with a second cousin of my mother. The military camp was on the edge of the town, so I got many nights and weekends at home, always terrified that I would not make it back to camp for the six am reveille. On weekends, Mary and I had opportunities to visit a number of places in that beautiful area, including Kingston, Trenton and the Thousand Islands. We also visited Thomasburg, where my father and grandparents were born, and from which they had moved west only forty-five years earlier. We met Dad's first

cousins, Ernest Chapman in Brockville, and Charlie Chapman in Thomasburg, as well as Charlie's daughters Velma and Edna, with whom we later became well acquainted.

The training at Brockville was completed early in July 1944, at which point I took part in a graduation parade ceremony. We were now Second Lieutenants, with one pip on our epaulettes to replace the white badges we had worn for a year as Provisional Second Lieutenants.



Harold, in training at Brockville, Ontario, March 1944.

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Next we were shipped to Camp Borden, Ontario, for further training, now as Officers in the Armored Corps. Three Agro grads, Romey Androcovicz, Charlie Fawell and Lawrence Iveson, were still with me. The others were dispersed to other units of the army. Mary came with me and we found a suite with the Ness's in the town of Barry. This was about twelve miles from Camp Borden, with regular bus service. I got to go home each weekend. Mary quickly made friends with Mr. and Mrs. Ness and with other women living nearby whose husbands were training at Camp Borden.

Shortly after arriving at Camp Borden we were given two weeks leave in August 1944 – the first I had received since joining the army in June 1943. We travelled by train to Regina and by bus to Palmer, where I met Mary’s family for the first time. I am sure they were wondering about me, but I passed the test and we got along well. After a few days, we went to my home at Meskanaw. I had not seen my family since the wedding the previous November. When we left it was another sad farewell, as I was entering the last part of my officer training. I expected to leave for overseas as soon as it was completed.

In mid November, I was sent to Newmarket, Ontario, for the last part of my training, where I was to take a platoon of thirty new recruits through their basic training. I had with me Sergeant Comrie and Corporal McDonald, who were experienced in carrying out their job. I conducted some of the training myself, including drills and map reading, but much of it was carried out by Sergeant Comrie and Corporal McDonald. My work involved getting acquainted with the men, who were new recruits, and dealing with concerns and problems. I enjoyed working with the men, most of whom were eighteen or nineteen years old. I also took my turn as orderly officer every few days, inspecting the barracks and mess halls.



First Lieutenant Harold Chapman, officer taking a platoon of new recruits through basic training. Harold is 6<sup>th</sup> from the right in the second row, February 1945.

At the end of eight weeks, the recruits' Basic Training was completed. The men were then sent to Nova Scotia for Advanced Training. Sergeant Comrie and I were delegated to take the men to their new training assignment, which went without incident. We found that a group of German prisoners were waiting in Halifax. We were given the job of escorting them to Ontario. This was an interesting experience; although I was apprehensive, the prisoners were quiet and well behaved and we had no problems.

I had now completed my training. At a graduation parade on January 12, 1945, I received my second pip and designation of First Lieutenant. I was now ready to go overseas and was put on draft.

It appeared there was not a big demand for officers overseas. I was still at Newmarket where I was assigned as officer in charge of another group of new recruits, with the same Sergeant and Corporal assisting. I enjoyed working with the recruits and the work gave me experience and confidence that would prove useful in the job I took after my discharge from the army.

In March, I was sent back to Camp Borden. I was still on draft, but it was becoming obvious that the war in Europe was almost over. There was great jubilation when peace was declared on May 8, 1945, the day Germany formally surrendered to the Allies.

After over two years in the active army, all of which was spent in officer training, the war was over and I was ready to be discharged without having been overseas.

I admit to mixed feelings. I joined the army in June 1943, after three years of training in the COTC, and expecting to complete my officer's training fairly quickly and to be on my way overseas. I had the training to take my part in the war and was prepared to go and make use of that training. A number of my friends had died in battle and I had no illusions of what might have happened to me. However, my wife and my family were relieved that the war was over and I had not been required to go overseas.

## Chapter Five

# Co-op Development and Agricultural Production Co-operatives

Co-operatives have long been central to Saskatchewan's progressive legacy. The farmers who had settled in Western Canada in the early 1900s had found themselves at the mercy of railroads, supply companies and grain companies. They responded by organizing co-operatives such as the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Wholesale to provide the services they needed. Farmers organized co-operatives to provide marketing, farm supply and credit services.

This progressive legacy played a significant role in bringing the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) to power with a large majority in the Saskatchewan election of 1944, under the leadership of Tommy Douglas. In my first post-war job, I was fortunate to experience firsthand the spread of co-operative services in many areas and was able to help groups to establish co-operatives to meet their needs.

The CCF advocated an economy based on a mix of public, private and co-operative activity, and sought out opportunities for employment and provision of services previously not available to the average citizen. The Douglas government was eager to encourage and expand the development of co-operatives, recognizing the need for educating members and training directors and managers to ensure successful organizations.

In 1944, Tommy Douglas established the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development, with Hon. Lockie McIntosh, a former Wheat Pool field man, serving as Minister and Barney N. Arnason as Deputy Minister. Barney Arnason had headed the Co-operative Marketing Branch of the Department of Agriculture for many years. Alex Turner headed the new Research Branch of the Department.



As the end of the war approached, there was concern about employment opportunities for the discharged veterans, and so a major priority for the new government was to assist returning veterans to get into farming. A co-operative farm had already been organized at Sturgis and two co-operatives for the ownership and use of farm machinery had been organized near North Battleford. Under the chairmanship of Alex Turner, a committee of farm leaders was formed to study different forms of group farming ventures in the world and to make recommendations. The committee reported in early 1945, recommending that co-operative farming, on the pattern used at Sturgis, be one of the options offered to veterans, particularly on suitable blocks of crown land.

The department decided to recruit a person who could become a specialist in Agricultural Production Co-operatives. Acting Deputy Minister Alex Turner contacted Dr. Ernie Hope and Professor Hadley Van Vleit of the Farm Management Department of the College of Agriculture for suggestions of graduates who might be qualified. They recommended that I be offered the job.

I was stationed at Camp Borden when I received the letter from Alex Turner, describing the job and offering to come to Toronto for an interview if I could meet him there. Mary and I were excited about this opportunity. We were both interested in returning to Saskatchewan, and so I took the train to Toronto for the interview. The proposed job appealed to me, so I accepted.

I would begin as soon as I was discharged from the army, which could take a long time. On his return to Regina, Alex Turner contacted Dr. Auld, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, for help in getting my release from the army. By the end of July, arrangements had been made for my return to Regina and my discharge, though by this time, Mary was eight months pregnant and not able to make the two-day train ride to Regina. Alex Turner and the army agreed that my departure could be delayed until our child was born.

Our son, Robert (Bob) Harold, was born on August 27, a healthy nine-and-a-half-pound boy. Two weeks later, I was on my way to Regina. Mary was in the hospital for eleven days, at a charge of three dollars and fifty cents a day. The case room charge was five dollars, and Bob was in the nursery for ten days at seventy-five cents a day. The doctor charged forty-two dollars.

I was discharged from the army on October 1, 1945, and commenced work the same day with the Saskatchewan Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development, as an Extension Specialist, at a salary of \$180 per month. I was twenty-eight years old and excited to be starting a job in an area in which I had received special training.

My orientation included reading the report of the Group Farming Study Team, the Co-operative Associations Act, the standard bylaws governing co-operatives in Saskatchewan, and the supplemental by-laws of the Sturgis Co-operative Farm, the Round Hill Machinery Co-operative and a co-operative community pasture. My first meeting, in late October, was with the board of the Uren Community Pasture. I do not remember being of much help to them, though they helped a great deal with my orientation. Soon after, I met with the members of the Round Hill Machinery Co-operative and the Sturgis Co-operative Farm. All the members were experienced, friendly and very helpful.



Monthly meeting of the members of the Sturgis Co-operative Farm, Sturgis, Sask. (note wives were also members)

Mary came west on the train with baby Bob towards the end of October. She said the people on the train, mostly service men, were very helpful to her. I had searched all over Regina for accommodation, but without success, as there was a great shortage of houses and apartments at that time. In the meantime, the Dexters, who had a small cottage at the top of the 25th Street Bridge in Saskatoon,

decided to sell their house and move to Victoria. Alex Turner said the department was considering opening an office in Saskatoon, so with a loan from my father, I bought the Dexter house, where we lived for almost a year. Most weekends I took the midnight train to Saskatoon on Friday nights, and returned to Regina on the midnight train on Sunday night. I was able to rent a one-room apartment on the Legislative Building grounds in Regina.

By the next year, the department had decided not to establish an office in Saskatoon, so we gave up our house there and were able to rent a small house in Regina, and later to buy a small wartime house. We certainly experienced the post-war housing shortage.

In the meantime, Mary and I had gone home to Meskanaw for the 1945 Christmas holiday, during which my parents and some of my siblings discussed forming a co-operative farm. My parents were very interested, as there were three separate farms involved, and three young fellows interested in farming. By the time we left, bylaws were developed, the incorporation document signed, and plans laid for the establishment of the Laurel Farm Co-operative Association. The nine members were my father and mother, my older brother Jack and his wife Pauline, my sister Gladys and her husband, John Dexter, and my younger brothers Earl, Charlie and Bill. Land, machinery and livestock were sold to the co-operative for equity, and the decision was made to establish the farmstead at the Dexter building site, where there was a large house and barn and a good water supply. A new house was built to house Dad, Mother, Grandfather and the three boys, Earl, Charlie and Bill. Jack and Pauline's house was moved from section three to the building site.

The incorporation of this co-op farm solved problems that had been facing the family for a number of years. It provided a legal basis for the family to work together; everyone was able to specialize in areas of interest, and machinery could be used more efficiently. I was able to reference my family's experience, including the supplemental bylaws we drew up, in discussing co-operative farming with many other groups in the province. Although there were changes in membership over the years, the Laurel Co-operative Farm operated from its incorporation in 1946 until 1971, when it was sold.

In January 1946, I gave my attention to planning the first co-operative farm for veterans. For the first veterans' co-operative farm, the plan was to use an area of high-quality crown land



Members of the Laurel Co-op Farm, at their Monday morning weekly work planning meeting. John Dexter, Charlie and Earl Chapman, and Irving Reid.

which was part of a community pasture north of Swift Current. It was across the South Saskatchewan River and had previously been part of the crown land leased by the Matador Ranch from the early 1900s. Equipment would be made available from War Assets, and the buildings from a small airport north of Swift Current would be moved to provide the buildings needed at the farm site. The grant for each veteran under the Veterans' Land Act would help with the financing.

The Canadian government had passed the Veterans' Land Act in 1942 to assist in the settlement of veterans wishing to farm. It provided a grant to veterans purchasing land from established farmers. It also provided a loan to each veteran who leased crown land, which would be forgiven at the end of ten years. At that time, though, we had no idea what interest there would be for the venture among veterans.

I placed advertisements for the co-operative farm in farm co-op papers and met with veterans attending the School of Agriculture. In this group, students Lorne Dietrick and Bill Zazalenchuk immediately showed interest. I made and advertised plans for a five-day co-operative farming school to be held in Swift Current in the last week in February. Resource people for the school included

Hon. J. H. Sturdy, Minister of the Department of Reconstruction and Redevelopment; his Deputy Minister, Earl Eisenhower; Eric Beverage from the Department of Agriculture; L. J. Bright, Secretary of the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan; Alex Turner and myself. Twenty-two veterans attended the school, including Lorne Dietrick and Bill Zazalenchuck. There were many questions and much discussion. In order to get underway, we had to determine who was prepared to commit themselves to the project. Some were ready at the end of the week. Others wanted to think about it and discuss it with their families. It was decided to return a week later, at which time those who wished to proceed would form a veterans' co-operative farm and start planning for the spring.

Seventeen veterans, four of whom were married, returned for the next meeting. They worked out the details for incorporating a co-operative farm, including deciding on the supplemental bylaws. The supplemental bylaws for a co-operative farm deal with such matters as acceptance of new members, withdrawal of members wishing to leave and the repaying of their equity, and the distribution of surplus at the end of the year on the basis of time worked. The name selected was Matador Co-operative Farm. The Board of Directors would consist of all the members. Lorne Dietrick was elected president and Bill Zazalenchuck secretary/treasurer. Fortunately, Bill had had some training and experience in bookkeeping. The group included Hollis Walker, who was an experienced mechanic, and Ernie Monson, a carpenter.

The group laid plans to meet at the farm towards the end of April. In the meantime, an Advisory Committee, which included Dietrick and Zazalenchuck, proceeded with details including identifying the land to be used, at three quarters per veteran, and obtaining tractors and implements. Power to pull the implements was provided by six used caterpillar tractors that required a lot of maintenance work. They also arranged for a number of bunkhouses to be moved to the site for use until the airport buildings could be moved. To provide immediately needed cash, a loan was arranged from the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society that was guaranteed by the provincial government, which had recently passed the Co-operative Guarantee Act.

Negotiations were started with the Veterans' Land Act officials for the veterans to obtain their grants to invest as equity in

the co-operative farm. This was unsuccessful because the officials required that each veteran have a lease on a specific parcel of land. This requirement held up the project for about two years, during which the co-operative farm entered into an agreement with each member to lease his parcel of land for the ten-year period.

The next challenge to the project came from opposition members in the legislature, who accused the co-operative farms of being subversive communist cells, not accepting them as being co-operative organizations operating by the co-operative principles. Alan Embry, who was elected in 1944 as an Independent by the Active Services vote, was one of the leaders in this criticism. Even a visit to the Matador Co-operative Farm did not change his mind. This was embarrassing to the veterans involved and affected their acceptance by the Kyle community. Incidentally, within a few years, these concerns had faded and the co-op farm was an accepted part of the community.

When the first veterans arrived at the farm in late April 1946, they started breaking land. The early breaking was worked with a discer and seeded with oats to provide feed for cattle added that summer.

Then the airport buildings were sawed into sections, loaded onto trucks and transported across the Saskatchewan River on the ferry just before the use of the ferry for this purpose was disallowed by the Highway Traffic Board. Under Ernie Monson's guidance, four houses were constructed, one for each of the married veterans, and a larger building for the single veterans, which was also used as a community hall.

Dave Robinson of the University of Saskatchewan Extension Division helped the co-op farm design a community site for houses and farm buildings, making provision for additional houses as the men got married, and also for a school. Incidentally, Lorne Dietrick married the first schoolteacher, and they raised their son on the farm.

The members of the farm worked hard to overcome the negative press and build relationships in the Matador and Kyle communities. They formed a baseball team that played in a league in that area, providing good competition for teams from neighbouring towns. Lorne Dietrick was catcher and Glen Davis pitched.

During the first year, I made many trips to the Matador Co-op Farm, attending meetings with the members and assisting with

problems relating to this new type of farm organization. In the first two years, the single men worked off the farm during the winter. Dietrick and Zazelenchuk used this as a time to complete their course of study at the School of Agriculture.

By this time, many established farmers in the province were expressing interest in co-operative farms and machinery co-operatives. I attended numerous meetings and gave assistance in forming a number of co-operatives. Among those organized in 1946 and 1947 were the Algrove Co-operative Farm formed by the Schweitzer brothers, the McIntosh Co-operative Farm at Hepburn, and the Turner Co-operative Farm at Osler. Later, others were established by groups at Zenon Park, McKague, Pierceland, Hudson Bay and Leroy. Veterans' co-operative farms were formed at Beechy and Carrot River following attendance at Co-operative Farming Schools.

About ten miles east of Carrot River, a large area of unbroken crown land had been burned in wild fires in the dry 1930s. In 1946, the province established a clearing and breaking project to prepare the land for settlement. It was to be settled by veterans on co-operative farms, with priority given to those working on the project.

In early 1947, I held a co-operative farming school at Nipawin. Out of the group attending, eight veterans formed the River Bend Co-operative Farm. This was soon followed by the establishment of the Sunnysdale Co-operative Farm and later six others in that area, all east of the Carrot River. The members worked at saw mills in the area during the winter. I attended many meetings with these groups as they were forming and incorporating their co-operative farms.

The groups in this area faced many challenges. Most serious was a series of wet years starting about 1950, which caused difficulty in working the land and completing the harvest in the fall. Also, the Carrot River flooded each spring, washing out the only bridge and isolating the settlers for weeks. Eventually, a permanent bridge was built and a series of drainage ditches were constructed.

Among the challenges to this new type of farming enterprise were the many acts of legislation relating to farmers that did not address the needs of co-operative farms or their members. One of these was the Saskatchewan Rural Municipality Act, which at first permitted a co-operative farm to have only one vote in local elections. This Act was amended in 1946 to give voting rights to the members of the co-operative farm. The Prairie Farm Assistance Act

also required amendment, as did the Canadian Farm Loan Board.

In the years after the war there was a surplus of wheat, so delivery to the elevator was placed on a quota basis. Each farmer was able to deliver his quota. Co-operative farms were at first designated as one farmer, which severely limited their ability to sell their wheat.



Co-operative Farming School held in Nipawin, February 1947. Back row on left is Hon. J. H. Sturdy, Minister, Department of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation.

This proved to be a serious handicap in disposing of the grain, and led to the dissolution of some farms. The Laurel Co-operative Farm responded by turning to the growing of registered seed, which was sold for seed and not on a quota. It also seeded non-quota grains such as canola and yellow mustard, the latter of which was contracted to a mill at Humboldt. Eventually, several quotas for wheat were granted to co-operative farms.

It took many years of negotiation for co-operative farms to be recognized for corporate income tax purposes. The co-operative farm was not recognized as a co-operative corporation and the members were not recognized as farmers. It was well into the 1950s before this was solved. In the meantime, for years the income tax



forms for co-operative farms were held and not processed. Thus they faced the precarious situation of not knowing what amount they might be assessed.

It also took years for the veterans on crown land to be paid their grants. The problem was that according to the Act, each veteran must have a designated piece of land in his name, and that at the end of ten years title to the land would go to the veteran. The solution devised for veteran members of farm co-ops was that the veteran would contract to have his land operated as part of the co-operative farm. Thus, at the end of the ten years, the land became the property of the veteran. This proved frustrating and divisive at times. For example, at the end of their ten years, three of the members of the Matador Co-operative Farm withdrew their own land, which was in the middle of the block operated by the co-operative farm. Other members sold their land to the co-operative farm and took equity in the farm for its value.

In our efforts to overcome the legislative problems, the relevant provincial departments and their Ministers and Deputies were very helpful. This included Hon. John Sturdy, who was a great friend of the veterans, Hon. Lockie McIntosh, and later Hon. Tommy Douglas, as Minister of the Co-operative Department, and Hon. Toby Nollet of the Department of Agriculture. I remember the first annual meeting of the Matador Co-operative Farm in 1947, where Tommy Douglas was the speaker. After some of Tommy's famous jokes, he gave them enthusiastic encouragement and support.

Other co-operatives in Canada were also supportive of the farming co-operatives and their legislative problems. I reported each year at the annual meetings of the Co-operative Unions of Saskatchewan and Canada. Their solicitor, W. B. Francis, was very helpful in presenting briefs and resolutions to the relevant governments. Mr. Harris, of the accounting firm of Harris, Fingerson and Company, was very supportive in obtaining recognition of the co-operative farms in various types of legislation, including the Canada Income Tax Act.

In 1949, the first Co-operative Farming Conference was held in Saskatoon. Attended by representatives of co-op farms and machinery co-operatives across the province, it addressed problems to do with legislation and income tax, as well as farm practices and any other problems being encountered. The conference led to the formation of the Saskatchewan Federation of Production Co-operatives.

Lorne Dietrick was the first president and I was appointed secretary. The annual meeting each year shared information and dealt with problems. The organization is still in existence.

By the early 1950s, thirty-five co-operative farms and a number of co-operatives for the use of farm machinery had been incorporated across the province. A number of these were family groups, like my own, in which incorporation as a co-operative gave them a legal basis on which to operate. A number also organized after the war as a means of obtaining scarce machinery, such as combines.

The co-operative farms helped younger people, including my brothers, to get established in farming and build up their equity in the organization, and enabled all members to benefit from the aptitudes and training of members in such areas as mechanics and care of livestock. Working in shifts encouraged maximum use of equipment and the keeping of regular hours. The members were also able to take holidays in summer or winter.

However, although efficiencies of equipment and labour were demonstrated regularly, we sometimes had difficulty in dealing with interpersonal problems in the groups. The bylaws allowed members to choose to withdraw and have their equities repaid, and for new members to be accepted. Provision was made in the bylaws for dealing with disputes, including arbitration where needed. To address interpersonal issues that might arise, it was (and remains) important for each group to develop the skills to chair meetings, carry out the roles of secretary and treasurer, and harmonize any irritants.

I gained valuable knowledge and experience as I carried on with this work. Guidance from people like Barney Arnason, Tommy Douglas, Lorne Dietrick, Lewis Lloyd, and Bill Baker proved invaluable.

As the number of agricultural production co-operatives and interested groups increased, I needed help. At first I hired agriculture students during the summer, including Stan Medland, Bill Miner, Eldon Anderson and John McConnell. Later, agricultural graduates were hired full time, including Del Sproxton, who later became a member of a co-operative farm in the Hudson Bay area, and Terry Phalen, who was a dedicated and competent assistant. He later replaced me when I was on leave and then when I resigned to develop the Co-operative Institute. Terry was a good supporter during my years with the Co-operative College and he and his wife Marjorie were personal friends of Mary's and mine over the years.

The Group Development Institute held at Valley Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle, which I attended in 1949 and where I was on the staff from 1950 to 1952, stands out as a major learning experience for me. The Institute was developed by a group of social scientists at Bethel, Maine, including Bill Baker, with the purpose of building understanding of roles that need to be played by the individuals in a group, such as a board of directors, in order for the group to function effectively. The teaching method was to provide students with information, for example in a lecture, and then for them to participate in a discussion group, working on an assigned task. The group discussed and analyzed the role played by each person in the group. Assigning someone the task of "observer" helped the group identify such helpful roles as providing information, asking questions, encouraging quiet people to participate, and so on. It also helped identify negative roles such as dominator and interrupter. I later built this experience into the training program at the Co-operative College in Saskatoon, and used it in discussion groups at meetings and courses.

I was hired by the Saskatchewan government's Department of Co-operation as an extension specialist in agricultural production co-operatives. I soon found myself working with a variety of groups that went far beyond agriculture; groups wanting to use the co-operative method of organizing to solve problems. Examples included university students developing a housing co-operative and mink trappers around several small lakes in the province organizing trappers' co-operatives. The members had previously competed in trapping mink for about a week each spring. As a co-operative, they organized with some members trapping and other members skinning the mink. The co-operative would sell the mink and the returns were divided among the members.

I also found myself working with the fish marketing co-operatives in northern Saskatchewan. The co-operatives sold the fish through the Saskatchewan Fish Marketing Service. I enjoyed working with the fishermen, many of whom were Aboriginal. One project in the north requiring many meetings was the building of a fish filleting plant on Reindeer Lake, for the Reindeer Lake Fish Marketing Co-operative. This involved selecting a site at the eastern point of Reindeer Lake. I negotiated a grant from the federal government under the Federal Cold Storage Act and arranged a

contract with a company in Saskatoon to construct the building and install the equipment. The building was constructed and supplies and equipment were taken in as soon as the ice was thick enough. The contractors went in by plane in the winter and had it completed by the time the first plane could land on the water in the spring. I made four trips to Reindeer Lake on this project, two landing on the ice and two on the water. I remember on one occasion that it was late by the time we left Lac la Ronge and it got dark before we reached our destination. The pilot was quite familiar with the lake and landed on the water beside an island on which he knew there was a log cabin. We took off safely in the morning. The project site on Reindeer Lake was named Kinesao, which, I am told, is the Cree word for co-op. This co-operative and its filleting plant are still in operation.

The Potato Marketing Co-operative at Lumsden was another project I helped organize and arranged for assistance through a federal grant. There was also a Cold Storage Co-operative near Melville that was financed by a federal grant. At its opening, I was on the platform with Hon. James Gardiner, whose department administered the grants.

In 1949, several groups of farmers formed rural electric co-operatives which would buy power plants to provide the members with electricity. Before they got underway, the government, via the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, decided to extend power throughout rural Saskatchewan. The co-operatives were among the first to receive power.

My work, though very interesting and gratifying, took me away from home a great deal. This was possible because Mary was independent, mature, and not afraid of being alone. During those years, our son Bob was growing and in May 1948, Gail was added to our family. We had been living in a rented house in Regina. In June 1948 we bought a new wartime house on the corner of 5th Avenue and Argyle Street. It was small, about twenty by twenty-two feet, with an unfinished basement, but it was ours. Over the years I built a wooden fence, dug the lot by hand and planted the lawn at the front and a garden at the back. We had friendly neighbours all around us.

We had started in the fall of 1946, to attend 6th Avenue United Church. I joined the choir and was soon elected to the Board of Elders. Mary joined a group of younger women called the Federettes



Our home at 1100 Argyle Street in Regina, 1948 to 1955.

and very shortly we helped form a Couples Club that met every month. Our children became part of the Sunday school. Both were very well-behaved, and Mary was able to take them to her meetings and visiting. We felt very fortunate as we observed the behaviour of some of our friends' children. Although I was often away during the week, it was seldom that I could not return by the weekend.

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It was gratifying to be able to work with so many diverse groups that recognized a problem and worked together to find and implement a solution. In many cases, the initial spark was lit through Farm Radio Forums (study and discussion groups sponsored by the Extension Department of the University of Saskatchewan), local committees of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, or local Co-operative Women's Guilds. The Wheat Pool field men and agricultural representatives often provided assistance. The general philosophy guiding their role and mine was that if a group wished to form an organization to help improve the condition or standard of living of its members, it should be provided the tools to help the organization function effectively. To emphasize the importance of this role, the title of the field staff of the department was changed from "Field Man" to "Co-operative Management Advisor."

Some of the challenges I faced in my work included helping the founders of co-operatives learn to conduct meetings, and assisting them to develop, register and administer their bylaws. Another challenge was to help develop the bookkeeping system for each organization and to train the treasurer in keeping the books. The introductory accounting class I took at university was of help in this endeavour. Also, Jack Bailey was hired by the department to develop practical bookkeeping systems and to train treasurers in implementing them. Jack and Aura Bailey became close personal friends of ours. Years after Jack passed away, Aura became the third wife of Jake Fehr, who had worked with me at the Co-operative College.

During my seven years at the Department of Co-operatives, I had not just been given a front row seat, but in fact had been a participant, in sweeping historical changes brought about by the CCF government in its first two terms in office. These changes included the introduction of universal hospitalization, rural electrification, establishment of larger school units and the Saskatchewan Arts Board, marketing boards for fish and fur, progressive labour legislation, the Human Rights Commission and the Saskatchewan Bill of Rights. These all reflected the CCF's support for democratic governance and for addressing the needs of Saskatchewan people.



## Chapter Six

# Co-operative Philosophy and Principles

The co-operative philosophy and principles, on which my life's work had been based, played a formative role in my upbringing. My parents applied them in our daily lives. We helped with work on the farm from an early age and participated in kitchen-table discussions aimed at ensuring that our family farm was successful in providing a good life for a large and growing family.

Growing up, I had observed my father's participation in the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. I had also been part of the formation of the Ethelton Community Hall Co-operative Association. Both of these organizations demonstrated efforts by people in the community to provide themselves with needed services. These early experiences were reinforced when, as a student at the University of Saskatchewan, I was introduced to the history, philosophy and development of co-operatives. My co-operatives class described how people with a problem could work together, through their co-operative organization, to provide themselves with goods, services, and equitable work arrangements. I learned of the democratic principles upon which co-operatives operate. At that time I also purchased the book, *The Diary of Alexander James McPhail*, edited by H. A. Innis. McPhail, the first president of the Pool, described the signing up of members and the early co-operative education programs. I found the co-operative philosophy to be very much in line with my values and my own philosophy at that time.

This growing interest in co-operative principles and practices made it easy for me to accept the job of Extension Specialist with the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development when it was offered by Alex Turner, the Acting Deputy Minister. Working with co-operative leaders including Barney Arnason,



Lewie Lloyd, Harry Fowler, Lorne Dietrick, Forrest Scharf and Howard Tyler helped to deepen my understanding of the co-operative philosophy and principles and their application to a variety of practical situations.

The co-operative philosophy and principles date back to 1844, when weavers organized a co-operative store in Rochdale, England. This co-operative and others emerged from the struggles of workers who had been evicted from their small plots of farmland to make way for large-scale farming, and so sought work in the factories and mills that were cropping up. The destitution and misery of these workers and their families led governments, reformers such as Robert Owen, and the workers themselves to seek solutions. These efforts sparked workers' movements, experiments with co-operative communities and the organization of early co-operatives. John Restakis describes this tumultuous period in detail in his excellent book, *Humanizing the Economy*.

The Rochdale Weavers were giving leadership in crystalizing the principles of the growing co-operative movement. These have stood the test of time, forming the basis of the co-operative movement throughout the world, and have been used in the organization of consumer, marketing, credit and many types of service co-operatives.

The co-operative principles have been the subject of three major reviews by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), in 1937, 1966 and 1995, in order to update wording and adjust the principles to the needs and context of co-operative organizations all over the world.

The last review used a process chaired by Dr. Ian MacPherson, whose book, *A Century of Co-operation*, was published in 2009 by the Canadian Co-operative Association.

This book defines a co-operative as “an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations, through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.” McPherson states, “co-operatives are based on values of self help, self responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. Co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.”

The co-operative principles are the guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice and are followed by co-operatives

throughout the world. I observed and experienced their universality while working with co-operatives throughout Canada, the United States, the Caribbean, and Kenya, Africa. I also understood their importance while attending the triennial conference of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) in Bournemouth, England, in 1963. I was one of six English-speaking delegates from Canada. At this conference, there was considerable discussion and debate, in particular, between United States delegates and those from communist countries about the role of government in relation to co-operatives.

The co-operative principles, as listed in *A Century of Co-operation* but with some elaboration of my own, are as follows:

1. *Voluntary and open membership.* Co-operatives are open to all persons able to use the services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.
2. *Democratic Member Control.* Members actively participate in setting policies and making decisions and have equal voting rights. One member, one vote.
3. *Member economic participation.* Members contribute equitably to the capital their co-operative requires. They receive only limited interest, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. (In the Saskatoon Co-operative, membership requires a \$10 investment). Members are allocated surpluses, after reserves have been set aside, as a patronage refund based on the amount of use they made of their co-operative during the year. In a retail co-operative, this refund is based on the amount purchased during the year.
4. *Autonomy and independence.* Co-operatives are autonomous self-help organizations with democratic control by the membership.
5. *Education, training and information.* Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees, so they can contribute effectively to the development and operation of their co-operatives. They also inform the general public of the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6. *Co-operation among co-operatives.* Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the movement by working together through local, regional and national structures.
7. *Concern for the community.* Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by the members.

While it is important for co-operative members to understand the principles guiding their co-operative, it is also important that they are able to understand and compare the various other ways, besides co-operatives, in which people can organize to provide themselves with goods and services. These are described briefly as follows:

- *The individual enterprise,* owned and controlled by the individual person.
- *The partnership,* owned and controlled by two or more individuals and guided by an agreement.
- *The for-profit corporation,* owned and controlled by shareholders on the basis of one vote per share. Surplus is distributed as a dividend on shares.
- *The non-profit corporation,* controlled as set out in the bylaws. Any surplus is used in the operation of the organization.
- *The crown corporation,* owned and controlled by the government to provide goods and services to the citizens in the area served.
- *The co-operative corporation,* owned and controlled by its members, to provide themselves with goods and/or services, with each member having one vote.

All of these are legitimate ways of organizing and providing services in our society. The co-operative is unique in that it is guided by the ICA principles originally established by the Rochdale pioneers in 1844.

As I helped organize co-operatives while working with the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development, I

became very familiar with the Co-operative Associations Act and the standard bylaws governing all co-operatives in the province. I also helped the members of many co-operatives develop their supplemental bylaws, which provided the agreement unique to their organization. These meetings provided the opportunity to discuss with members the principles on which their organization would operate.

I also had the opportunity to work with the inspection staff of the department, whose job it was to ensure that the requirements of the Act were being carried out. These included requirements that meetings were being held, that books were properly audited, that reports were provided to the members and that directors were elected. I was impressed with the helpful approach the inspection staff took to their job, assisting members, directors, managers and staff to understand and carry out their roles.

Some of the co-operatives I organized were designed to meet fairly short-term needs, for example, their machinery co-operatives that provided machinery that was scarce during and after the Second World War; co-operative farms which dissolved because the next generation was not interested in farming; muskrat trapping co-operatives which dissolved when the market for muskrats disappeared; and community service co-operatives in communities in which the population had largely moved away. I helped some of these groups wind up and dissolve their co-operatives.

However, most co-operatives are organized with the intent of serving their members in perpetuity. This includes consumer and farm supply co-operatives, marketing co-operatives, credit unions, and health service co-operatives. In these cases, the members each sign an application in which they agree to abide by the bylaws and to accept their responsibilities as members. The applications are accepted by the board of directors.

It is the responsibility of the board to help members understand their organization and the responsibilities they have accepted. This involves applying the fifth co-operative principle: Education, Training and Information. The importance of this principle is not difficult for the original members to grasp. They knew the problems they faced that led to the organization of the co-operative. The organizational meetings at which bylaws were developed and the co-operative principles and the Co-operative Act were explained and discussed were themselves learning experiences.

However, as the years go by, new members who join the co-operative have not had that formative experience. A person who takes out a new membership in a retail co-operative may only be interested in finding a convenient source for the goods and services he or she requires. However, they sign a document saying they agree to accept the responsibilities of membership and to abide by the bylaws. Through the approval of the board, they become members, and are expected to learn what is needed to be fully functioning members of their co-operative.

As these new members move towards being effective and contributing members, it is important that they learn

- The goods and services handled by the co-operative.
- The key items in the supplemental bylaws.
- The significance of being a part owner with a say in the business.
- The key differences between a co-operative and other forms of business.
- The responsibilities of being a member.
- The existence of other types of co-operatives serving the community, such as credit unions.
- The philosophy and principles underlying the co-operative idea.

As the membership grows, this becomes a very serious responsibility for the board. It needs to be recognized that these members are adults with varying amounts of experience and with biases. To assist the board in carrying out its member education responsibility, it is important that it have an effective member relations committee. The role of this committee is to enable the board to provide programs that help members understand and support their co-operative. In addition to board members, the committee should include co-op members who have interest and skill in member education. I believe the committee should also have the assistance of a staff person to help carry out planned programs.

Some people suggest that good service and the payment of refunds are all that are required to attract and maintain members.

However, the competing businesses also provide good service, as well as advertising gimmicks. Also, years will go by in which our co-operatives are not able to pay refunds. It is, then, especially important that members have a good understanding of and are loyal to their co-operative, and this requires active and sustained efforts at member education and membership development.

Manniche, the Danish Folk School leader's admonition that a co-operative without an education program will only last a generation and a half continues to apply, as was recently demonstrated by the members and delegates of the prairie Wheat Pools, who several years ago voted to reorganize their co-operatives as joint stock companies. The legacy of marketing co-operatives like the Wheat Pools will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.



## Chapter Seven

# Marketing Co-operatives: The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool

**F**rom the early days of settlement in Western Canada, farmers found themselves at the mercy of the private companies purchasing their grain and the railroads transporting it to market. Marketing co-operatives such as the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool represented a major innovation in farmers' efforts to use their collective power to defend their own interests. They were one of the earliest and strongest forms of co-operative development on the prairies, and a great resource for me as I pursued my work in co-operative development.

The wheat pools were the most visible marketing co-operatives, but producers of all the commodities raised on Saskatchewan farms formed similar organizations, including marketing co-operatives for dairy products, forage crops, livestock and poultry. All followed the principles developed by the Rochdale pioneers, and placed the ownership and control in the hands of the producers. Every member had one vote, and the farmers distributed amongst themselves any surplus earnings from the sale of commodities.

Grain marketing organizations were formed in each of the prairie provinces in the early 1900s. These organizations built local elevators and provided for the marketing of the grain. However, farmers were not satisfied with the deal they were getting in the marketing of their grain. In 1923, Aaron Shapiro, an American lawyer and an eloquent speaker, who had been instrumental in developing marketing co-operatives in the United States, was invited to Saskatchewan by the Farmers' Union of Canada and the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association to bring his message to Saskatchewan farmers.

Shapiro explained the concept of farmers pooling their grain for sale. Their organization would make a down payment to the farmer



when the grain was delivered. At the end of the pool year, July 31, a final payment would be made based on the total amount received from the sale of the grain, minus expenses. This idea appealed to the farm leaders. In each of the prairie provinces, farmer co-operatives, known as wheat pools, were organized and went into operation in 1924. This is described by Gary Fairbairn in his history of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool entitled *From Prairie Roots*.

The wheat pools were incorporated as provincial marketing co-operatives. After a major canvassing effort, a majority of farmers had signed up as members. One can imagine what an effort this was, considering so many farmers were immigrants, from a variety of countries, and were just learning the English language. The provincial governments sold their local elevators to the pools. Many new elevators were built until, by 1929, there was a Saskatchewan Wheat Pool elevator at almost every shipping point in Saskatchewan – over nine hundred in total.

As mentioned earlier, my father joined the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool in its first year, 1924. For the first two years there was no Pool elevator nearby, so he and a neighbour arranged for a freight car to be parked at the siding of Duro, four miles away. The agent at the Pioneer elevator agreed to weigh the grain and then Dad shoveled it into the boxcar. This was done for two years, after which arrangements were made for the Pioneer elevator to receive the grain on behalf of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. Later, in 1929, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool built an elevator at the Grasswood siding, five miles south of Saskatoon and three miles from our farm.

I was fourteen years old when I first delivered wheat to the Grasswood elevator, driving a tandem team of four horses hitched to a grain tank holding 120 bushels of wheat. I have never forgotten the first time I drove out of the elevator with four reins in hand, holding back the rear team so they would not try to get past the team on the lead.

The Wheat Pool's success in developing structures to organize such a large and dispersed group of farm members into a co-operatively owned and democratic structure warrants more attention than space permits here, but is ably described in Fairbairn's *From Prairie Roots*. In brief, the province was divided into sixteen districts. Each district was subdivided into nine sub-districts, each of which had approximately nine shipping points, each with an elevator.

A field man was assigned to each of the sixteen districts to help with the organization and education of the members. A Wheat Pool committee of about nine members was elected from the members at each shipping point. The committee elected a chairman and a secretary and was expected to hold four committee meetings each year and an annual meeting of the members at that shipping point. This provided a great opportunity for co-operative education and also for education in democracy.

At the annual meeting of the members in each subdistrict, a delegate was elected. There were nine subdistricts in each district. Every three years, at the time of the Wheat Pool Annual Meeting, the delegates for each district met and elected a director from their number. The director held office for three years and could be re-elected at the end of the term.

The sixteen directors elected the president and first and second vice presidents. These formed the executive of the Wheat Pool.

The Wheat Pool board of directors hired the general manager, who was responsible for the operation of the elevator system. Under the general manager were travelling superintendents in each district, responsible for training and supervising the agent who operated each elevator. These agents were later called elevator managers. The operation of the elevator included receiving, weighing and grading the grain delivered by each farmer member. In some years, frost and drought made this a very difficult job.

I became personally acquainted with many of the agents. They were dedicated to their co-operative and often helped organize retail co-operatives and credit unions in their community as well. My friend Fred Lockhart was a Wheat Pool agent when he organized a credit union and became its first treasurer. While attending a Basic Adult Education Course at the Co-operative College, I suggested he become a co-operative field man. This led Fred to many years in co-operative education work with Federated Co-operatives Ltd.

The Wheat Pool board also hired the secretary. In addition to being secretary to the board, this person was responsible for the educational work of the field men and also for the research function of the organization. Thus, the board had two persons reporting to it: the general manager, responsible for the commercial operations; and the secretary, responsible for maintaining the democratic function of the organization, including member education.

I look upon this as an ideal structure for a co-operative organization. It provides for the efficient operation of the co-operative and also guarantees the involvement and education of the members. This structure was not necessarily an easy relationship to maintain, however. In general, managers wish to retain control over all expenses of the co-operative. I remember a travelling superintendent, attending a course at the Co-operative College, complaining that the managers made the money in the Pool, while the field men “frittered it away.” Unfortunately, this tension was eventually resolved by a decision of the board to have the secretary report to the general manager, thus subordinating the educational function of the organization to the business interests. In my opinion, this change substantially weakened the democratic control of the organization.

From the time I started organizing co-operative farms and machinery co-operatives in the fall of 1945, I found the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool field men interested and helpful. Equipped with movie projectors, they showed co-operative as well as other educational movies in rural schoolhouses throughout the province. They also helped administer travelling libraries in rural schools for many years. Les Stutt was Director of Field Services for the Wheat Pool, with Howard Tyler supervisor for the eight northern districts in the province. Abel Toupin was responsible for the eight southern districts. John Stratyckuk was a special field man who worked with the Ukrainian members, and Bob Beaulac worked with the French communities.

With the help of the field men, the Pool provided education and training in co-operative principles and philosophy, as well as the practice of democracy – skills that recipients applied locally by getting involved in boards of churches, co-operatives, rural municipalities and school boards. Some of these people were also active provincially, on boards and in government. One example was Lockie McIntosh, a former Wheat Pool field man who was the Minister of the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development when I joined the staff in October 1945.

The Wheat Pool field men were dedicated co-operators. In addition to their work with the Wheat Pool, they helped many farmers use the co-operative approach in dealing with problems. They helped with the organization of many consumer co-operatives to provide food, clothing and other necessities. They also

helped organize farm supply co-operatives to handle petroleum, coal and wood, twine and fertilizer, and assisted in the formation of many rural credit unions. Many of the local co-operatives have disappeared over the years, though they formed the base for the large retail co-operatives and credit unions serving thousands of members across the province today.

For many years, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool played a leading role in the development of agricultural policy in Canada through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and the Co-operative Union of Canada. It was also a leading supporter of the Canadian Wheat Board. Bob Phillips was head of the Pool's research department and took an active part in the Canadian Co-operative Research Committee, formed by the Co-operative Union of Canada. I was privileged to be a member of this committee for several years as a representative of the Co-operative College.

In its early years, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool also sponsored the farm and co-operative weekly newspaper, the *Western Producer*. It was a useful educational tool for Saskatchewan farmers.

As I explained earlier, in subordinating the secretary's role to one of reporting to the General Manager instead of the board, the educational component of the Wheat Pool was weakened. In 1996, the board recommended to the delegates that the Pool reorganize as a joint stock company. A reason given by the board was that this would facilitate obtaining the capital needed to rebuild the country elevator system. By a narrow margin, the delegates voted to accept the recommendation. Thus, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool ceased to be a co-operative, owned and controlled by its members. It became a joint stock company, now known as Viterra, owned and controlled by shareholders, who might or might not be farmers. During the same period, both the Alberta Wheat Pool and Manitoba Pool Elevators also reorganized as joint stock companies.

With this decision, the former Wheat Pool ceased to be a member of the Canadian Co-operative Association and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. It also ceased to be a major sponsor of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan.

The Pool's organizational structure of members, wheat pool committees and delegates was disbanded. Also, since there was no further role for the field staff, it, too, was disbanded.

Viterra has since bought the company formed from the Alberta and Manitoba Wheat Pools. It continues to provide grain marketing and farm supply services to farmers in the prairie provinces, but for the profit of shareholders. The pool elevators that marked the skyline of Saskatchewan are now gone and the grain is now hauled by trucks to large regional cement elevators.

In the meantime, a number of groups of farmers have recently formed co-operatives on branch railroad lines that are still operating. They are achieving significant savings through assembling and shipping their own grain.

If farmers become dissatisfied with marketing services for their grain, over which they have no control, they may again consider establishing a marketing co-operative.

I predict that, in the years to come, there will be another Saskatchewan grain marketing co-operative formed. It may, one can hope, even have a field staff that provides co-operative education and other services throughout the province.

It is of interest that the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix* newspaper headline of 12 March 2012 read, "Swiss company, Glencore International, made a \$5.4 billion take-over bid for Regina-based Viterra." In the days that followed, the Viterra shareholders agreed to the takeover as reported in the *Star Phoenix*.

## Chapter Eight

# Consumer and Financial Co-operatives

Organizing consumer co-operatives and credit unions was the logical outcome of kitchen-table discussions and informal meetings in the offices of the Wheat Pool elevators. The need for food, coal, farm supplies and credit, all at reasonable prices, were major concerns of the early settlers in Saskatchewan. Co-operatives providing the necessary supplies and services sprang up in almost every town and village in the province. These also provided hands-on experience in democracy for the settlers who came from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds.

When I started work with the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development in the fall of 1945, I became a member of the Sherwood Co-operative in Regina, which had the largest volume of business of any retail co-operative in Canada. George Munro was the general manager for many years. Mary and I patronized the Co-op as fully as possible. Mary was an active member of the Sherwood Co-operative Women's Guild, which carried out extensive product testing and co-operative education. The activities of this co-operative helped us to build understanding of and loyalty to this organization that we, as members, owned.

When we moved to Saskatoon in 1955, we withdrew our savings (patronage refunds) which helped buy the furniture for our new home. We had already taken out membership in the Saskatoon Co-operative Association in 1951. My work took me through Saskatoon frequently, so my main purchases were from the service station. When we moved to Saskatoon, we found that our co-operative had expanded its services to provide almost all the goods we needed, including food, drugs, petroleum, lumber, coal and dry goods. It was almost fulfilling Harry Fowler's saying: "If

my co-operative doesn't have it, we don't need it!" Once again we attended all meetings of the co-operative and Mary was an active member of the Saskatoon Co-operative Women's Guild. I think we demonstrated the value of both husband and wife participating in the activities of the co-operative, and learning together.



Saskatoon Co-operative Women's Guild, December 1956.

For many years, the co-operative newspaper, *The Co-operative Consumer*, was mailed to all members of the co-operative in Saskatoon. It was very helpful in developing and maintaining understanding of co-operatives, and explaining the importance of being a loyal member. This paper was discontinued in about 1983, as part of a cost-cutting process by Federated Co-operatives Ltd. It was sadly missed by many members of the retail co-operatives.

The development of retail co-operatives in western Canada is well described by Brett Fairbairn in his book *Building a Dream*. This book was commissioned by the board of FCL to document the history of the co-operative retailing system in Western Canada from 1928 to 1988, to help celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of FCL. It provides interesting and educative reading.

The development of retail co-operatives in Ontario and the

Atlantic provinces, meanwhile, is described in *A Century of Co-operation* by Ian McPherson. This book was commissioned by the Canadian Co-operative Association to commemorate the 100 years since the Co-operative Union of Canada (now the Canadian Co-operative Association) was formed in 1909.

These books describe and document the struggles of the early settlers in developing and operating their co-operative businesses. The problems included the lack of training of directors and managers, as well as the opposition of private businesses, with some wholesales and other suppliers refusing to sell to co-operatives. The reason for this animosity was ideological opposition to the co-operative practice of distributing the surplus as patronage refunds rather than as profit on shares. The refusal of established oil companies to sell to the new farm supply co-operatives in the Regina area spurred the organization of the Co-operative Refinery in Regina in 1934.

I would later work closely with the retail co-operatives as Principal of the Co-operative College and then as Director of Member Relations with FCL. In this work, I gained a better understanding of the responsibilities of a member and the importance of members understanding and accepting these responsibilities.

The study of adult education principles and methods helped me understand the difficulty of getting adults to change their practices. Since the members of co-operatives are adults, there was need for co-operatives to develop education programs that applied these adult education principles and methods. This is difficult when the membership of a co-operative is small, but becomes an even greater challenge as the co-operatives grow in size.

Hence the need for vigorous member relations programs, especially in large co-operatives. The focus of member relations should be to help members understand their co-operative and their responsibilities, to keep members informed through newsletters and regular ads and bulletins, and to provide venues for members to make suggestions and raise questions. In addition to the annual meeting, there should also be opportunities for interested members to attend meetings and participate in co-operative decision-making. These events would provide information as well as opportunity for feedback to directors and managers. The member relations committee should also respond to as many opportunities as possible to assist interested groups in the community, including youth and



charities. Each of these activities would provide opportunities to discuss co-operative principles and practices.

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Financial co-operatives or credit unions have been another important resource for co-operative development in western Canada. The history and development of financial co-operatives in Canada is described in *A Century of Co-operation* by Ian MacPherson.

MacPherson includes information on the organization and development of co-operatives that provide credit and insurance services for their members, and describes the problems people, particularly farmers, faced that led them to establish their own services.

Barney Arnason, in his co-operative memoir, *It Was a Great Privilege*, described the development of credit unions in Saskatchewan. As head of the Co-operation and Markets Branch of the Department of Agriculture from 1932 to 1944, and then as Deputy Minister of the new Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development from 1944 to 1964, he played a leading role in the development of financial co-operatives to meet the needs of Saskatchewanians.

Arnason recounts that it was thirty-four years after Alphonse Desjardins organized the first *caisse populaire* (credit union) at Levis, Quebec, that credit unions were seriously discussed at major co-operative conferences in Saskatchewan. By this time, the province was suffering drought and depression. Credit was not available at a reasonable rate to individuals. Local co-operatives were experiencing financial difficulties due to the large number of members who were unable to pay their credit accounts. Many of those co-operatives went bankrupt.

The subject of credit unions was introduced to a conference of leaders of co-operative trading associations in 1934. The delegates were very interested in the idea and passed a resolution to “request the Saskatchewan government to enact legislation providing for the organization of co-operative credit unions.” Arnason indicates that at that time, chartered banks did not consider applications for loans of less than \$100 to be part of their ordinary business. Loan sharks were regularly charging forty percent interest, and sometimes as high as fifty to a hundred percent. A committee was formed to

draft legislation, which was presented, passed and then came into force June 30, 1937.

Arnason told of the keen interest in credit unions during those impoverished years, in which many credit unions were organized by community groups and by occupational groups. The incorporation documents would indicate the group whose members were eligible for membership. He and his staff spent much time training directors and the treasurer of each new credit union, and educating the members.

The number of credit unions grew rapidly in the late 1930s, thus necessitating the addition of a credit union inspector and organizer to the staff of the Department of Co-operatives. A. C. McLean, a former banker, was hired. He became an effective, enthusiastic promoter of credit unions. He was adamant that these people's financial organizations be managed and operated efficiently and honestly. By the end of 1940, there were fifty-two credit unions in Saskatchewan.

In 1942, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society was incorporated through a special Act. This Act provided the powers and requirements for it to be a central credit union for co-operatives and credit unions. Ted Kober, who had managed the Sherwood Credit Union, was hired as the first manager. By the end of 1943, there were 128 credit unions in the province with a membership of 15,000 and assets of almost \$1 million. The Credit Society was envisioned as a future central bank for the co-operatives and credit unions that could eventually meet most of the credit needs of the provincial co-operative movement.

In the early 1940s, the credit union leaders began to recognize the need for resources to assist in the education of the members of the credit unions and to respond to the many requests for information. To meet these needs, the Saskatchewan Credit Union League was formed. Arnason was the first secretary, but soon turned this over to a league employee as the number and size of the credit unions continued to grow.

Starting with my return to the province in October 1945, I was soon both an observer and a participant in the financial co-operatives.

I joined the Saskatchewan Government Employees Savings and Credit Union and was encouraged to start saving small amounts regularly each month. In the early credit unions, all members were encouraged to save. This built up the fund from which loans could

be made to needy members. I am not aware of “regular savings” being part of the education program for members today.

An early educational experience came when a fellow employee asked me to co-sign a loan to be used in buying a coat. Six months later, I was told that my co-worker was not keeping up her loan payments and that I might be called upon! Eventually, she paid up, but that was my last experience in co-signing a loan!

A couple of years later, when I decided to buy a car, I joined the Sherwood Savings and Credit Union, a larger organization. Ron Bunn, a credit union inspector with the Department of Co-operatives, persuaded me that with the many miles of driving I was doing in my work, I could afford to take out a loan, buy a car and use the travel expense allowance to make the monthly payments. This worked well and over the years I drove my own car, turning it in every three years for a new car and a renewed loan. A personal advantage was that we had the use of our car for family driving in the city and on holidays.

The Sherwood Savings and Credit Union came to our rescue in 1951, when the finance committee of St. John’s United Church, of which I was vice chair, could not get a loan from banks or mortgage companies to finance construction of our new church. We arranged for fifty of the church members to each take out a loan of \$1,000 from the credit union and construction got underway. When the building was almost complete, the finance committee obtained a mortgage and the \$1,000 loans were all repaid. Through this action, the credit union gained a number of new members.

When organizing co-operative farms and other new types of co-operatives, I found the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society, under the management of Ted Kober and later Barney Johnson, to be very helpful in providing the loans needed to get them started and other financial services. In a number of cases, groups organizing new co-operatives lacked the security required to obtain the loans. To facilitate such loans, the government passed the Saskatchewan Co-operative Guarantee Act, which was administered by the Department of Co-operatives and which permitted the Credit Society to provide the loans needed. This was of great help to these new organizations, and I am not aware of any that did not manage to repay their loans.

It was gratifying and exciting to be part of the co-operative scene

during the period following the “dirty thirties” and the Second World War. It was no accident that Saskatchewan was called the “Banner Co-operative Province” in Canada, with leaders who had developed the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, had brought the fledgling farm supply and retail co-operatives together to form the Saskatchewan Co-operative Wholesale, and had formed the Saskatchewan Credit Union League, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society and the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan. Thus, it was natural that there was such widespread public support for the idea of organizing co-operatives to meet the needs of people in the province. When problems arose, people saw the “co-operative way” as the method of dealing with them – solutions where people set up their own organizations to provide themselves with goods and services they needed. In many cases, these innovators faced criticism and opposition from those who said, “people did not have the ability to operate and manage their own organization. We will do it for you, and our surplus will go to the wealthy shareholders who put up the money!”

By setting up and running these co-operatives and credit unions, people developed valuable skills in understanding and evaluating financial information, in democratic decision-making, in verbalizing their thoughts, in conducting meetings and in making decisions regarding their welfare.

Out of that experience, grew the financial and other co-operatives serving us today. In our large co-operatives and credit unions, the challenge is to provide the same education that these early pioneers gained from the experience of founding the organizations. There are important efforts being made in this direction. For instance, my credit union, Affinity, is striving to communicate with and involve its membership. It has established nine districts, with a number of regions in each district. The credit union has a board of twenty-five, appointed by the councils in the nine districts. The credit union provides a wide variety of services as it strives to meet the financial needs of its members, including personal, business, agriculture, Aboriginal and community services.

The consumer co-operatives and credit unions have grown into very large and successful organizations. In many cases, this growth has included amalgamation of smaller co-operatives and credit unions in different areas. The membership now includes second, third and fourth generations from those who struggled and

established the original organizations. The continuing success of the co-operatives and credit unions depends upon members understanding and accepting their responsibilities as owners of these co-operative businesses. This includes understanding the philosophy and principles established in 1844, and being proud of the difference between an organization that is locally owned and controlled and a for-profit corporation whose board is committed to making a profit for shareholders.

## Chapter Nine

# The Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life

The CCF government introduced many changes in Saskatchewan between 1944 and 1952. These included programs extending universal access to hospital care and automobile insurance, farm security legislation, rural electrification, establishment of larger school units, and many others. It was a privilege to be in one of the front seats as these and other changes were adopted.

But deeper changes were being envisioned as the Douglas government embarked on its third term in 1952. The Douglas government was feeling the need to have a better understanding of the situation as it made further plans for change. Consequently, under Tommy Douglas's leadership, the Saskatchewan government established the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life in 1952, to study and report on the current social and economic structure in the province, people's major challenges, and potential solutions.

At this point, I'd been working with the Department of Co-operatives for seven years, and felt honoured when I was invited to join the Secretariat of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life. My role would be to coordinate the involvement of rural people in the province. I knew this would provide opportunities to use the group dynamics experience provided by the Group Development Institute, and would take me to all the parts of the province that I had visited while organizing agricultural co-operatives.

While I was excited to join the Secretariat of the Royal Commission, it was not easy to leave the groundbreaking role of organizing co-operative farms, the task I'd been assigned to do for the Department of Co-operatives. Terry Phalen continued with this role, while I was tasked with the challenge of involving people

in rural Saskatchewan in listing and prioritizing the problems the Commission should be studying on their behalf. This was a grassroots project involving people throughout the province and a demonstration of democracy in action.

W. B. Baker, who had graduated in Agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan and then pursued post-graduate study in sociology, economics and community development at universities in Kentucky, Minnesota, and Michigan, was invited to chair the Commission. The others invited to be commissioners were selected with a view to representing a broad spectrum of agriculture and rural life in the province. These included

- ✦ Joe Phelps, a farmer and farm leader and also president of the Saskatchewan Farmers' Union,
- ✦ Charlie Gibbings, a farmer, graduate in agriculture and first vice president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (later to become chairman of the Canadian Wheat Board),
- ✦ Harry Fowler, a co-operative leader, innovator and activist, particularly in the development of farm supply co-operatives, Federated Co-operatives and the co-operative refinery,
- ✦ Nancy Adams, past president of the Saskatchewan and Canadian Homemakers associations,
- ✦ T. H. Bourassa, of Lafleche, representing small business people providing services to farm people.

To carry out the study, Bill Baker and the other commissioners decided to invite the extensive participation of rural people throughout Saskatchewan, applying techniques known then as "group dynamics." The second level of involvement was through organizations representing every aspect of life and services in Saskatchewan. The third area was that of research in randomly selected areas of the province. Questionnaires were also used to obtain information from groups such as the reeves of municipalities and chairmen of school districts. Specialists were also used extensively during each aspect of the commission.

This extensive study required a qualified Secretariat. For the roles of secretary and administrator, Bill Baker selected Bill

Harding, seconded from the Adult Education division of the government. Meyer Brownstone was chosen as director of research and I was invited to co-ordinate the involvement of rural people of the province. My role also included attending meetings of the Secretariat and of the Commission.

I remember that on a drive from Regina to Saskatoon, with me driving and Bill writing, the draft of the basic plan for local involvement through community forums was worked out. The draft plan was tested in a rural community and then adjusted as needed. We obtained permission for the Department of Agriculture representatives and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool field men to organize and conduct community forums in their districts. Several consultations were held in each district, assuring that the province would be evenly covered.

Bill Baker and I organized a one-day workshop for the agricultural representatives and the Wheat Pool field men to prepare them to conduct the forums. Communities throughout the province were invited to volunteer to hold forums. There was an enthusiastic response. Communities that agreed to host forums were asked to select representatives from each of the local organizations and other groups serving in the community.

The process for the one-day forums involved organizing the participants into random groups of five or six. The first group task was to discuss and list the problems facing the community, and then identify the top five in order of their importance. The next step was for each group to report to the forum its priority problems. This process identified to the forum, in order of priority, the most serious problems facing the community, in the opinion of those present. The tasks for the morning were thus completed.

In the afternoon, the groups focused on the top five problems identified in the morning. One problem was assigned to each group. The group task was to propose solutions to the problem assigned. Then, for each solution, the group was asked to suggest the responsibility of various parties: the federal government, the provincial government, the local municipality, and the individual citizen, for implementing the solution. In the last session of the day, group reports were presented and discussed.

A local committee was then formed to prepare a brief, on behalf of the community, containing the information generated by the



forum plus other information that might be of interest and value to the commissioners. A few weeks later one of the commissioners and a member of the Secretariat would hold a second meeting in the community, at which the community brief was presented, questioned and discussed.

Ninety-five community forums were held early in 1953, representing all regions of the province. They had an average attendance of eighty-six people. Fifty-seven community hearings were held, with over 1,700 people attending. These included communities in most regions of the province, and generated a great deal of information of use to the commissioners in identifying the major areas on which to concentrate their study.

This process was a great learning experience for me. It provided me the opportunity to put into practice group dynamics principles learned at Group Development Institutes, and to test procedures that were later applied at many co-operative conferences and meetings held over the years.

After the forums and hearings were completed, I spent much of my time on research projects related to the findings of the commission. One of these was a study of the leases held by the veterans on the Carrot River co-operative farms.

The full report of the Commission was released in 1956. The final product was made up of fourteen reports containing 275 recommendations and totaling over three thousand pages. The reports were as follows:

- ✦ The Scope and Character of the Investigation.
- ✦ Mechanization and Farm Costs.
- ✦ Agricultural Credit.
- ✦ Rural Roads and Local Government.
- ✦ Land Tenure.
- ✦ Rural Education.
- ✦ Movement of People.
- ✦ Agricultural Markets and Prices.
- ✦ Crop Insurance.
- ✦ The Home and Family in Rural Saskatchewan.
- ✦ Farm Electrification.
- ✦ Service Centres.
- ✦ Farm Income.

- ✦ A Program of Improvement for Saskatchewan Agriculture and Rural Life.

My role on the Secretariat of the Royal Commission was winding down by the summer of 1955, after three years of involvement. I was preparing to return to the role of Director of the Extension Services Division of the Department of Co-operatives, a division that had been established shortly before I took a leave of absence to work with the Royal Commission. The Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan had decided to establish a training centre for co-operatives, and approached me to see if I would oversee the establishment of the training centre. I accepted, effective October 1, 1955, ten years to the day after I started work with the department. Terry Phalen was hired to replace me as Director of Extension Services with the department. I had some regrets in leaving, as I enjoyed the work and was surrounded by a supportive staff. I was moving into a situation where I was more on my own, but in which I had a board to which to report.

Tommy Douglas had told me that the experience of working with Bill Baker on the Royal Commission would be a learning experience more valuable than a Master's degree from a university, and I'd wager he was right. Bill Baker was a good friend who profoundly influenced my personal and professional development. Bill had an inherent faith in people and a philosophy that, given sufficient information, ordinary people would make wise decisions in determining their own future. He believed that a healthy society should work to make such information available; a philosophy that helped Bill develop the democratic, participative approach to problem solving that proved so valuable in his leadership.

With the winding down of the Royal Commission, the Centre for Community Studies was established at the University of Saskatchewan with Bill Baker as its founding director. As he was building the staff of the Centre, Bill again offered me a key role. I declined, as by that time I was immersed in the development of the new Co-operative Institute, which was housed in the Federated Co-operative's building.

Saskatchewan lost a talented and dedicated leader in Bill when the Liberal Thatcher government withdrew the funding for the Centre for Community Studies at the University of Saskatchewan

in 1966. Bill moved to Ottawa, where he was offered the role of Director of a Canadian Centre for Community Studies at the University of Ottawa. His health problems were a major reason that this centre did not materialize. We lost a great friend and a competent and dedicated social scientist when Bill passed away in 1968, a few days before a heart operation was scheduled, but his influence lives on.

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Through the period I worked with the Royal Commission, 1952–55, I was able to spend more evenings and weekends at home than at any time in my working career. Bob and Gail were in public school and each had their circle of young friends. Gail was taking acrobatic training. Bob had tried it, but it was not for him. Bob, however, enjoyed being a member of the church Cub Pack of which I was a leader. Mary, meanwhile, enjoyed the church group of young women and the Sherwood Co-operative Women's Guild. We both were active in the church couples' club, and I was a member of the church men's club, the AOTS. I sang in the church choir and was on the church board.

We found it very difficult to leave our community, but we moved to Saskatoon in the fall of 1955, when I took the job with the Co-operative Institute. I think it had the greatest effect on Bob, who at ten years of age left two very close pals whom he sorely missed. Gail found it easier to find new friends in Saskatoon.

As a family, we became associated with Grosvenor Park United Church, which was being established in the new area in which we settled in Saskatoon. We quickly found ourselves immersed in church activities including Sunday school, choir, other church groups and fundraising for a new church. Bob and Gail attended Albert School and Mary joined the Saskatoon Co-operative Women's Guild.

## Chapter Ten

# The Co-operative Institute

As co-operatives developed in Saskatchewan from the early 1900s on, a number of methods were used to apply the core co-operative principle of continuous education. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, for instance, set up an organization based on a membership committee at each local grain elevator, which was expected to meet four times a year. To facilitate the education program, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool engaged “field men,” one for each district, to assist committees and delegates to carry out their roles effectively.

Federated Co-operatives Ltd., meanwhile, produced a newspaper, *The Co-operative Consumer*, which provided information to all the members of its retail co-operatives across the prairie provinces. It encouraged and funded the organization of co-operative women’s guilds, which were formed at many of the retail co-operatives.

Co-operative leaders in Saskatchewan and Manitoba were aware of the Co-operative Colleges established in England and the Scandinavian countries, and the saying, popular in Europe, that a co-operative without an education program will only last a generation and a half. This is widely considered a truism of co-operative development, since the people who establish a co-operative can be expected to understand the need for the co-operative and will have educated themselves about the bylaws and policies necessary for its successful operation. With each succeeding generation, however, this information will not be transferred without an effective education program.

It was with this rich legacy of co-operative education in mind that I assumed my duties as Director of the Co-operative Institute in Saskatoon in October 1955. In the first year, the program took over the Federated Co-operatives Ltd.’s (FCL) training activities for retail co-operative employees. I worked with the FCL staff, who provided the technical information required, and was able to use

my experience with teaching methods such as the use of discussion groups to facilitate learning and retention of information.

The first five-day course offered was for lumber department managers of retail co-operatives. My roles were to chair the sessions, conduct group discussion sessions, provide information on co-operative theory and practice, and look after administration. There were fifteen lumber managers at the first course.

My second course was for driver salesmen, who were responsible for promotion and delivery of petroleum products to the farmer members of retail co-operatives. This course provided detailed information on the various petroleum products handled by the retail co-operatives. It also included sessions to build confidence and skill in recruiting members for the co-op and customers for the petroleum products. I also introduced a session on information about co-operatives.

In early 1956, a course was held on bookkeeping and accounting in retail co-operatives. Again, my role was to advertise the course, recruit students, conduct the course, conduct a session on co-operative information, and look after administration.

The co-operative sessions in these courses provided basic information, including

- definition of a co-operative
- co-operative history
- co-operative principles
- organization of a co-operative, including the bylaws
- role and responsibilities of members and the board of directors
- other co-operatives in the community.

Notes were provided for participants to use at their co-operative.

In addition to conducting the courses and looking after administration, I was asked by the personnel department of FCL to administer a Wonderlic Test for employees of retail co-operatives attending courses. This was a form of I.Q. test that measured ability with words, with arithmetic, and with ideas. I had everyone complete the test early in the week. I would then mark the tests and have an interview with each person. The interview would help guide a person as to what additional training or education would be helpful.

We introduced this test because we recognized that many of

the retail employees in the mid 1950s had dropped out of school after Grade 8 or 10. The test helped identify the potential for greater responsibility that many of the managers had, which encouraged many to add to their formal education through correspondence courses and through experience. Many students attributed the start of their successful advancement to this process.

The Wonderlic Test and the counselling helped many managers to move ahead in responsibilities in the co-operative retailing system and the co-op movement. Within a few years, the young people moving into employment and training in co-operatives had a Grade 12 basic education plus graduation from a Community College or University.

I had the opportunity to participate in a number of educational activities at this time, such as the Institute on Co-operative Education, which had been sponsored each year since 1952 by the Co-operative Union of Canada and the Co-operative League of the USA. It was held alternating years in the USA and Canada, and 1956 was Canada's year. The Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan had been asked to host, and so I found myself alongside H. A. (Buck) Wagner of FCL and Terry Phalen of the Department of Co-operatives playing a major role in planning and conducting the Institute.

Leaders of co-operative education and training programs from across Canada and the United States attended the 1956 Institute on Co-operative Education. The program included speakers from a number of co-operatives in Canada. Drs. Beall and Bohlin from the Iowa State College at Ames, Iowa, led a special session in which they reported on their research on the responsibilities of a member of a co-operative, which involved an extensive survey of members of co-operatives from the Altona and Winkler areas of southern Manitoba. Beall and Bohlen explained that it was important for members to understand, accept and carry out their responsibilities if the co-operative was to effectively provide the services for which it was organized.

The most important responsibilities of a member that they identified were to:

- ✦ patronize the co-op for all the services they could use.
- ✦ attend meetings.
- ✦ finance the co-op.
- ✦ provide feedback on the goods and services provided.

- ✦ serve on the board and committees.
- ✦ talk to others about their co-operative.

Beall and Bohlen set out clearly the responsibilities of the members of a co-operative, and emphasized that a co-operative education program should help members to know these responsibilities and to develop skill in carrying them out. They pointed out that if members did not have this information, especially after the co-op had been operating for a few years, they were not likely to continue their support if the co-operative encountered difficult times.

I was impressed with the information in these sessions and the use of a flannelgraph in its presentation. I had a number of discussions with Drs. Beall and Bohlen and was persuaded that it would enhance my understanding if I attended the summer session at Iowa State College, which was to start in a few days. I discussed this with Mary and my co-op advisory committee and before long, Mary and the kids and I were on our way to spend our holidays and an education leave at Ames, Iowa.

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At Ames, I enrolled in the graduate program in Rural Sociology. I took classes in sociology, adult education methods, and psychology. I received A's in each of the classes and was prepared to spend more summers there to earn a Master's Degree in Rural Sociology. However, I found the College required that I spend a fall and winter term in Ames. With the Co-operative Institute just getting under way, I did not feel I could take that amount of time away, so I never did get back to Ames, and my Master's program was put on hold until 1971.

However, the flannelgraph on responsibilities of co-op members and the teaching methods I learned at Ames were used in the program of the Co-operative Institute over the years. One immediate application was a presentation on "What is a Co-op?" that Buck Wagner and I used at several co-operative annual meetings, which tended to spark a lively discussion of the responsibilities of members of the co-operative.

The program for staff of retail co-operatives, in the fall of 1956, covered the same courses as in the first year, but with a

number of additions. The Institute continued to be sponsored by the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan and financed primarily by FCL. My advisory committee consisted of Lewie Lloyd, president of the Co-operative Union, Forrest Scharf, editor of the *Co-op Consumer*, Orville McCreary, personnel manager, and Smokey Robson, head of the field staff of FCL. They were good friends of mine and very helpful in advising on decisions that had to be made.

The annual meeting of the Co-operative Institute, in the fall of 1956, included representatives of other co-operatives who had attended the original meeting. It recommended broadening the program to include meeting training needs of other co-operatives. In response, we developed the first course for the field staff of co-operatives, which presented information on co-operatives and on planning and conducting co-operative education programs. A challenging and interesting part was having each participant present information on the co-operative he or she represented and describe how it applied the co-operative principles.

By the following year, Phil Rothery was added to the staff as educational assistant. He was a graduate in Agriculture who had been on the field staff of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. Phil made it possible for us to handle more courses with less dependence on outside resource people. An example was the preparation of a class in basic arithmetic for the management and merchandise classes, which helped the students to better deal with the mathematics involved in merchandising calculations. In addition to an increased number of courses for staff of retail co-operatives and the course for co-op field staff, an introductory course for credit union staff was added that year.

The third year saw more developments in the Co-operative Institute. One was a move to the fourth floor of the Grain Building on Twenty-First Street, next to the Canada Building, which provided for a much larger classroom, as well as office space. Students were billeted in the Ritz Hotel across the street. The move to the Grain Building required that we provide our own secretarial services. Edith Kinzel and later Anne Ewanchina came to the Institute staff from FCL for this purpose.

It should be understood that at this time, from the mid to late 1950s, most credit unions and retail co-operatives were very small, but growing. Many of the managers had left school early, so courses



were planned for an introductory level. For example, we often had to provide sessions on basic arithmetic before teaching calculations for pricing, gross margins and financial statements.

Many of the managers were motivated to take more training. However, as they completed the initial courses and then returned for more, they started saying, "I studied this last year. What is the next step for me?" This led us to differentiate between 'merchandising' and 'management' and conduct courses in each.

We also noted that general managers of the larger co-operatives would send staff to these courses, but would not attend themselves. To address this, a training activity aimed for general managers of larger co-operatives was planned. This endeavour was assisted and encouraged by Eric Hughes, general manager of the Saskatoon Co-operative. He had been invited to attend an Annual Co-operative Manager's Conference held for managers of retail co-operatives in the United States. He was much impressed with the level of information provided and the discussion. On his return, Eric met with Bob Elmhurst, manager of the Kindersley Co-op, Don Elmgren, manager of the Portage la Prairie Co-op, Smokey Robson of Federated Co-operatives, and me. The result was the first Co-operative Executive Management Conference, to which managers of the larger retail co-operatives in Western Canada were invited. It was a three-day conference held at Valley Centre, Fort Qu'appelle. This became an annual event and a major program of training for the general managers of the larger co-operatives in Western Canada. This will be discussed further in Chapter 14.

Having helped with and attended the Institute on Co-operative Education in 1956, I became involved with it and attended each year. This became a major training activity for me and for the instructors in the Co-operative Institute. It helped my own development and provided resource material for courses at our Co-operative Institute. This annual co-operative education activity later developed into the Association of Co-operative Educators, which is still operating and also described in Chapter 14.

The development and expansion of the program of the Co-operative Institute led us to hire Jake Fehr as an instructor in 1958. Jake had graduated in agriculture from the University of Manitoba, and had been a field man for the Federation of Southern Manitoba Co-operatives and president of the International

Co-operative Institute. He was employed with the Feed Department of FCL. Jake was a dedicated co-operator and a good instructor.

The Co-operative Institute had now been operating for four years under the sponsorship of the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan. We had expanded the program to other co-operatives and personnel of co-operatives in the four western provinces, and so decided to incorporate as an independent organization and seek out more permanent and adequate facilities. These changes led to the incorporation of the Western Co-operative College in 1959.

Starting as a dream in 1955, the Co-operative Institute was now established and accepted as an effective co-operative training centre. It was now ready to take on additional challenges including training of the board and managers of the large central co-operatives, such as FCL and the Wheat Pools. The plan was also to expand this program to the four western provinces.



## Chapter Eleven

# Establishing the Western Co-operative College

The incorporation of the Western Co-operative College (WCC) in 1959 was a natural and necessary expansion of the Co-operative Institute, which, by the late 1950s, had developed into a full-fledged training institution serving the four western provinces. The Institute was already recognized as a leading adult education and learning centre, so it made sense for us to incorporate as a college and to construct residential facilities to house out-of-town adult learners. My main concern throughout my years with the new college, 1955 to 1973, was to provide effective learning experiences for participants in all the college programs.

Up to this time, we had not considered the training needs of directors and managers of larger co-operatives. The board and I recognized the need for a continuum of training programs from basic to advanced, and for more advanced courses taught by resource persons with higher academic education in management, merchandizing and adult education.

This realization challenged my instructional staff and me to enhance our level of competence. We all enrolled in graduate programs in adult education at the University of Saskatchewan and made extensive use of research and training provided by the Association of Co-operative Educators.

The Annual Meeting of the Co-operative Institute, October 2, 1959, was attended by representatives of the major co-operatives in Western Canada. (Appendix 1). They considered questions of incorporation, building requirements, and financing that would lead to the incorporation of the Co-operative Institute as the Western Co-operative College. The chairman, Lewie Lloyd, president of the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan, indicated that money and

hard work, as well as the support of Western Canada's co-operative organizations, would be needed to provide the facilities for carrying on an efficient training program. He said, "We have a chance to make history and hope the opportunity will be taken." The proposal suggested that the name be changed to Western Co-operative College to give broader recognition to the functions being planned for the organization and to the fact that the services were being used by co-operatives across Western Canada.

It was agreed that membership would be on a fee basis, with no share capital. The fee would be low enough that co-operatives such as the Co-operative Women's Guild would not be excluded from joining.

The bylaws for the new college provided for the election of a nine-person Board of Trustees from the delegates of member co-operatives. The trustees were limited to two three-year terms in office. After a one-year period off the board, they would be eligible for re-election. The board was authorized to proceed with incorporation of Western Co-operative College and registering the bylaws.

Those authorized to sign the application for incorporation of the College and who made up the first Board of Trustees were Lewis L. Lloyd (Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan), E. Forrest Scharf (*The Co-operative Consumer*), Howard M. Tyler (Saskatchewan Wheat Pool), W. Breen Melvin (*The Co-operators*), Orville M. McCreary (FCL), John Shields (Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society) and Raymond J. Neville (Saskatchewan Credit Union League).

The statement of objects of the College was of particular significance because of the enhanced services envisioned in carrying out its training role:

- The College shall have power to provide, on a non-profit basis, education and training in co-operative principles and methods and their application to economic and social needs, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing,
- ✦ to develop and conduct training programs and courses for persons interested in co-operatives;
  - ✦ to establish and carry on scholarship and research programs relating to co-operatives;
  - ✦ to provide consultative services for co-operatives;
  - ✦ to develop a cultural centre for co-operatives;

- ♦ to make and enter into contracts and arrangements for affiliating with any college, institution or other organization having similar objects;
- ♦ to establish and maintain a library;
- ♦ to provide such other services of an educational, provident or benevolent nature as shall be conducive to the attainment of these objects;
- ♦ to erect, construct, furnish, equip and alter buildings for the purpose of the said College.

Incorporation took place December 10, 1959, thanks to the work of Dr. W. B. Francis, who then proceeded to have the College recognized for income tax purposes for people making donations to it. Walter Francis was for many years the able solicitor of the Co-operative Unions of Saskatchewan and Canada and for other major co-operatives in Canada.



First Board of Trustees of Western Co-operative College. Standing: Forrest Scharf, Ted Mowbrey, John Peters, Orville McCreary and G. A. (Al) Charboneau. Seated: Harold Chapman, Lewie Lloyd and Howard Tyler.

The bylaws provided for the appointment of a Principal, who would be the chief administration and educational officer. I was appointed to fill this role at the first meeting of the board. They also



Harold Chapman, Principal.

empowered the Board of Trustees to appoint an educational council of five members, of which one would be the Principal. The council acted in an advisory capacity to the board in recommending programs and other functions assigned by the board. The council was very helpful to me in advising on decisions that I had to make.

Preceding this meeting, E. F. Scharf, Vice President of the Board of Management, and I had held two separate meetings with the administration of the University of Saskatchewan with two separate requests:

1. That the Co-operative Institute be accepted as an affiliate to the University similar to St. Andrews College and other affiliates.
2. That for construction of a building for the Co-operative Institute, permission be granted to locate on University property, near the Field Husbandry Barn, south of College Drive.

We were turned down on both requests. I have no idea how far the request was communicated past the administration.

On being refused by the University, a committee consisting of Orville McCreary and me examined a number of alternative locations for a facility. A criterion for the site was that it be close enough to the university that university personnel would be available to teach some of our courses. Our recommendation was to purchase the 3.26-acre building site at the corner of 105th street and Egbert Avenue in the Sutherland area of Saskatoon.

Once the formal go-ahead had been given, a committee of the board and staff prepared a detailed list of functions required for a residential college building. A preliminary estimate of the cost was \$350,000. Tenders were called for architects and the firm of Izumi, Arnott and Sugiyama was engaged. Gordon Arnott was assigned for the job and I found him interested and helpful. He prepared the first draft of plans for a residential college building.

At that time, it so happens that I was invited by the Canadian Association for Adult Education to attend an international conference on residential adult education in Ontario. Other attendees included people from many countries of the world who conducted adult education programs in adult education facilities with residences. I proudly took a copy of the plans that had just been drafted for our own college residence. Participants startled me by saying that these plans were completely out of date because they did not apply new thinking about residences for adult education and learning!

I telephoned Arnott. He immediately got on a plane and joined us at the conference. He picked the brains of the key people at the conference, and promptly discarded the plans he had prepared. People at the conference then helped him to design each aspect of the facility with a view to encouraging learning. He completely redesigned the plans for the Co-operative College building, including three five-sided classrooms for twenty-four students each, with six tables, with large sliding blackboards on two walls, and acoustic properties on walls and ceilings. There were three seminar rooms and a dining room with tables for four. The residences were circular buildings with twelve rooms in each building, with two bunk beds in each room and a comfortable lounge in the centre. An assembly hall



Participants in International Seminar on Adult Education.



with capacity for a hundred people and with a stage was included. The theory was that the adults attending courses should have ample opportunity for informal discussion and sharing of experience, in the classrooms, dining room and residence.

A building fund committee had been established in the fall of 1959 to raise funds to construct the new building. George Munro, president of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society, was chairman, and Jake Fehr of the College staff was given a leave of absence to be full-time fund organizer. An extensive fundraising campaign was organized and carried out, which reached out to all co-operatives and credit unions in the three prairie provinces. There was an enthusiastic and generous response, which resulted in the \$350,000 target being raised. The Co-operative Women's Guilds were particularly helpful in promoting the new College building and encouraging support for the campaign.

Unfortunately, the estimated cost of construction was \$100,000 more than the target for the financial campaign. The board would not tackle another campaign, and so the architect was asked to cut back. As a result, all rooms were reduced in size. This was regrettable, but a workable residential building was produced which was the envy of adult educators throughout North America.

When the Co-operative Institute had first been established, FCL agreed to provide the budget for the first year. The Institute was expected to carry on and expand the program previously conducted by FCL's training services. This programming was financed by annual grants from participating co-operatives, including FCL, and by tuition fees from students attending courses, which were paid by their co-operative employers. When the Co-operative Institute became the Western Co-operative College, the same financial arrangements were followed.

Because the training programs of the College were used by other co-operatives, the main sources of income became grants from major co-operatives that were members of the College, tuition fees for participants in the courses, training services for courses held away from Saskatoon, and fees for conducting conferences and meetings. A shortage of income was always of concern; perhaps we should have been more aggressive in negotiating fees and annual grants to make sure costs were sufficiently covered. Most years we were successful in meeting the budget estimates, but income from courses offered to outside organizations often helped to meet these estimates.



Co-operative Management Course conducted by Western Co-operative College in Winnipeg, April 1962.



Participants in Management Course, Prince Edward Island.

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Construction started in the fall of 1961 and the first course was held in early September 1962, an adult education course in program planning, conducted by Dr. Harold Baker who was with the Centre for Community Studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

Incidentally, 1962 was the year in which Medicare was introduced in Saskatchewan by the CCF government of Woodrow Lloyd. In July, the doctors went on strike for three weeks. At that



FCL's contribution to College Building Fund being presented, 1962.  
Left to right: Don Milne, Manitoba Vice President; Lewie Lloyd, President; Robert Boyes, Saskatchewan Vice President; Harold Chapman, Principal; Maurice Jevne, Alberta Vice President.

time a number of Co-operative Community Clinics were incorporated to provide health services, working with doctors who refused to go on strike. The Saskatoon Community Clinic was incorporated in July 1962. It required space from which to operate. The space used by the Co-operative College in the Avenue Building was ideal for the Clinic, so the College moved in August to its new building before construction was complete. The first course was held using a residence as a classroom.

It would be an understatement to say that these were busy years for me. I was appointed Principal of Western Co-operative College, with responsibility for education and administration. In addition, I was appointed secretary of the Board of Trustees.

The new residential building allowed for more courses and other programs to be offered. This required additional staff. Eric Rasmussen, who had been with the Accounting Department of FCL, became the College Treasurer. He quickly moved into the role of teaching the accounting classes and later the Management of Finance course. Eric later wrote a book on co-operative accounting entitled *Financial Management in Co-operative Enterprises*, which was used by retail co-operatives across Canada and in some developing countries.

Bill Hlushko, from the Alberta Co-operative Wholesale, was the third instructor added to our staff. Martha Friend became



Official opening of new Western Co-operative College building, October 1962. Addressed by Dean J. F. Leddy, Vice President, University of Saskatchewan. Seated, l to r: Lewie Lloyd, Hon. Woodrow Lloyd, Forrest Scharf, Howard Tyler, Betty Cappy, and Harold Chapman.



Western Co-operative College building.

our secretary and was soon assisted by Eva Quintaine. Bertha and Barney Loehr applied for the jobs of supervisor of food preparation and serving, and of building maintenance, respectively. They were good friends of mine and very helpful over the years. With the expanded staff, I was authorized to add an administration manager. I

hired Jack Collier in that role. He later applied for the job of instructor, and was replaced by Boris Maduke as administration manager.

In 1963, the Co-operative Union of Canada named me as one of the six Canadian representatives to the triennial meeting of the International Co-operative Alliance in Bournemouth, England. This organization was made up of co-operatives in countries throughout the world. I was impressed with the co-operative leaders from the many countries, including those from behind the Iron Curtain. The proceedings were carried in English, French, Spanish and Russian. I had the opportunity of addressing the assembly, describing Western Co-operative College, its organization and program. Following the meeting, Lewie Lloyd and I visited the co-operative colleges in England, Finland and Sweden. I learned from each, but was particularly impressed with the training program of Var Gard, the Swedish Co-operative College, where co-operative managers spent two years. The program included extensive training at the college and then time spent as instructors. This program had been in effect for many years, so almost all the managers of co-operatives in Sweden were graduates and thus were alumni of their co-operative college.

On my return, I proposed to my board a program in which employees of member co-operatives might be given three months



The Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance at Bournemouth, England, 1963. Canadian representatives, 4<sup>th</sup> row: Ralph Staples, Lorayne Janison, Lewie Lloyd, and Harold Chapman.

leave with pay to attend Western Co-operative College. My proposal was accepted, and Jim Wright of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool was the first to enrol in this program. The program consisted of taking all of the courses offered by the college that were relevant to his work. He then helped with administration and instruction in a number of the courses, including the co-operative information and the introductory adult education courses. FCL and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool each enrolled a number of people in this program. Jim Wright was appointed Secretary of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool a few years later.

To further supplement the college's instructional staff, a number of university students were given the opportunity to take training given by the college and then to assist with administration and with instruction in the basic courses. The students included Diane Hancock; Barret Halderman, who later became a lawyer and then a judge; and Jack Craig, who had been a field man for the Co-operative Public Relations Federation at Kindersley, and who went on to earn a doctorate from and join the faculty of sociology at York University, focusing on co-operatives in Canada. Dan Beveridge was one of the University of Saskatchewan students who was on the staff of the Co-operative College and later was employed with the Department of Extension of the University of Regina for many years.

As the College program developed and the number of course offerings increased, each of the instructors tended to specialize in particular courses. Phil Rothery helped plan and then conducted the first course for credit union employees. He specialized in this area, working with the Saskatchewan Credit Union League and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society. These courses were held in Saskatoon and also taken to the other western provinces. As the credit unions grew, so did the number and variety of courses developed to meet their training needs. Phil was succeeded by Don Pavelick, who later managed a large credit union in Manitoba. Years later, this training program led to the development of the Canadian Credit Union Institute.

Many of Saskatchewan's retail co-operatives were incorporated in the late 1920s and the 1930s. In the larger centres, these co-operatives grew in volume of business and number of members over the years. The complexity of the jobs of general manager, department managers and other employees also increased, and so the training needs for these positions increased as well, and a series of courses was developed in consultation with FCL staff. The program inspired a common comment from many course participants: "I will take the more advanced management and merchandising courses, but I do not have time for the introductory co-operative information course." To effectively carry out the "co-operative" part of the role, I felt it very important that the manager had a good understanding of the co-operative, its philosophy, principles, structure, bylaws, the role of members and the board and the other co-operatives operating in the community. I felt the study involved in earning a certificate in co-operative management was not complete without the co-operative information course.

The courses that made up Certificate No. 1 in Co-operative Management started with the co-operative information course, followed by a basic merchandising course and a basic management course. These were followed by two relevant courses in order to earn the certificate. In the year in which this series was established, almost all the courses sponsored by FCL were co-operative information courses, in order to get the people who had taken the other courses qualified for the certificate. The certificates were well received and in general the employees looked forward to going through the series. They displayed their certificate with pride.

The College sometimes encountered problems with instructors or guest lecturers who were prepared to talk for their whole period. Our studies had indicated that talking alone (lecturing) was the least efficient method of teaching. We followed the practice that in each period the speaker would have a third of the time to deliver information; another third would be spent in groups, under the direction of the college instructor, raising questions and discussing the application of the information to their co-operative; and the final third would receive the reports from the groups with the speaker answering questions and adding more information. These were general guidelines, though many instructors really appreciated working in this way.

When I was first appointed Director of the Co-operative Institute, I felt challenged to provide effective learning experiences for those attending the courses we conducted. The instructors that we added to the staff shared the same interest. We assembled books dealing with the adult as a learner and teaching methods for effective change or learning. We also took turns attending the Annual Institute sponsored by the Association of Co-operative Educators which presented up-to-date programs and research aimed at co-operative members, directors and managers. We worked this material into our teaching methods and programs at Western Co-operative College.

Drs. Harold Baker and Per Stensland from the Centre for Community Studies at the University of Saskatchewan were an important resource in the development of these courses at Western Co-operative College. At the same time, they were giving leadership to the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan in developing a graduate program in Continuing Education. I enrolled in the first course being offered along with Jake Fehr and Bill Hlushko. I took a second course the next year, though my workload prohibited me from continuing further. Jake and Bill, and later Ole Turnbull, completed their Master's Degrees in Continuing Education at the University of Saskatchewan. This university program helped inspire a series of five-day courses in Adult Education at Western Co-operative College, which could be taken over a period of years, and which earned a Certificate in Adult Education.

In the late 1950s, recognizing the importance of education for their members and inspired by the Wheat Pool model, Federated Co-operatives Ltd. tasked H. A. (Buck) Wagner, a former Saskatchewan Wheat Pool field man, with organizing a co-operative public relations federation in each FCL district in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. This co-operative public relations federation would provide a framework in which qualified field men were hired to assist local co-ops with their member education and public relations. The members of these public relations federations were the retail co-operatives in the district, sometimes joined by credit unions. Each federation elected a Board of Directors, which hired a co-operative educational field man. The federations were funded by FCL and the local co-operatives in the district. The field men all enrolled in the series of courses in Adult Education at the College, where the assignments helped them develop the education



programs and activities they would carry out in the district. The field men were very effective in helping the local co-operatives to plan and carry out annual and other meetings and to plan member education and public relations programs. They also were certified as instructors by the College and conducted basic College courses in the district.

Some local co-operatives found it difficult and expensive to sponsor many of their employees to attend courses at the Western Co-operative College in Saskatoon. A solution we introduced was a 'training of trainers' course at the College, which certified people who took the training to conduct basic College courses locally. The first such instructor certified by the College was Harold Empey, the assistant manager of the Portage la Prairie Co-operative. Harold set up a classroom at his co-operative and took all the employees through the co-operative information and basic merchandising courses. A number of directors and interested members also attended.

A number of the co-operative educational field men became certified Western Co-operative College instructors as a result of this course. Later, all the board members of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Women's Guild took the training to be College instructors. They conducted many Co-operative information courses, as well as shorter sessions and co-operative workshops in their districts. The role of the College was to train the instructors, maintain the curriculum, and keep a record of all who had taken the College courses locally. It was gratifying to be aware of the many directors and members who had participated in this program.

I was very disappointed when the FCL's district Co-operative Public Relations Federations disappeared from the scene by the late 1960s. As a means of cost saving, FCL had decided to cut off its share of the funding for this program. I was invited to a number of meetings with the boards of these federations at which alternate ways of financing were discussed, but I was not successful in persuading them to maintain the program.

In the early 1960s, Alex Laidlaw, secretary of the Co-operative Union of Canada and a former teacher, developed a correspondence course on the co-operative movement. Western Co-operative College accepted the role of advertising the program and of marking the papers. Many employees and leaders in co-operatives enrolled in the course and invested a lot of work and study into completing it.

Lou Gossen, on the College's staff, administered the course for a number of years. Incidentally, after I retired from FCL, one of my part-time jobs at the Co-operative College was administering the co-operative correspondence course.

For many years, the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan oversaw a five-day summer program for young people assisted by a staff consisting of field men from the major co-operatives, the Saskatchewan Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development, and the Extension Department of the University of Saskatchewan. As the instructional staff of the Western Co-operative College grew, we assisted with the staffing of the five-day co-operative schools, several of which were held each summer at different locations. When the new College building opened in 1962, it became the popular location for a co-operative school. The summer students working on the College staff assisted with staffing these schools.

In the late 1960s, the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan agreed to transfer the administration of the summer youth program to Western Co-operative College. A youth program director was added to the college staff. As described by Jodi Crewe in *An Educational Institution of Untold Value: Evolution of the Co-operative College of Canada*, the program grew to include youth camps, co-op college courses, field trips and other activities that involved young people in co-operative education.

In succession, Linden Hillier, Fred Clark and Don O'Neill led the junior, senior and leadership youth programs during the summer, with additional activities during the year. These leaders have all gone on to play important roles in co-operatives and government. These youth programs have been a major co-operative educational opportunity for young members of co-operatives. Many of the directors of co-operatives in Saskatchewan once attended a summer co-op school. The co-operative youth program continues today under the leadership of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association.

Over the years, there was pressure to conduct more courses, both at the College and at other locations. There was also encouragement to seek other clients such as overseas students and school-teachers, and to conduct extension courses across Canada. These program initiatives will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.



## Chapter Twelve

# Outreach and Programming at the Western Co-operative College

Our college had built a reputation for educational and training programs, and we fielded many requests for training and new programming from co-operatives and other organizations across Canada. I was privileged to meet with individual teachers who wanted to incorporate co-operative education and innovative teaching methods used by the College. I also held meetings with the co-operative wholesales in Ontario and the Maritimes to plan training in management and merchandising for personnel in their retail co-operatives. Personnel in the Department of Indian Affairs arranged for management training for members of Band Councils. We planned and conducted courses for recently organized retail co-operatives in the Northwest Territories. Western Co-operative College also administered the co-operative youth program for Saskatchewan.

I also worked with representatives of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to plan a course for overseas students. The Western Co-operative College's training for overseas students started in 1961, when the principal of the co-operative college in Nigeria joined us for about six months of study. Around that time a number of other co-operative leaders from overseas were touring co-operatives in Canada. I observed that the training opportunities for these leaders were sporadic and that overseeing the tours occupied significant time of leaders in our co-operatives. I proposed offering a course for overseas students at Western Co-operative College, which would include the content from our regular courses with additional information about Canadian co-operatives. This was accepted by our board and also by the CIDA representative.

This was the beginning of the WCC's Course for Overseas Students, which lasted from 1961 to 1969. The program included many of the courses conducted by the College, as well as a study of the major co-operatives serving Western Canada. The program provided welcome income to the College, though I have wondered if it took attention away from working more closely with our member co-operatives and arranging stable sources of funding in Western Canada.

When the program was first being established, the Extension Department of the University at Antigonish, Nova Scotia, expressed concerns because we were competing with their program for overseas students. We successfully argued that our program was management oriented while theirs focused on theory and philosophy.

We scheduled the program for overseas students so it took place in the summer, during a time when it was more difficult to attract employees of Canadian co-operatives to College courses. One of our instructors was assigned to be fulltime coordinator for the course. Others would provide resource assistance as needed. Our emphasis was on helping the students prepare to apply the course information to their work and to the co-operatives in their countries. The assignments helped them develop plans and present them to the class for feedback and evaluation. Most of the students were mature and experienced. The presentations and discussion provided effective learning sessions.

We encouraged local community members to become acquainted with the students and to invite them to visit their homes. On a long weekend during the course, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Women's Guild helped organize the hosting of students by co-op families throughout the province. On these occasions, the students often participated in and spoke at local events. Students proudly showed pictures of riding on combines and participating in whatever work was being done on the farm. The host families would generally see their student several times during the summer. They often kept in contact for years afterwards.

The students were recruited from English-speaking countries in Southeast Asia (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Indonesia), Africa (Nigeria, Kenya, the Congo, Uganda, and Tanzania) and the Caribbean (Barbados, Trinidad, Grenada, St. Lucia, Jamaica and Guyana). Approximately a third of each group that attended the Co-operative College came from each of

these three regions. After the first year, the number of students was increased from twenty-five to about forty-five, and the students were divided into two groups for instructional purposes.

As each group approached the end of its course, the students prepared an evening program in which all areas were represented. The College staff and spouses were invited as well as people who had hosted them during the course. Several of the groups prepared a class paper that included pictures and information on each student in the program.

The students who participated in the Overseas Program were experienced co-operators who were interested in gaining knowledge and experience to apply in their workplaces. I remember one course in which there were two senior students from India and Pakistan. They became good friends at a time when their countries were at war. On another occasion, a group of young Inuit from the Northwest Territories were at the College studying the management of retail co-operatives at the same time as a group of overseas students. The two groups were very interested in each other, and participated together in the concert at the end of their respective courses. Another year there was snow in early September. The students were thrilled to see the snow, and took great delight in making snowballs and throwing them at each other.

An innovation I initiated in classes for overseas students was singing. One Monday morning they were all looking serious and formal. I started singing, "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag and smile, smile, smile." The students were from English speaking countries, most of which had been British colonies. They participated in the singing and it sure lightened up the atmosphere in the classroom! At first we used our co-op song books, then the students developed a song book which included some of their native songs.

Many different kinds of learning went on with the participants of these courses. We also learned a lot from them. Our staff and their families and the many people who hosted and associated with the students gained much from the experience.

This program wound down in about 1969 because of cuts to CIDA. Instead, CIDA contracted with the College to have instructors carry out training assignments in some of the developing countries. I spent two months in Guyana assisting the Co-operative Union of Guyana to establish a co-operative training centre, while Ole Turnbull and Eric Rasmussen were conducting training in India.



Harold Chapman, giving lecture on "What is a Co-op" at the Co-operative Training Institute in Guyana, March 1967, also demonstrating the use of the flannelgraph to increase retention of information.



Harold Chapman addressing a graduating class: with officials of the Department of Co-operatives in Guyana, 1967.

In the summers of 1969 and 1970, Memorial University of Newfoundland contracted with the Co-operative College for me to conduct a three-month course for students from overseas. Mary accompanied me. We rented a suite and enjoyed becoming acquainted

with Newfoundland and its co-operatives. The course content for the first half of the course was the same as for the courses held at the college in Saskatoon. It also included a week on Fogo Island, which was very rustic, but the people were friendly and were happy to show off the many co-operatives that had been developed. The course also included a tour of co-operatives on Prince Edward Island. There we were joined by Terry and Marj Phalen. By now, Terry was the secretary of the Co-operative Union of Canada in Ottawa.

The fisheries section of the course was resourced by specialists in the handling and marketing of fish. My role continued to be administration and conducting the course. The resource people invited me to participate in the filleting and grading of fish. We spent a day on the ocean in a large fishing boat. Mary accompanied the class and all were impressed that she was the only one who did not get seasick.

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Providing training and resources to schoolteachers represented a tremendous opportunity for the Western Co-operative College to build public awareness of co-operative principles and practices. By the 1960s, there had been reference to co-operatives in the Saskatchewan school curriculum for many years. There had also been some experience in organizing school co-operatives, though teachers admitted they had neither the experience nor the resource material to deal effectively with the subject.

The role of the Co-operative College in fostering co-operative education in the schools started when two teachers attended a co-operative information course in the fall of 1968. They had in mind getting material and methods that could be adapted to the classroom.

The next year, 1969, the College board agreed to sponsor a Co-operative Information Course for School Teachers. This was held in late August, shortly before school started. FCL and the Sask. Wheat Pool agreed to sponsor the course by paying tuition and accommodation costs at the College. The teachers' contribution was to take the time to attend the course. Twenty-five teachers attended in each of two years.

Content of the course was very similar to that of the regular co-op information course at the Co-operative College: co-operative history, philosophy and principles; types of co-operatives serving



communities in Saskatchewan; the Co-operative Associations Act; steps in organizing a co-operative; responsibilities of members, directors, manager and staff; and the various forms of business organization in our society, including individual, partnership, and for-profit, crown and co-operative corporations. The focus in each section of the course was extremely practical: how this information would be taught in the classroom and what resource material would be required. The teachers developed lesson plans and demonstrated them to the class.

By the end of the course's second year, the Department of Education asked the Co-operative College to prepare a manual that teachers could use for teaching that part of the curriculum in the schools. Under Ole Turnbull's leadership, two schoolteachers were hired, who prepared the material for the manual and tested it in several schools. The manuals were printed and placed in each school in the province. The two teachers were available for the remainder of the year for workshops and other assistance for teachers using the material. This was a helpful resource used for many years in Saskatchewan schools.

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Two groups that were not part of the early training programs of the Western Co-operative College were directors and managers of the large co-operatives in Western Canada. Recognizing this gap, we decided to bring in qualified people who would attract members of these groups to attend the courses.

During the early years of the Co-operative Institute and the Western Co-operative College, the management courses were generally attended by managers of smaller co-operatives and department managers. By the end of the five-day course, the department managers would say, "My general manager should be attending this course!" We had to gradually build recognition and status for the management courses.

In the early 1960s, the executive of the Co-operative Managers Association invited Dr. George Terry, who authored a book on management that was used in the Co-operative College's management courses, to conduct a two-day management course at the annual Co-operative Manager's Conference. He was a popular

speaker and well received by those attending. A copy of his book was given to each manager in attendance. This was one of the many times that the Co-operative Managers' Association was helpful in building recognition for the training in management provided by the Western Co-operative College.

Another key resource person who played a prominent role in extending the College's programming to co-op boards and managers was Dr. Leon Garoyan of Oregon State University. I became aware of and then acquainted with Dr. Garoyan through the annual Association of Co-operative Educators conference held in alternating years in Canada and in the USA. He had been engaged to do research and prepare a training program for the directors, boards and managers of large agricultural co-operatives in the northwest USA; research which led to the development of a training manual, *The Board of Directors in Co-operatives*.

The purpose of this manual was to help directors and managers of co-operatives learn, together, their role in the management of an organization. The board and general manager were referred to as the Leadership Team, and each had specific roles to play.

I arranged for Dr. Garoyan to hold a course at the Co-operative College for managers and directors of large co-operatives in Western Canada. It was very well received and became a major program of the College. Dr. Garoyan conducted the course each year for several years. The staff of the college then conducted this course with the board, manager and senior staff of many co-operatives across Canada. The course brought together directors and managers of major co-operatives in Canada, many of whom were competing with one another in the marketing of grain and the sale of farm supplies. It got them talking together and resulted in a major conference of co-operatives that were competing in the sale of livestock feeds and farm supplies. They discussed collaboration in a way that had never been feasible before. The value of the Western Co-operative College residences was demonstrated, as course participants used the lounges, becoming acquainted and informally exchanging information in the evenings.

The course, Board/Management Roles and Responsibilities, became a major Western Co-operative College program. We were able to recruit directors and several general managers from the three Wheat Pools, FCL, and several other central co-operatives

to enrol. The course was very successful, opening the door of the Co-operative College to the boards and general managers of central co-operatives across Canada. It also introduced management terms that became common to co-operatives across Canada.

One source of conflict was that the general managers of many of the larger co-operatives attended the management course at Banff, which was also attended by managers of large for-profit corporations. Some of the approaches and definitions were different from those of Dr. Garoyan, who had based his research on working specifically with co-operatives.

I found Garoyan's approach to the Leadership Team of board and manager to be the best model for co-operatives. I had the opportunity to introduce it to a variety of other organizations while I was serving on their boards. While on the board of the Saskatoon Region Community College in 1976, for instance, I was asked to lead a strategic planning workshop with the board and staff, formulating objectives, goals, key performance areas and key indicators. I led a similar workshop while I was on the North Saskatchewan Council of Boy Scouts of Canada in 1984.

The Board/Management Roles and Responsibilities course also became part of the program for our students from overseas. Also, the executive of the Co-operative Managers Association arranged to have Dr. Garoyan conduct this course as a major part of an annual Co-operative Management Conference, which helped managers develop a common approach and standard terms relating to the role of the directors and the manager in the management of a co-operative.

The course on Board/Manager Roles and Responsibilities identified a two-fold challenge facing the board: that of representing the members' interests while also overseeing the conduct of the co-operative. The board is charged by law with the welfare of the organization and is responsible for the long-term guidance of the co-operative corporation. In carrying out its role, the board fulfills five basic functions:

1. *Supreme decision centre:* The board is the final authority on administrative decisions. Areas for board decisions include establishing objectives, adopting policies, approving goals, selecting the general manager (Chief Executive Officer) and overseeing his or her actions.

2. *Advisory function:* The board carries out an advisory function for both the manager and the members.
3. *Trustee function:* The board functions as a trustee for members and creditors. It must see that the co-operative is operating on a basis consistent with the wishes of the members and following good financial management practices.
4. *Perpetuating function:* The board must provide for the continuity of the organization, including its role in selecting and appraising the general manager and providing for manager succession. It also includes maintaining an effective board of directors by recruiting capable candidates and providing them with a comprehensive board training program. Maintaining an effective member education program is also part of this function.
5. *Symbolic function:* This is a function of leadership, a position of honour, responsibility and trust. This is evidenced by board members' support of the co-operative and recognition received as leaders.

Board responsibilities were discussed at the course and incorporated into a job description for the board.

Concepts that appeared particularly helpful to course participants and to the co-operatives represented were the following:

*Objectives* are statements of purpose that define what the management team, board and manager believe to be the mission of the co-operative. They should be reviewed periodically and should be stated for every area in which performance and results directly affect the performance of the organization. The board needs to specify objectives broadly for the whole organization, which can guide units within the organization in establishing their objectives.

*Goals* are benchmarks in moving towards achieving objectives. They are time oriented. They indicate progress that is desired. As part of the planning process of the organization, goals should be set at each operating level of the organization. The final setting of goals to be approved by the board includes the budget for the coming year.

*Policies* are guidelines for making decisions that will contribute to achieving goals of the organization. Policies deal with vital issues concerning actions that will affect the success of the organization.

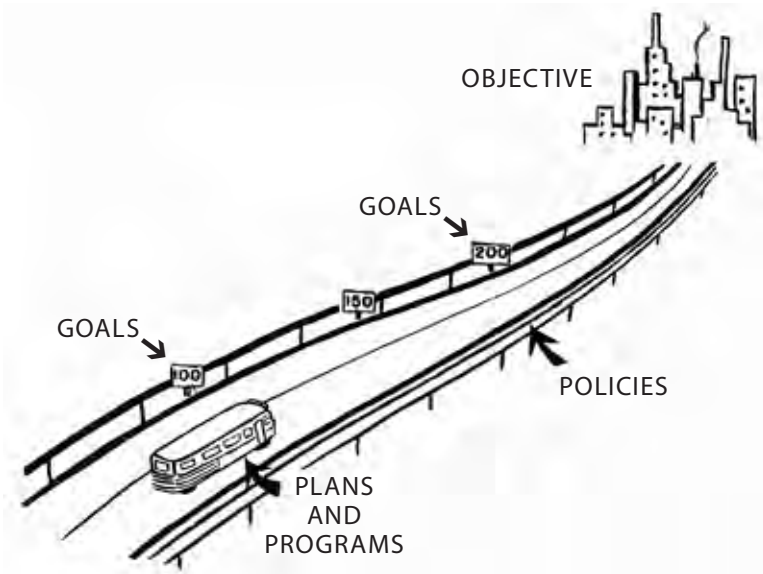


Fig. 1. Objectives, Goals, Policies: Company Foundations

Source: The Board of Directors of Co-operatives, Garoyan & Mohn

Policies are relevant for each area in which objectives have been stated. The board's role is to see that policies have been developed and to reference them in making decisions

*Key Performance Areas* are the business performance areas that are vital to the success and survival of the organization. This concept is that programs be developed for each area as part of the annual planning process. Important key performance areas might include volume forecast, expenses, personnel, new members, member education, director training, and attendance at the annual meeting.

*Key Indicators* are items that for each key performance area can alert the board and manager of impending problems. Consisting of a number, a ratio, a percentage, or a qualitative or quantitative statement of condition, the key indicators can inform the board and manager of the condition of a key performance area. This can alert them to pending problems.

*The Annual Plan* should contain the program for each key performance area. One of the tools for carrying this out is the budget. The periodic reports during the year should provide information on progress identified for the key Indicators. In some cases, the information will be reported monthly, for example in the budget. Other key

indicators might report on a quarterly or even an annual basis.

Participants also found the concept of the board and manager being considered a single *leadership team* particularly helpful. The manager would be responsible for the operations of the co-operative while the board, in addition to having overall control, would be concerned with the key performance areas of member relations, public relations, government relations, and director recruitment and development.

Recognition of the board's responsibility for the key performance areas of member and public relations led to discussion of the resources needed by the board to help carry out this role. Many boards handle this through a member relations committee made up of two or three board members with the addition of several interested members and a member of the staff providing administrative assistance.

During the 1960s and 70s, the Western Co-operative College's board/management training program helped both local and central co-operatives in Canada develop a consistent approach to fostering effective leadership from boards and general managers. It improved mutual understanding of the various roles and helped co-operatives to formulate their objectives and goals, develop their plans and their key indicators, formulate better job descriptions for the board and the general manager, and prepare board manuals. The Western Co-operative College's course on board/manager roles and responsibilities is described in the book, *The Contemporary Director*, which was used by co-operatives for many years as a resource text in their training of directors.

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In 1973, the passing of the Canadian Co-operative Associations Act facilitated incorporating Western Co-operative College federally as the Co-operative College of Canada. This had become advisable because College programs were now offered across Canada, including training services for the co-operatives in Ontario and the Atlantic provinces. The College had also expanded its program with the Canadian International Development Agency, providing consultation and training for personnel of co-operatives throughout the developing world.

By the later part of the 1970s, the College was finding it increasingly difficult to attract enough students to make effective use of its

residential buildings, opened in 1962. As a result, the board decided in the mid 1980s to sell the buildings, which had been praised by adult educators across Canada, and open an office in downtown Saskatoon from which its course offerings could be delivered across Canada.

The Co-operative College of Canada gave leadership, along with FCL, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and the Saskatchewan Credit Union Central, in establishing the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan in 1984. This Centre provides leadership in university-level research and education on co-operatives.

In 1987, the Co-operative College of Canada amalgamated with the Co-operative Union of Canada. Both organizations had the same co-operatives as members and the same delegates attending the two annual meetings each year. The Co-operative College of Canada became the Education Department of the Canadian Co-operative Association. The Canadian Co-operative Association has branches in each of the western provinces, the Atlantic provinces and Ontario. These are incorporated under provincial co-operative legislation and each has a Board of Directors and staff. Their major role is co-operative development within the province.

The training programs for directors and managers of central co-operatives, the adult education series of courses for field staff and supervisors, along with the certificates that were offered by the Co-operative College, have disappeared. The Credit Union Institute has continued to provide training for Credit Union personnel, including directors and managers in Canada.

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I had been with the Co-operative College for over seventeen years when Don Tullis offered me the role of Member and Public Relations Director with Federated Co-operatives Ltd. in 1973. I decided to take the opportunity to apply in a large co-operative organization what I had been teaching and advocating over the years. I continued to maintain a relationship with the Co-operative College, staying actively involved through my years with FCL and for years after my retirement.

## Chapter Thirteen

# Adult Learning and Development Applied to Co-operatives

The job of the Co-operative Institute and then the Co-operative College was to develop and disseminate courses and programs aimed at helping co-operators to become more effective in carrying out their roles, be they members, directors, committee members, delegates, managers or staff. These persons were all adults, with varying amounts of education and experience, so the challenge was to help them move towards being fully functioning in their role, understanding the role and carrying it out to the best of their ability. Perhaps the most significant contribution of my career was in developing understanding of how adults learn and applying it in the programs of the Co-operative College.

Through the Group Development Institutes in 1949 and the early 50s, and the experience with the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life, and then at Ames, Iowa, I was challenged with the questions: What is learning? How do you help adults to change? Can you have confidence that change has occurred as a result of an activity you planned and conducted?

As described earlier, the research reported at the Institute on Co-operative Education in 1956 helped identify the responsibilities of a member of a co-operative. These included understanding the co-operative principles and philosophy, patronizing the co-op, financing the co-op, communicating suggestions and needs, participating in meetings, and acting on boards and committees. These can provide a basis for an education program for members.

Providing educational programming is the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The Annual Meeting is a business meeting required by law for official reporting by the board and for electing members of the board. Depending on the number of members in



the co-operative it may be attended by only a small percentage of the membership and cannot be considered a major educational activity. Additional activities are required which can reach out and help people become effective members.

The Institute on Co-operative Education held in 1958 at Columbus, Ohio, introduced five key principles of adult learning. These principles provide a useful checklist for developing education programs for adults:

1. The problem to be solved needs to be considered important by the person trying to solve it. A person is not motivated to learn something he or she does not feel is important.
2. Find out what the learner knows and start there. The person has had previous learning and experience, which should be recognized in planning a program.
3. A learner must go through a learning process. Learning is not transferred directly from one person to another. The learning experience needs to provide the process for a person to learn or change.
4. Learning requires the integration of new facts and information into the experience of the learner. There is a need to start where people are, not where you think they are or would like them to be.
5. A learner feels more responsible for what he or she helps or decides to create. Give them the opportunity to discuss, ask questions, understand, analyze and decide on its relevance and application.

Here is an example of how we applied these principles at the Co-op College: A third of an instruction period would be used by a resource person providing information. A third would be used for small groups of four or five people discussing the application of the information to their specific situations and raising questions. The final third of the time would be devoted to receiving reports from the groups, with the speaker or resource person commenting on the reports and answering questions. Even the resource persons grew to appreciate this procedure aimed at applying the adult learning principles.

In applying these principles, the other instructors and I recognized the importance of such tools as handout notes, and using chalk

boards, flip charts and various other visuals. Another challenge I grappled with a great deal in my years of teaching, is to work with different ways of enhancing the learner's ability to retain information. A study presented at an Institute on Co-operative Education reported on research carried out at the University of Wisconsin. It reported that learners retain

- ✦ Ten percent of what they read.
- ✦ Twenty percent of what they hear.
- ✦ Thirty percent of what they see.
- ✦ Fifty percent of what they see and hear.
- ✦ Seventy percent of what they say as they speak.
- ✦ Ninety percent of what they say as they carry out an activity and at the same time give an explanation of it.

I am sure these are general results that would vary with each individual and situation. Interestingly, updated research presented at the Association of Co-operative Educators' Institute in July 2011 presented almost identical percentage levels of retention. In developing learning experiences to help an individual move towards being fully functioning in a role, they provide useful guidance. For example, reading, or a lecture alone, provides for only limited retention. However, if small-group discussions and reporting can be added, the understanding and retention of the information will increase significantly.

A combination of hearing and seeing could be achieved through a lecture accompanied by handout notes, audio visuals, illustrations on newsprint or chalkboard, or a computer presentation with commentary by the speaker.

Of note is the fact that a person who has studied a topic and is making the presentation, answering questions and providing additional information on that topic will retain ninety percent of what they've learned. An example of this level of retention could be when a schoolteacher prepares a lesson, presents it and follows it up with group discussions and reports. The children hearing the lesson will retain far less, but the adult who spends the previous evening preparing the lesson and delivering it to the class is strengthening his or her understanding of the information in the lesson being taught. An example of a student in our school system attaining a 90% level of retention is illustrated in the Science Fairs held across the province.

The student studies a topic, prepares a visual presentation and then explains his or her findings to those attending and observing the fair.

Doing, explaining and allowing for a follow up activity provides the top level of retention and could be illustrated by a person writing and explaining a policy or a report, developing and presenting bylaws, preparing and explaining a financial statement, reporting on attending a meeting or conference, or carrying out a study and reporting on it. All are at the ninety-percent retention level. But remember that those receiving or hearing the activity will be at a lower level of retention depending on the method of presentation! The person at the ninety-percent level is also challenging and developing his or her own values and philosophy.

In programming for learning and development, the challenge is to use methods which recognize the levels at which the most effective learning takes place. For example, when dealing with a topic after dinner at a Rotary meeting, consider the relative effectiveness of different methods on the level of learning by the fifty or more members attending the meeting. Provision of audio visuals, handout notes and a question period can increase the value of the time used.

Another practical example is where a person is delegated to attend a meeting or conference on behalf of a group. Think of the amount he or she learns through each of the following activities:

- ✦ Listening to a speaker talk.
- ✦ Observing visuals used in the presentation or receiving and reading handout notes.
- ✦ Preparing a report on the activity.
- ✦ Presenting the report to the group, with recommendations, and answering questions.

The amount of information retained from each activity should be recognized by the board. This applies to a delegate attending the Annual Meeting of FCL, a young person attending the five-day summer Co-op School, and a director attending FCL district meetings or the fall region conference. Time spent preparing and presenting these reports is a learning experience for all.

The Co-operative College built these concepts into the training of its staff and into the courses conducted, in particular those for field men, directors and managers of co-operatives. The programming for

courses included a combination of activities and methods designed to help a person move towards being fully functioning in whatever role he or she played in the co-operative.

My quest for knowledge about the adult as a learner led to my enrolment in the first class in Continuing Education offered by the College of Education of the University of Saskatchewan in the fall of 1963. Jake Fehr, Bill Hlushko and I enrolled and spent our Saturday mornings with instructors Per Stensland and Harold Baker. This led us to explore many books on adult learning including one by Roby Kidd entitled *How Adults Learn*. Roby Kidd was recognized as one of the most important educators of the twentieth century. He was a scholar, an organizer, and a teacher with a lifelong commitment to the education of adults worldwide. This book provided information and emphasis on the adult learner and adult learning.

The course challenged us to recognize each adult as a unique person who had years of experience and previous learning, as well as years of development of attitudes and biases.

Among the concepts introduced by Per Stensland was that of “spiraling” learning experiences. Spiraling involves interspersing segments of theory with the opportunity to test or apply that theory in practical situations. It allows for evaluation and discussion of the experience, thus providing additional depth of learning.

This model suggests that in programming for adult learning, inputs of theory should be followed with opportunities to apply the theory. The principle has application regardless of the length of the program.

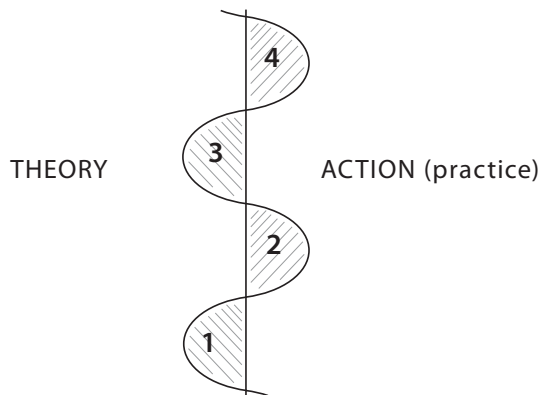


Fig. 2. Spiral model for programming adult learning.

One of our applications of this concept at the Co-operative College was the use of assignments in which students would illustrate the application of course information to their job or role. They would then have the opportunity to present their findings to the class, thus retaining much more of what they had learned.

The College also applied these concepts through offering certificates in co-operative management and in adult education. In each case, a series of five one-week courses was developed. Many of these were taken at the rate of two a year. When visiting co-operatives over the years, I often found the certificate in Co-operative Management proudly displayed in the manager's office.

The sorts of ideas being promoted at the Co-operative College in the 1950s and 60s were new to the co-operatives, but were well accepted and supported. When developing a course, we first brought together the supervisors or the managers of the co-operative employees who would be attending the courses later, and tested the materials on them, adjusting as needed based on their feedback. This led to the development of several series of five-day courses; the completion of each series was awarded with a certificate.

Many of the employees and directors who came to the College had limited knowledge of co-operatives and the co-operative movement. They might be employed by a retail co-operative, but not realize that the Wheat Pool, the credit union, the local community hall, and co-operative insurance were all services in the community owned and operated on a co-operative basis. For this reason, the first course offered in the certificate programs was known as a Co-operative Information course. It dealt with the history, principles and philosophy of co-operatives, the types of co-operatives, the organizational structure of a co-operative, types of corporations, and a description of their own co-operative. An assignment would have them describe their co-operative, including its bylaws, and present it to the class, thus retaining much more of what they had learned.

Many of the field men in the Co-operative Public Relations District Federations, as well as the directors of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Women's Guild, became certified teachers for the Co-operative College. Thus, basic Co-op College courses were being taught locally across the prairie provinces. In administering this program, the role of the College was to provide the curriculum, train the instructors, keep the record of attendance at the courses, and provide certificates as needed.

A further source of co-operative education administered by the College was a correspondence course on the co-operative movement. This course was first written by Alex Laidlaw, a Nova Scotia schoolteacher who went on to become Assistant Secretary of the Co-operative Union of Canada. The course contained sixteen lessons. It was taken by many local leaders and employees of co-operatives. For several years after I retired, the Co-operative College contracted with me to mark and add comments to the assignments for students enrolled in this course.

The 1960s was a great period of co-operative education on the prairies. The effect of this investment in education was felt for many years. Its demise followed the dissolution of the provincial Co-operative Women's Guilds and the District Public Relations Federations and the amalgamation of the Co-operative College with the Co-operative Union of Canada.

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The programs of the Co-operative College worked primarily with groups of fifteen to twenty-five adults. The lesson plans used a variety of methods, including lecture, small group discussion and individual assignments. However, at this group size, it was sometimes difficult to recognize and identify the unique characteristics of the individual adults as they attended courses conducted by the College.

The uniqueness and differences of the adult participants related to age, education, general experience, and experience with or in their co-operative roles. There was a wide variation in all of these characteristics, which made it difficult to focus on the unique learning needs of each individual.

The opportunity for me to seriously approach this problem came when I applied for leave from the Co-op College in January 1971 to study for a Master of Science Degree in Co-operative Extension Education at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, Wisconsin. At the time, I was president of the Association of Co-operative Educators, discussed further in the next chapter. I had been impressed with the work of Drs. Dick Vilstrup and Frank Groves when they had been on the program for two of the annual Institutes. They, along with Dr. Jim Duncan, were my advisory committee. Incidentally, the Sabbatical leave policy of the Co-operative College helped to pay for my year.

In addition, my holidays for two years were devoted to this project.

I decided to focus on delegates of central or major co-operatives as the target group for my study of the learning needs of the individual. Delegates vary widely in age, education and experience, but all play a very important role in their co-operative organization. The delegates establish the organization, including approving the bylaws and the financial structure. They elect, guide and appraise the directors; they receive, evaluate and approve the annual report; and they communicate with the members. This is not a role to be taken lightly, as it can make or break the organization, as was the case for the three prairie Wheat Pools and the United Grain Growers. The power of delegates emphasizes the importance and need for delegates to be well versed in their role and responsibilities, which is why their training is so essential.

I tabulated information sent to me by the secretaries of eleven large co-operatives in Canada and the United States for the year 1970. These organizations had a total of 2,958 delegates, representing 1,881,400 members and with total assets over \$700 million.

In every class taken during the year, I focused on the role of the delegate, and factors involved in helping a delegate become more effective in the role. My university classes included program planning, adult learning, philosophy and values, the board of directors in co-operative business, and psychology of adult development. Papers were written and presented for each class and I took many opportunities to consult with the professors.

My final paper, entitled "Development of Delegates in a Co-operative," was submitted to the University of Wisconsin, at Madison, Wisconsin, as partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Science in Cooperative Extension Education.

I completed my degree fifteen years after originally enrolling in the graduate program at Ames, Iowa, in July 1956. None of the classes taken at Ames or at the University of Saskatchewan were accepted in this program because of the time that had passed since I had taken them.

In consultation with the co-operatives used in the study, and after a careful review of their bylaws, I developed a statement of the responsibilities and functions of the delegate in a co-operative. These are listed in Appendix 2 and could form the base for a job description for a delegate. I also developed a list of the kind of decisions made by the delegates of the co-operatives studied. These are found in Appendix 3.

For effective decision-making in a co-operative, I suggested in this statement that the goal of delegate development should be to help each delegate move towards being fully functioning in their role. This would help the co-operative achieve its objectives and provide satisfaction, challenge and motivation to the individual delegate. A fully functioning delegate would be one who clearly understood his or her roles and responsibilities and carried them out to the best of his or her ability.

Shortly after delegates are elected or appointed, they find themselves on the job. They participate in meetings, voting on decisions that have far-reaching effects on their co-operative, its members and the economy. The development program should help build their competence and confidence, and should foster continuity in the role by appointing or electing delegates for a period of several years.

Recognizing that each delegate is an adult, an individual, and unique as a person, I spent much time during the year studying and discussing theories for deciding the curriculum for the training of delegates of a co-operative. These are discussed in my paper "Development of Delegates in a Co-operative," cited above. The study and discussion led to the concept of a "Self Diagnostic Guide" which sets out a detailed statement of the role and responsibilities of a delegate for the co-operative and what he or she needs to know and be able to do in order to be competent in the role. See Appendix 4 for an example of a self diagnostic guide for delegate development.

The guide becomes a questionnaire to be filled out periodically by each delegate. By completing the questionnaire the individual delegate identifies the areas in which he or she now feels competent and those in which he or she is having problems. The delegate training program can then be adapted so that group activities can focus on those needs generally felt by the group to need work, while smaller group or individual assignments and tutoring can focus on items applying to only one or a few delegates.



At the end of my program at Madison, I took this information back to Western Co-operative College. I met with senior managers and training directors in a number of the major co-operatives, including FCL and Co-operative Implements Limited, to explain the concept of a self diagnostic guide and get their permission to meet with a selected group of delegates. This permission was granted.

A small group of experienced delegates was selected and brought together for each organization. Two days were spent with each group, identifying important subject matter for delegate training. A self diagnostic guide was then prepared by which an individual delegate could indicate his level of comfort with each item. I found this a most rewarding experience, and I'm sure the delegates involved did as well.

The most effective application was with the delegates of Canadian Co-operative Implements Limited (CCIL) under the leadership of Mel Brolund, the Member Relations Director. All seventy-five delegates of CCIL completed a self diagnostic guide for their role as delegate. The training program Mel developed was popular and effective.

I also had the opportunity to work with a number of co-operatives in developing self diagnostic guides for staff positions. I appreciated working with Baldur Johnson, who gave leadership in having staff of The Co-operators in the Maritime provinces use self diagnostic guides in developing their training program.

In June 1972, the annual ACE Institute was held at the Co-operative Training Centre at Kansas, Missouri. Bruno Neufeldt and I from the Co-operative College had a session on the program explaining and demonstrating the use of self diagnostic guides in selecting content for a training and development program. Bill Hlushko, then training director of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, also made extensive use of this method of selecting content for training for field staff of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

I was, and continue to be, concerned about the level of understanding of adult education principles and methods by people responsible for planning and carrying out training and development programs in and for co-operatives. The series of courses required to earn Numbers 1 and 2 Certificates in Adult Education from the Co-operative College had provided a good combination of the theory and practice required. Unfortunately, when the Co-operative

College amalgamated with the Co-operative Union of Canada, the training programs previously conducted by the College were no longer offered.

I have recently become active in advocating that boards of directors engage qualified persons to plan and carry out educational programs in keeping with the co-operative principle, "education and training for members, directors, managers and staff." I assume such persons will not necessarily be university graduates, though I do ask, "How and where does one learn to effectively plan and carry out education and training programs for members, directors, managers, and staff of co-operatives?" Such programs include effectively planning for and using discussion groups, flip charts and handout materials; reading assignments; preparing reports; and carrying out workshop and panel discussion methods. A guide for planning a session using discussion groups is included as Appendix 5.

Information earlier in this chapter emphasizes the enhancement to the quality of learning when a person is thinking, talking, asking questions and relating new information to his or her situation. This is encouraged and facilitated by people working in small groups.

Many adults do not feel confident in speaking up and speaking out in a large group. Also, lack of time does not give them the opportunity. They feel more comfortable in a small group, which gives them a chance to listen and react. Program planners will note that this provides for a higher level of learning. Over the years, this happened in small neighbourhood kitchen-table meetings, such as the Farm Radio Forums. Now it needs to be adapted for and used in larger meetings and courses.

However, the effective use of the group discussion method requires training. For example the chairman of a meeting should not be expected to conduct the group discussion session. He should call upon the trained adult educator to organize and conduct the session, while he watches and listens.

Although I have made frequent reference to my co-operative, the Saskatoon Co-operative Association, with its nine directors and 80,000 members, I am well aware of the approximately 250 other co-operatives in the co-operative retailing system and the large number of co-operatives and credit unions in Canada, which all face the challenge of member education, of training directors and delegates, and of providing co-operative education for managers and staff.

It is the responsibility of all co-operative leaders to face up to this situation during this period of relative affluence, and to be prepared to develop and support solutions. Although some larger co-operatives have well-developed training programs, many do not. All are facing the challenge of providing effective education of their members. There are many similarities between the situation today and the problems faced in 1955, when most co-operatives did not have a training program for managers and directors and there was no training available for people employed as field men.

## Chapter Fourteen

# Two Associations: The Co-operative Managers Association and the Association of Cooperative Educators

After I was appointed director of the Co-operative Institute in October 1955, I soon recognized that the Institute's success depended on two factors. The first was the support of the general managers of the large retail co-operatives, which used the Institute's services and provided financial support, and the second was the continuing development of my own understanding and skill in providing programming for the education and development of adults. Both of these were facilitated by my involvement in establishing two associations: the Co-operative Managers Association and the Association of Cooperative Educators. Participation in both of these organizations generated good will and valuable contacts, and my association with directors of training centres for co-operatives and with universities conducting co-operative educational research enhanced my own understanding of co-operative education.

### **The Co-operative Managers Association**

I served as Secretary of the Co-operative Managers Association from its founding in 1957 until I joined the staff of Federated Co-operatives in 1973. They then appointed me an honorary member, and I was part of the executive committee until I retired. One of my cherished mementos is the plaque, "Presented to Harold Chapman – On recognition of his 26 years of service within the co-operative system by his fellow managers in the Co-operative Managers Association." I have many good memories of my association with the managers of

the larger retail co-operatives in Western Canada. Many became my warm personal friends. They gave good support to Western Co-operative College and their advice was helpful to me.

My involvement in the association began with a request to develop a training program for the managers of larger retail co-operatives. The Co-operative Institute had been underway for only a year when, in the fall of 1956, Eric Hughes, general manager of the Saskatoon Co-operative Association, invited me to a meeting attended by Bob Elmhurst, manager of the Kindersley Co-operative Association, and Don Elgert, manager of the Portage la Prairie Co-operative. Eric felt that the existing training program of the Co-operative Institute was too elementary to meet the needs of managers of the larger retail co-operatives. He had been attending the annual conference of managers of the larger co-operatives in the United States, sponsored by the Co-operative League of the USA, and proposed a similar conference for general managers of retail co-operatives that were members of Federated Co-operatives Ltd. (FCL).

These managers recognized the Co-operative Institute's expertise in planning and conducting conferences and courses and looked upon us as a neutral organization, so asked me to be secretary of the planning group. The managers of larger co-operatives felt they should have a more management-oriented program than the one sponsored by FCL for the smaller co-operatives, and believed that I would be able to give unbiased guidance in planning the annual Co-op Managers' Conference. I must admit that from time to time I found myself skating on thin ice when the plans made by the managers did not necessarily follow the wishes of the management of FCL!

The first Managers' Conference was held in Valley Centre at Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, in 1957. Managers of retail co-operatives in Saskatchewan and Manitoba were invited, as well as management people from FCL. The program of the conference included a resource person who was general manager of the Hyde Park Co-operative in Chicago. There were also reports from the managers in attendance and discussion of problems encountered in their co-operatives. They decided to hold an annual conference of retail co-operative managers and asked the Planning Committee to remain in place in order to plan the next year's conference.

Evaluation by the Committee identified two problems with the conference; one was that managers of small co-operatives were

concerned about operational problems rather than problems of management; another was the dominance of people from FCL in discussions of reports and problems. The Committee proposed terms of reference for a Co-operative Managers' Association that would sponsor an annual conference. These included a requirement that attendance be limited to general managers with at least three department managers reporting to them and in whose co-operatives total volume of business was at least \$350,000. The conference planning committee would be appointed by the managers. As principal of the Co-operative College, I was appointed secretary, to be responsible for administration for the annual conference to be called a Co-operative Executive Management Conference.

For several years, at least one of the Canadian managers attended the U.S. Managers' Conference, which was held in June each year, and reported to our planning committee. This resulted in an American manager and other resource people being invited to our Co-operative Executive Management Conference each year.

During the first few years, the key resource people were those selected from the American Co-operative Managers' Conference. Other agenda items included a report from the CEO of FCL, a participant in the conference; reports by managers on selected topics; and discussion of problems and concerns raised by the managers. The five-day conference also included an afternoon golf tournament, a banquet at which golf prizes were presented, and an annual meeting, at which resolutions could be presented and at which two new members would be elected to the Executive Committee. As new members were elected, attention was given to having all provinces represented. These conferences were and have continued to be significant learning experiences for the general managers.

Starting with about fifty managers, attendance at the annual conference grew to about eighty managers in the early 1970s. As the volume of business of the retail co-operatives grew, the criteria for eligibility for membership was increased. The retail co-operatives had been growing steadily. No manager who had been attending was excluded by the change in criteria.

Over the first several years, the conference was held in each of the provinces represented. Locations included Clearwater Lake in Manitoba; Waskesiu, Saskatchewan; and the Banff School in Alberta. A criterion was that there was a good golf course!

My role as secretary provided a very useful contact with the managers. The general managers became my personal friends and the staffs of their co-operatives were regular attendees at the College courses. They were also aware and supportive of the management certificates issued by the Co-operative College. Some enrolled in the courses and earned the certificates themselves.

A creative change was made for the 1972 conference. We had heard of significant developments in co-operatives in the Scandinavian countries. I had visited their wholesales in 1963. Tony Hagel, general manager of the Melfort Co-operative, was chair of the executive of the Managers' Association in 1970. He was enthused about the idea of a conference being held in the Scandinavian countries and presented it to the 1970 conference. It was well received and the executive was directed to study it and report to the 1971 conference to be held at Clearwater Lake, Manitoba. The report recommended that the 1972 conference be held as a tour of the wholesale and retail co-operatives in Sweden and Denmark. It also recommended that spouses be invited to attend. Previously spouses had not attended the annual conference.

I was asked to contact people in the Swedish and Danish wholesales with the request that our conference in the fall of 1972 be a study tour of their co-operatives. They agreed enthusiastically. In February of 1972, I travelled to Copenhagen, Denmark, and Stockholm, Sweden. My contacts were the public relations directors in each wholesale. We developed a proposal for a program which included lectures by key people and tours of the wholesales and several large co-operatives. They agreed to reserve accommodations as needed and arrange for the buses that would be required.

On my return, the executive met and worked out details of program and costs. Red McAndrews, manager of the Red Deer Co-operative in Alberta, was chair of the executive, and Elmer Weibe was vice chair. The committee was a very good group, interested in this being both a learning and a social experience.

The proposal was sent to the managers, who were faced with persuading the boards to authorize their attendance. The boards gave good support. Over fifty managers enrolled, almost all of whom were accompanied by their spouses.

The Lloydminster Co-operative had a travel department. Leo Doucet, the general manager, arranged a Ward Air charter for

the trip to and from Europe. The charter also carried a number of non-manager passengers, in addition to the spouses. The plane flew to Stockholm, refueling in Greenland. The return trip was from Copenhagen. In Denmark and Sweden we travelled in two buses.

We had arranged to arrive a week before the conference was to start. The managers and their spouses took the extra week to visit other parts of Europe of interest to them. Mary and I, as well as Harold and Betty Empey, flew on standby tickets to Majorca Island in the Mediterranean. We rented a car and had an enjoyable and relaxing week before travelling to Denmark for the conference.

The conference got underway in Copenhagen. It included speakers from the wholesale, and tours of the wholesale and of a large retail co-operative. The managers were organized into six groups, each with a leader and with a particular area of interest identified. Every evening, all the groups met. They discussed what they had seen and heard and the relevance to Canadian co-operatives. Each group prepared a report that was presented and discussed at our last meeting of the trip. It was a great learning experience.

There was also a program for the spouses, which was less intensive. Each evening there was a banquet and we had the opportunity to sample local culture, including raw fish and an abundance of wine. I did not develop a taste for raw fish, but for the first time I developed a taste for wine. One picture showed Mary and me at a table with about a dozen wine bottles!

From Denmark, the Conference participants travelled by bus to Sweden, visiting a glass factory on the way to Stockholm.

We were impressed with the Swedish Co-operative Wholesale and the large Swedish consumer co-operatives. Of particular interest was a drive-through lumber department.

In addition to the co-operative managers having a great learning experience, the conference fostered a warm friendship among all who attended. We took a supply of song sheets and had enthusiastic sing songs on the two buses, led by Gerry Doucet and myself.

One memorable incident saw Steve Forchuk left behind at a bus stop. He tended to be late and we assumed he was on the other bus. He was able to catch a train so caught up with the group that evening. I do not remember him being late again!

As a result of the conference, managers were able to apply practices they had observed. One example was the opening of a



drive-through lumberyard by the Saskatoon Co-operative, the first in the Co-operative Retailing System.

Another very significant result was that henceforth spouses were invited to accompany the managers to each conference. Mary accompanied me to the conferences I attended over the years. She made many good friends and all had a good time.

In 1973, the conference was held in Kelowna, B.C. Early that year I was hired by Federated Co-operatives Ltd. as Member Relations Director, and was no longer with the Co-operative College. In order to maintain the Western Co-operative College's relationship with the Association, Bruno Neufeldt, coordinator of the training program for retail co-operatives at the College, was appointed as secretary of its Executive Committee.

The managers named me an Honorary Member of the Co-operative Managers' Association, in which I continued to serve as a member of the executive. Mary and I continued to attend the annual conference for many years, until several years after I retired.

To this day, the Co-operative Managers Association continues with its annual conference. A major item on the agenda each year is the report of the FCL CEO. As the retail co-operatives have grown, the Association continues to serve training needs of general managers, with the criteria for membership now being \$10 million in volume of business.

I cherish the friendships made and maintained in the Co-operative Managers Association over the years. These friendships continue through the semi-annual newsletter provided by Bill Christensen, who was manager of the Red Deer Co-operative for many years, and his editorial committee.

### **The Association of Cooperative Educators**

During my years of involvement with the Co-operative Managers Association, I was also active in the formation of an Association of Cooperative Educators (ACE), which brought together people responsible for training programs in co-operatives, directors of co-operative training centres and universities advocating for and conducting research in the vital principle of co-op education. This initiative helped to remove the feeling of isolation previously felt by people engaged in co-operative education.

Alex Laidlaw, secretary of the Co-operative Union of Canada,

and Hayes Beall, secretary of the Cooperative League of the USA, were both schoolteachers. Both had a good understanding of co-operative history, philosophy and principles. They were concerned about the limited application of the co-operative principle, “continuous education of co-operative members, directors, managers and staff.” They had seen the damage done to co-operative organizations when that principle had been neglected.

In an effort to counteract this shortsighted lack of emphasis on member education, Alex Laidlaw and Hayes Beall gave leadership in conducting the first Institute on Co-operative Education, to be held in 1952, at the University of Minnesota at Duluth, sponsored by the Cooperative League of the USA (CLUSA) and with co-operative participants invited from Canada. The program included speakers from co-operatives and universities.

That first Institute was very successful. It became an annual event and after being held on successive years in Illinois, Minnesota and Iowa, it was held in Canada in 1956.

I first became involved in the Institute on Co-operative Education when the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan was invited to host the event. At that time, Saskatchewan was known as the banner co-operative province in Canada. I had just finished carrying out the first year of programming with the Co-operative Institute.

H. A. (Buck) Wagner with FCL, Terry Phalen with the Department of Co-operatives, and I were the committee responsible for administering and conducting the Institute. We decided to hold it in the School of Agriculture Building at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.

The participants included leaders of co-operatives and co-operative education programs in Canada and the USA. The program was taken up with case studies of Saskatchewan co-operatives, presentations by Saskatchewan co-operative leaders, and by a tour of co-op facilities.

There was particular interest in the role of government in co-operative development, as this was known in the USA as a “socialist” province. This was effectively explained and discussed by Woodrow S. Lloyd, the Minister of the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development for Saskatchewan.

I attended and participated in the annual Institute, which was held alternately in Canada and the United States, for many years.



Planning for the 1960 Institute on Co-operative Education held in Winnipeg.

Locations included the Co-operative Training School in Kansas City, Missouri; the University of Michigan; the University at Columbus, Ohio; the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg; and then back to Western Co-operative College in Saskatoon and its new residential facilities. Each year we were updated on co-operative research, education and training programs in major co-operatives and agricultural colleges in the USA and Canada. We also had the opportunity to report on the progress and programs of our College.

Up to the early 1960s participants in the Institutes included people with a variety of backgrounds and interests, including directors of co-operatives, public relations people and those engaged in co-operative education. It was at the 1964 Institute on Co-operative Education in Kansas City, Missouri, that the participants decided to establish a permanent association for co-operative education.

Key leadership for this decision came from Jerry Voorhis, who had been head of the Cooperative League of the USA (CLUSA) for many years. In his speech, he advocated a professional association in the field of co-operative education. He emphasized the value in the co-operative form of economic organization, which was to be found in the unique relationship that exists between co-operative members and the business they own. But, he emphasized, this rich potential resource that co-operatives represent is of little value unless it is fully developed. The purpose of co-operative education



The participants in the Institute on Co-operative Education, June 1964, at Kansas, Missouri. A historic meeting at which it was decided to form a professional organization.

work is the development of membership participation, understanding and activity.

Voorhis argued that to carry out this educational work, a professional association would be needed to develop skilled educators, which co-operatives would need if their progress in the modern-day world was to be assured. This association should establish standards for its members – standards of preparation and training, standards of compensation, standards of accomplishment. The association would be a means of regularly sharing and exchanging experience, both successes and failures.

Voorhis's address opened a valuable discussion on the need to establish a separate organization to represent those engaged in co-operative education. I was appointed to a committee that included Hayes Beall and Phil Dodge of CLUSA, charged with drafting a proposal for an organization. The suggested constitution would include a statement of purpose, qualifications for membership, election of a board of directors and the planning of the annual Institute and its program.

The intent was to develop a professional organization that would provide leadership in the development of co-operative educators, trainers and researchers. There was also interest in having

employers recognize the importance of the programs for participating employees.

The report was presented at the Annual Institute held at the Co-operative College in Saskatoon in July 1965. It was discussed, adopted as amended, and the first board was elected. I was elected to the first board. Hayes Beall was appointed secretary of this unincorporated organization. We started the next year making plans for its incorporation. It was decided to incorporate under the Co-operatives Act of Minnesota.

Fred Halverson, with Midland Cooperatives in Minneapolis, gave good leadership in the preparation of bylaws and other incorporation documents for the Association of Cooperative Educators (ACE), as the new organization would be known. These bylaws were approved at the Co-operative Institute held at Levis, Quebec, in June 1969. Glen Anderson of the Wisconsin Association of Co-operatives was elected president and I was elected vice president. We appointed Phil Dodge, who was in charge of the Chicago office of CLUSA, as secretary. He had been associated with the annual Institutes for several years. He was an efficient secretary, and held the role for several years. Phil and his wife Nonie became good personal friends of Mary's and mine and we maintained contact for many years.

In the association's first years, three awards were established which would be awarded annually. When I retired from the board on June 21, 1972, I was presented with an Award of Merit. The citation read: "ACE Award of Merit to Harold E. Chapman for outstanding contributions to co-operative education and training, helping to promote the principles of democratic involvement by people in determining their economic and social improvement."

An Organization Award was also established, presented each year to a co-operative doing an exemplary job of co-operative education. A Youth Award was established later in memory of Bill Hlushko, who had passed away in 1974. Bill had been an instructor at the Co-operative College for a number of years before taking a training role with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

I continued my interest in the Association of Cooperative Educators for several years after leaving the Co-operative College. However, I found it increasingly difficult to participate in the Annual Co-operative Institute because of my very busy schedule with FCL, described in the next chapter.



Glen Anderson, President of ACE, presenting an award to Harold Chapman, Vice President.

The Association of Cooperative Educators continues to play an active role with its annual Co-operative Institute. Support in Canada is provided by the Canadian Co-operative Association, which, as the Co-operative Union of Canada, was an original sponsor, and by the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan.

ACE was very helpful in my own development and in creating the programming for the Co-operative College and its staff. Over the years, it has been a source of up-to-date information on research related to co-operative development and training. It has also served to highlight examples of effective programs that others might emulate. Many of these findings were adapted for use by the Western Co-operative College.



## Chapter Fifteen

# Federated Co-operatives Limited Member Relations

In December 1972, Don Tullis, Secretary of Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL), offered me the position of Director of Member and Public Relations, reporting to him. They had recently hired a person in this position who had had no experience with co-operatives and it had not been successful. The role included supervising public relations programs, developing member relations programs for retail co-operatives, working with the directors in carrying out their member relations role in their districts, and supervising the consumer counsellors. Consumer counsellors were FCL staff who provided information to retail co-operatives to pass on to their members on nutrition and the various products available at the co-operative.

I felt it would be a good experience to apply what we had been teaching at the Co-operative College in a major co-operative organization. Also, I looked forward to working with Don Tullis, whom I had known for many years. I accepted the job.

I quickly found myself enmeshed in the member relations role, so was able to hire a person to work full-time in public relations. The main emphasis of the member relations role was assisting the nineteen directors in carrying out their responsibility of holding education and training seminars for the directors and delegates of the local co-operatives in their districts. I hoped to strengthen the educational component of the local co-operatives.

I regretted leaving the Co-operative College and the association with the many central co-operatives across Canada, the boards and managers of which I had worked with over many years and with whom I had built a good relationship. I was also sorry to leave the staff of the College, with whom I had developed a strong professional relationship. But I remembered something Alex Turner once



told me, that a person should change jobs about every ten years. His theory was that a person makes his or her major contribution in ten years and then tends to relax. I don't think that applied to me, but I had been with the College for over seventeen years and was prepared to move.

Both the staff and the board of the Western Co-operative College gave me very moving farewells. I still have the silver tray presented by the staff. Its inscription reads: Harold E. Chapman, in thanks for 18 years of Service and Leadership to Western Co-operative College, from the Staff, February 1, 1973.

During the first three months of 1973, I taught several courses at the Co-operative College to which I had made a commitment. I then started full-time work with Federated Co-operatives Limited, and was immediately immersed in their ongoing programs. This included the program of having floats built that could be used by retail co-operatives participating in their local summer parades. The floats were built each year by a person living in Lumsden, Saskatchewan. About three identical floats were built each year and scheduled to be available for local parades from June to August.

My work included helping with arrangements for FCL staff meetings, retail manager conferences and the FCL Annual Meeting. One of my tasks was leading the singing of the National Anthem at meetings and conferences. An amusing incident (for me, at least), occurred at the 1978 Managers' Conference, which kicked off the celebration of FCL's 50th Anniversary. An elaborate ceremony had been prepared with a screen presentation for the singing of 'O Canada.' Unfortunately, a technical snag left us in the dark. I can still hear Harold Empey, who was chairing the meeting, calling out, "Chapman, where are you? Come and lead the singing!"

The part of the role that I settled into most readily was working with the directors of Federated Co-operatives Limited. Bob Boyes was president when I first joined the staff of FCL, followed by Gordon Sinclair, Leo Hayes and then Verne Leland. The directors each held at least one workshop per year for retail directors and delegates in their district. I found myself involved with these one-day sessions, including developing the resource material to be used and conducting the sessions. There were nineteen districts covering the four western provinces. Since some of the directors scheduled more than one workshop, I spent quite a lot of time on the road.

FCL is a co-operative whose membership consists of the retail co-operatives in western Canada. Each retail co-operative appoints delegates to attend FCL meetings. Each of the nineteen districts had approximately eighteen retail co-operatives. The delegates in each district elected a director. The districts were grouped into six regions: one in Manitoba, two in Saskatchewan, two in Alberta and one in British Columbia. The nineteen district directors elected the president and the directors in each region elected a vice president.

In order to provide much-needed resource material for retail co-op directors, I oversaw the development of a retail co-op director's manual. The manual was a three-ring binder containing the material that a director should have before going to a board meeting, including the bylaws of the co-operative, policies that had been established and the role descriptions for directors and delegates. Minutes of retail board meetings, the manager's report, the budget and the financial statements were also included. Items were added over the years to make this a most useful tool for the directors.

These binders were used at each workshop. In most cases, the directors and managers of each co-operative would order sufficient binders for each director of their co-operative. They would then insert the material for their co-operative. The workshop in each district was the focus of the retail director's training program for many years. This has since developed into a certificate program involving attendance by each director at a number of training sessions. These sessions were developed in recognition of the importance to FCL of the retail director and the delegates in the development and the maintenance of a strong co-operative retail system.

The consumer counsellors on my staff provided information and resource material to help both FCL and retail co-operatives in selecting products as well as in educating members with consumer information. They developed a manual for the use of managers, as well as for the retail co-operatives' own consumer counsellors. They also prepared material for use in co-op pamphlets and in local co-op newsletters. The counsellors contributed information at managers' conferences and gave leadership in developing the concept of "nutrition breaks" instead of "coffee breaks" and the use of fruit and other nutritious foods for the breaks at conferences and annual meetings. They also tested products for possible sale at the co-op and promoted co-op products.

At the recommendation of management, the board of FCL eliminated the consumer counsellor role from the co-operative retail system soon after I retired. This was part of the cost cutting in the difficult financial times of the mid eighties, and removed a professional resource for the FCL merchandizers, the retail managers and the members of the retail co-operatives. The consumer counsellor positions were not restored when financial prosperity returned.

A major program with which I was involved was the forming of member relations committees with the boards of retail co-operatives. These were to help the board in one of its important responsibilities, that of ensuring that the members understood their role and were carrying it out effectively. This committee, in addition to having two or three members of the board, would also include several members of the co-operative who had particular interest and skills to contribute to the education of the members. The committee would also include a member of the staff who would assist in implementing programs initiated by the committee. A key program was a member newsletter. We gave leadership in preparing a member relations manual for the use of the committee. We also held a number of member relations workshops each year to assist the committees with programs such as the newsletter and planning for meetings.

In celebrating its fiftieth anniversary in 1978, the FCL Board president, Vern Leland, introduced the theme "Generation and a Half" at the annual meeting in March. The theme originated from the warning of the Danish leader, Peter Manniche, that a co-operative without an effective education program for its members will only last a generation and a half.

Following the annual meeting, workshops on this theme of member education were held in each district and at the fall Managers' Conferences in each of the regions. The theme was used in building member education programs in retail co-operatives. The celebration went on throughout the year, with a number of activities including the writing of a play entitled *Generation and a Half*. My staff and I were involved in scheduling the presentation of the play at many locations in the FCL area, the four western provinces. I credit Jack Trevena, the FCL staff information person, with writing many articles and developing the theme for the fiftieth-year celebration. Jack was a good friend of mine with a solid co-operative philosophy.

On the retirement of Don Tullis, I began reporting to Denny

Thomas. Over the years I had a number of assistants. These included Hal Murray, who took on most of the public relations activities. When he moved to Calgary, Lorna Moen joined my staff. When she married, shortly before I retired, I selected Bryan Tastad, who was a reporter with the *Co-operative Consumer* newspaper, to replace her. Consumer counsellors Betty Ann Deobald and Leslie Henry did an effective job of providing consumer information to staff and members of co-operatives in the co-operative retailing system.

FCL supported me when taking on responsibilities in the community. I had joined the Nutana Rotary Club in 1966. I had been secretary for several years and in 1973–74 was the president. I have continued as an active member over the years. FCL also supported my role with the Saskatoon Regional Community College, described in Chapter 17.

Upon my retirement as director of the Member Relations Department of FCL, I was succeeded by Andy Baribeau, an enthusiastic co-operator and a good friend. We had worked together on a number of the programs. Unfortunately, the late 1970s was a period of high interest rates, which played havoc with the many expansion loans taken out by retail co-operatives. Many experienced severe financial problems, placing a serious burden on FCL. Under Pat Bell as CEO, FCL and many retail co-operatives made major retrenchments. The retrenchments included reducing services, including those provided by the Member Relations Department. These were not reinstated when FCL and the retail co-operatives returned to a prosperous period in the 1990s and later.

I enjoyed the work with FCL, and felt I was able to make a useful contribution in developing and implementing programs for the education of members of co-operatives and the development of their elected officials.



## Chapter Sixteen

# Retirement Years

I retired from Federated Co-operatives Limited when I reached the age of sixty-five, on April 27, 1982. I was given a warm send-off by the FCL directors, with whom I had worked closely over the years. They presented me with a new briefcase and the best of good wishes. I remember telling them that I was not yet ready to “retire” and that I had a general plan for the future, set out in five-year intervals:

1. Continue to work part time from age 65 to age 70.
2. Travel extensively by motor home from 70 to 75.
3. Take tours by bus in North America and Europe from 75 to 80.
4. Travel in Canada, visiting friends and family from 80 to 85.
5. Settle into a quieter lifestyle from age 85 on.

It is amazing how closely this plan has actually worked out. I would not have dared to dream that in the fifth five-year period, and beyond, I would still travel extensively and participate actively in a number of organizations.

I always envied my friends who worked at the university, which allowed them to continue into retirement with a desk and encouragement to continue doing counselling, research, writing and lecturing. Since I planned to continue working, in 1982, I incorporated as a company, “Harold Chapman Consulting Associates Incorporated,” with the intent of sharing my experience in organizational development and conducting training activities and programs for co-operatives and community organizations.

The “associate” was my wife, Mary, and my office was in my home. I charged on the basis used by the Co-operative College and got as much work as I wanted, without interfering too much with the free time Mary and I planned to enjoy.

The work was a continuation of co-operative and adult



Son Bob, presenting Harold with a new set of golf clubs as a retirement gift, Waskesiu golf course, 1982.

education initiatives that I had carried out with FCL and the Co-operative College. I was invited to conduct a number of seminars for directors of retail co-operatives by FCL and a number for the Co-operative College, of which Gerald Schuler was now the Principal. I was engaged by the College to mark the papers for people enrolled in the Correspondence Course on Co-operatives. I also developed lesson plans for a number of courses for co-operative employees and directors.

Shortly after retiring, in the summer of 1982, I was invited to be a participant and group leader at the Co-operative Future Directions Congress held in Ottawa. This was attended by co-operative leaders from across Canada. A report was prepared which guided co-operative development in Canada.

An extensive and interesting project in which I participated was working for the Co-operative Union of Canada on a training program for co-operatives in the Caribbean. This project was under the management of Jack Reid, who had been a manager of several retail co-operatives in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The program, which I was responsible for conducting, brought four co-operative leaders from different islands in the Caribbean to Canada for a three-month study of Canadian co-operative development. One of these leaders was Hainsley Benn from Barbados. The study was to be followed in the Caribbean, by a three-day Conference of representatives of co-operatives from the different islands. The four leaders would present information and findings of the Canadian study tour at the conference. They would also bring out and discuss suggestions for coordination of co-operative legislation, training and services for co-operatives in the Caribbean countries.

The three-month study in Canada had us in Ottawa most of the time. However, we also travelled to Yellowknife and Cambridge Bay in the Northwest Territories, where the type and size of co-operatives more closely compared to co-operatives in the Caribbean.

The Conference in the Caribbean, which I chaired, was held on the Island of St. Lucia. Mary accompanied me and was thrilled that we occupied the suite where Prime

Minister Trudeau had stayed on a holiday in the Caribbean. It had a small, built-in swimming pool. About fifty leaders of Caribbean co-operatives attended the conference. During the three days, following the reports of the four leaders, a number of ideas were developed for coordination between two or more of the islands; an example was with co-operative legislation.

Incidentally, a disruptive factor was that while the conference was being held in October 1983, the United States Air Force was attacking the nearby island of Grenada. Many of the participants from Grenada were concerned about the safety of their families.

At the conclusion of the conference we returned to Barbados, where I was contracted by the co-operatives in Barbados to provide a four-week program to help set up an organization structure for the local agricultural marketing co-operatives and a training program for their directors. This was arranged by Hainsley Benn, the secretary manager of the organization and one of the co-operative leaders who had visited Canada. We stayed in a resort on the beach and were able to travel freely around the island.

This was one of several trips that Mary and I made to Barbados, each of which we enjoyed very much. One of these was made even more interesting by a visit from our daughter Gail, who was in her sixth month of pregnancy. Our good friends Harold and Phyllis Baker from Saskatoon also visited for a few days.



Harold Chapman and Henry Thomas, B.C. Supervisor of Co-operatives.





Miramar Beach Club in Barbados, -following the Co-operative Conference in St. Lucia, October,1983. Tom and Gail Malone, Harold and Mary Chapman and Phyllis and Harold Baker.

I also co-authored a book at this time, published by the Co-operative College of Canada in 1986, under the title *The Contemporary Director*.

This book was written as a handbook for elected officials of co-operatives, credit unions and other organizations. Douglas A. Holland and Sean D. Kenny of the College staff and I co-wrote the book, with contributions of individual chapters from a number of others. This book was prepared for use in the training of directors and also as a guide in the operation of the boards of directors of co-operative and community organizations. I saw this as an important means of helping directors move towards being fully functioning in their role.

For me, writing for the book became an opportunity to record information I had developed and used in training and consultation with directors. I took responsibility for three chapters of the book. The first chapter dealt with the board's role in member relations in the organization. I set out to present the necessary information to help a board plan and implement a program to help members recognize their responsibilities and to carry them out effectively. A board that carries out this responsibility takes a major step in helping their co-operative avoid experiencing the "Generation and a Half" concept.

I sometimes came under criticism for my strong advocacy of member development, but the graveyard of co-operatives is full of organizations in which the second and third generations of members were not prepared to support an organization that did not look to them to be much different than the competitors.

My second chapter was on board operations. This dealt with the organization of the board, the planning and conducting of effective board meetings, the preparation and use of a board manual, and the appraisal of the performance of the board. The chapter included job descriptions for the board, the president and the member relations committee, as well as numerous tools that had been developed and used in director training programs.

The third chapter dealt with Director Training and Development. It described the areas of responsibility of a director and the tasks involved with each area. I emphasized that the objective of experience and of training programs should be to help each director move towards being fully functioning in the role of director, and reminded the board of its responsibility to plan for the development of the individual directors and of the board as a whole.

It gave me a great deal of satisfaction to know that the work and study with which I had been involved over the years was being recorded in a way that could be used to help co-operatives and other community organizations function more effectively. I understand that the book was used for many years by co-operatives across Canada. Even while writing my memoirs, I came upon two cases where it is still being used.

A few years ago, I raised the question with the Canadian Co-operative Association of having it updated and republished. I am not aware of this being done, even though major changes may not be required.

It was only a short time later that I was invited to contribute a chapter to a book titled *Dignity and Growth: Citizenship Participation in Social Change*, by Harold R. Baker, James A. Draper and Brett T. Fairbairn, in honour of W. B. "Bill" Baker. Bill had been a good friend and had contributed to my development. In the section on Co-operatives and Education, my chapter dealt with "the change process through co-operative education and research." I described the organizational structure and the education programs in several central co-operatives with headquarters in Saskatchewan, and emphasized a concern expressed by Bill Baker that "as co-operatives grow and become more complex they tend to rely on technical,

impersonal, rational, efficient types of problem solving skills, with fewer people involved in making the decisions which shape their destinies." He was concerned about the move away from community-based, neighbourly, people-oriented approaches to problem solving. He felt this should be of particular concern to co-operatives because of the principles and philosophy on which they are based.

Another interesting and challenging opportunity to contribute was presented when Verne Leland, President of FCL, invited me to be part of the advisory committee for Brett Fairbairn when he was commissioned by the board to write a history of FCL to commemorate its sixtieth anniversary. The book was entitled *Building a Dream: The Co-operative Retailing System in Western Canada, 1928–1988*.

This role permitted me to call upon my many years of study and my experience with retail co-operatives. Brett did a fine job of producing an interesting and accurate history of retail co-operative development in Western Canada. In the copy of the book he autographed for me he wrote: "To Harold Chapman, Co-operative Educator, who educated this co-operator. With thanks for many hours of committee meetings, and above all for your knowledge, insights, and dedication to making this book an effective tool."

Verne Leland, when retiring as president of FCL, presented me with a unique experience. He invited me to help plan and to conduct a workshop with the directors of FCL to help them review the roles of the board and of the president, and to understand the qualities that best equip a person to take on the job of president. I was impressed with how seriously and competently the directors participated in the workshop.

I enjoyed and was challenged by the projects I had the opportunity of carrying out. They permitted me to continue offering leadership in adult education and co-operative development. Eventually, though, I found that our company, Harold Chapman Consulting Associates, was interfering with our free time, so, after several years, I had it dissolved.

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My working years had involved a great deal of travelling alone. On retirement, I looked forward to continuing to travel, but accompanied by Mary. The motor home provided an ideal way for us to

make this happen. My sister Gladys and husband John Dexter had taken trips in their motorhome while still on the co-operative farm at Meskanaw. They encouraged us to try one.

To test if we would enjoy this lifestyle, we bought a seventeen-foot Vanguard maxi van in 1980, two years before I retired. Our two requirements were that it have a proper bathroom and a comfortable bed. We enjoyed our holiday trips in the winter to Mesa, Arizona, and Hemet, California, and to Saskatchewan lakes in the summer, so after I retired in the spring of 1982, we traded the maxi van for a twenty-one-foot Vanguard motorhome, with a bed above the driver's seat. Over the next eight years, accompanied much of the time by Gladys and John Dexter in their motorhome, we drove over 114,000 miles around Canada and the USA.

Our longest trip, in the winter of 1987–88, started on September 3. It took us to Toronto for a week with Gail and family, and several days with my father's cousins in the Thomasburg area of Ontario north of Belleville. My ancestors, as United Empire Loyalists, had settled in that area in the 1790s. We met cousins, attended a service in the church where my grandfather, John A. Chapman, sang in the choir, and visited the home in which they had lived before venturing west in 1899 to homestead near Kisbey, Saskatchewan.

We carried on to Vermont, and spent a week in R.V. parks near Boston and Washington, visiting historic sites. We also visited a number of Civil War memorials from Virginia to Georgia. During this time our friends, Al and Eva Keene, also motorhome travellers, spent time with us, playing golf and visiting historic sites. We arrived at St. Augustine, Florida, in mid November. It was there that we joined the Coast-to-Coast Travel Club at the Beachcomber Resort. The Coast-to-Coast membership gave us access to about 500 resorts in Canada and the USA, for a week at a time, for one dollar per night. We spent two months touring Florida, then in February we headed west on Highway 10 through Georgia, Mississippi and Texas to New Mexico and Arizona, staying at Coast-to-Coast Parks all the way, before proceeding north to Victoria during the last week in March. There we visited our son, Bob, an environmental technologist. We arrived home in Saskatoon on April 3, 1988, to end a very memorable trip.

With our motorhome, we made many more trips over the years, in Saskatchewan, to Victoria, and to Arizona and California. Our

plans for a second trip to Florida were cut short when John Dexter suffered a heart attack in California in December 1988.

I must also mention a five-week trip to Alaska where we were joined by John and Gladys Dexter, Harry and Greta Prior, and Wes and Grace Baker. We travelled the Alaska Trail to Dawson City and Fairbanks (where we played golf on the world's most northern golf course), to Anchorage, and took a boat trip to see the icebergs before the long trip home. We had heard horror stories about the condition of the Alaska Trail, but we encountered no problems and had a very enjoyable trip.

When it became difficult for Mary to climb the ladder to get to the bed over the cab, we traded the Vanguard for a twenty-three-foot Empress motorhome, which had a bed at ground level. We enjoyed many more trips south with John and Gladys and brother Charlie and his wife Yvonne, until we felt it was time to give up motorhome travel. We sold the Empress with much regret in 1993, but it left us with many good memories.

With the sale of the motorhome, came the opportunity for Mary and me to travel to a number of interesting places further afield. This included a three-week trip by plane to Amsterdam and by bus with Dale and Mildred Morrison through Brussels, Paris, Switzerland, Italy and Austria to Oberammergau in Germany. We also took two bus trips to Branson, Missouri, with the Morrises. We enjoyed the many performances in Branson, and also the scenery along the highway and the fellowship on the bus.

Another interesting experience was a week in Cuba, where we flew with daughter Gail, Tom and family. We would have been glad to repeat this trip but Mary's health had become a concern.

Because we were absent for several months each year and planned to continue to travel, we decided to sell our home at 1414, 11th Street East in Saskatoon. We had lived there since April 5, 1956, when it was a new house in a new area. In the last few years many of our friends had moved. However, Gail, then living in Toronto, said, "You can't sell that house. It is my home!" She came around, though, and the house was sold in January 1984. We rented an apartment in downtown Saskatoon, at 125, 5th Avenue North, which was comfortable and where we made good friends.

Through the Presbytery Committee on Church Development, on which I was a member, we became aware that McClure United

Church was not only constructing a new church in the expanding area of south-east Saskatoon, but was also sponsoring a new seniors' high-rise, McClure Place, attached to the church. The residence was a fourteen-story building with 108 suites. We found that with a loan of \$85,000 we could obtain a "life lease" which would provide a 922 square-foot, two-bedroom apartment for as long as we could live there independently. It was known as an enriched seniors' high-rise. The enrichment included voluntary meal services, a part-time nurse and recreation director and a 24-hour emergency response service.

We applied for a lease and were among the first to move into McClure Place, on Mary's birthday, April 5, 1989. This was a good move for us. In fact, we sold our house of twenty-eight years for an amount that provided the Life Lease loan, which will be repaid when I leave.

McClure Place is a warm, friendly community, with lots of activities. I helped develop the bylaws for the Residents' Association, whose membership is made up of all the residents of McClure Place. The Association is concerned with



McClure Place, seniors' high rise, opened in 1989. Harold and Mary moved into suite 1204 in April 1989.



McClure Place Choristers: *Front row* l to r: Shirley Blackburn, leader, Ellen Manton, Betty Webb, Golda Jackson, Ruby Andrusiak, Mary Chapman, Thelma Stevens. *Centre row* l to r: Thelma Shortt, Rosemary Slater, Rene Foster, Iris Cook, Verna Crawford, Rose Sherwin, Nina Bigsby. *Top row*, l to r: Wendell Stevens, Bill Chapman, Bert Best, Harold Chapman.

the quality of life of the residents, including resident activities and member relations.

McClure Place is sponsored by McClure United Church and incorporated as a non-profit corporation. Those eligible to vote are the members of the congregation and the residents of McClure Place. Seventy-five percent of the McClure Place board members must be members of the congregation. One of the things that attracted me was that the residents are able to decide on and participate in the activities enhancing the quality of life in the community while the Board of Directors is responsible for the management of McClure Place. I spent several years on the board of McClure Place Association and on the council of the Residents' Association.

I was on the board of the McClure Place Foundation for many years. The main role of the foundation has been to raise money for the building of Amy McClure House, a residence to provide assisted living for people no longer able to live independently, but who do not qualify to move into a nursing home. Amy McClure House, with twenty-one rooms, two of which can accommodate couples, opened in February 2005. It is attached to McClure Place and McClure United Church. Residents of McClure Place are given priority for openings in Amy McClure House. The Foundation continues to function, first to raise money to pay off the mortgage on Amy McClure House and second to subsidize the cost of living there for low-income seniors.



Mother and Dad, taken in 1985  
by Thelma Pepper.

Throughout the years, Mary and I enjoyed the many Chapman family gatherings. For years we celebrated my dad and mother Chapman's birthdays and wedding anniversaries. A memorable one was the celebration of Dad's 100th birthday. We carried on the tradition of singing favourite songs and having the young folk contribute musical entertainment. Another significant celebration was held at the home of our niece, Shelly McFadden, on the occasion of our 60th wedding anniversary.



Harold and Mary with son, Bob, and daughter, Gail, at their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary celebration, November 2003.

After several years of ill health, Mary passed away September 14, 2005. I am thankful to have been in McClure Place at that time, as it was helpful and comforting to have friends close by, bringing food and offering sympathy. My friends also encouraged me to continue in McClure Place activities.

My son, Bob, and daughter, Gail, planned and organized a memorable celebration for my 90th birthday in 2007. It was held in the McClure United Church auditorium and attended by over 200 relatives and friends.

I visit and am visited by my son, Bob, and his partner, Kathy, from Victoria; also by Bob's daughter, my granddaughter, Corinne, her husband, Pat Hagel, and baby daughter (my great granddaughter) Arden Mary, born December 19, 2007. My daughter, Gail, in Toronto, her husband, Tom Malone, and daughters Megan and Mackenzie also visit regularly, to my great enjoyment. I'm proud of my three granddaughters, Corinne, Megan and Mackenzie and their educational achievements; Corinne is a veterinarian in Calgary, Megan a teacher in the Toronto School System, and Mackenzie a graduate of Ryerson University, specializing in film production.

At ninety-four years of age, I continue to have good health. Among other things I am thankful for the genes provided by my parents: my father who lived to be a hundred, and my mother, who passed away at age ninety-seven.



I was determined, when I retired, that I would not be like the old gentleman who said he had seen a lot of changes in his life and disagreed with them all! I take an active part in my community, and seek to lend my influence to decisions that are made. I remain an active volunteer with a number of community groups and organizations (many of which are detailed in the next chapter), and am an active volunteer and participant in McClure United Church. In McClure Place I am one of the exercise leaders, sing in the McClure Place Choristers, and participate in card games, (Bridge and 'Nil') and the coffee group each weekday morning.

I also appreciate my friendship with Joan Bell and her family with whom I've enjoyed many lake visits, farm reunions and holidays with her brother Tim, his wife Isabel and daughter Zoe in Costa Rica.

Life is good!

### *Postscript: The 1943 Agriculture College Graduates*

When, as a young man in 1939, I decided to enrol in agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan, I had no idea of the life-long friendships I'd make or the memorable reunions I would hold with my fellow students through the years, particularly following retirement.

Seventy-one of us enrolled in 1939, including one woman, Betty Myrick. Thirty-five graduated in 1943, including Betty. (Incidentally, over half the graduates in 2010 were women.)

Many of our group dropped out to join the armed services, and a number of those men were killed in action. All who were physically fit took military training as members of the Canadian Officers Training Corps (COTC). We were conscripted late in 1941 and put on leave to complete our courses at the University.

On graduation, the majority of us joined the Active Army as Provisional Second Lieutenants and continued our training with the prospect of going overseas as soon as the training was completed. Charlie Fawell, Romy Androchowicz, Lawrence Iveson and I opted for the Reconnaissance Corps and were together for most of our training.

After our discharge from the army, I saw my fellow graduates only sporadically for many years. A twenty-year reunion was held in 1963, but I was not able to attend as I was at the International Co-operative Alliance Conference in England.

Our next reunion was at forty years, in 1983, initiated by Jock

Blacklock and Bill Ewert. It was at the Blacklock farm east of Saskatoon. A large number of our group was able to attend along with their spouses. I remember the program including a brief report by each of the graduates on their experience since leaving university. This was very interesting. By that year almost the entire group had retired. Lawrence Iveson, who had married a girl from Australia, had passed away. At that reunion we decided to meet again in five years.

For our fiftieth anniversary in 1993 we were invited to Victoria by Bill and Betty Powell and Romy Androchowicz (now Andrews) and his wife Jean. Twenty Agros and their spouses attended. We stayed at a downtown hotel, had tours of Victoria and were hosted to dinners by both couples. I remember Frank Kennedy, in a Victoria restaurant, leading us in the singing of the Agriculture College song, written by a classmate George Wilkinson in 1939 and first sung at the Field Day Banquet on March 5, 1940:

*Agriculture, Agriculture, that's our pride as on we go,  
We have the faith and we have the heart of the west to keep aglow.  
So, keep in pace as we go along, led by our S.A.C.  
We're the blue and white of the green and white Uni-ver-si-ty.*

By the time of the fifty-fifth anniversary reunion in 1998, I had accepted the unelected role of contact for the group. I developed and maintained three lists: the surviving 1943 Agro grads and their spouses, the 1943 Agro grads who had passed away and their spouses, and the Agros who had taken some classes with us from 1939 to 1943.

At the fifty-fifth year reunion in 1998, we decided to form the Saskatoon and Area Committee of the 1943 Agros. It meets twice a year for socializing and also to plan for the next reunion. That year we also decided, looking around at the dwindling size of our group, to begin holding reunions annually, rather than every five years. This would continue indefinitely, and the last surviving Agro will 'turn out the light'!

Highlights from my involvement with this group have included a book published by Howard Fredeen in 2001 containing the life history of the remaining members of the group. I remember that when I sent Howard a one-page summary of my life's activities, he wrote back asking for more detail and pictures. I wound up with three pages, including four pictures. We were all very proud to

receive the book, with the stories of twenty-two graduates, and a brief history of the College of Agriculture. Howard put much work into the book, including having to do a lot of editing. (One Agro sent a whole book of his life story, asking Howard to cut whatever he didn't want.)

Another highlight was the decision that for our sixtieth anniversary we would make a significant contribution to the University of Saskatchewan. We all credited our Agriculture Degree with providing for rewarding careers and a comfortable income. With encouragement from Hartley Fredeen, we each decided to contribute \$5,000 towards a bursary fund that would provide "financial assistance to students pursuing a graduate degree in any area related to sustainable agriculture in the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan." Ole Turnbull, Hartley Fredeen and I signed the contract with the University. (Incidentally, Hartley signed while in the hospital.) Over \$68,000 was raised that year, with more being added each year. A \$2,500 bursary is given to a student each year. For several years, I have had the privilege of representing our group at the Annual Bean Feed in October, at which bursaries are presented to the students.

For several years, our reunion has been held at the Park Town Hotel in Saskatoon, in a small meeting room used as a Hospitality Room. We spend the day visiting and reminiscing. During the afternoon we are addressed by the Dean of the College, who brings us up to date on the College; and by the most recent bursary student who reports on his or her

research project. We are also joined by the person who is responsible for College fundraising. He or she provides up-to-date information on our bursary fund.

Following dinner at the Park Town Hotel, we hold our "Annual Meeting" in the Hospitality Room.

Although our numbers are dwindling, we continue to hold two meetings of the committee



Dr. Mary Buhr, dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources, and Harold Chapman at the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1943 Grads.



Members of the 1943 Agriculture Graduating class attending the 67<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in June, 2010: from left to right: Cliff Simpson, Harold Chapman, Betty Barlow, Vince Coffey, Lou Hluchaniuk and Howard Fredeen.



Those attending the 67<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, l to r: standing: Cliff Simpson, Howard Fredeen, Betty (Myrick) Barlow, Vince Coffey, Lou Hluchaniuk and Harold Chapman. Seated: Margaret Fredeen, Simone Coffey, Joan Fredeen, Betty Simpson, Vi Hanson, Margaret Hluchaniuk and Joan Bell.

a year. I send two information letters to the surviving members of our group, a number of whom are in nursing homes, and to the surviving widows.

Incidentally, I have had an interesting opportunity, while visiting Costa Rica in each of the last four years, to visit with Ray Gross, one of our 1943 graduates. Ray went to Central America in 1947 to work with a fruit company. He had not been able to attend any of our reunions, and I had not seen him since graduation. He took me on a tour of agricultural experimental projects in Costa Rica where

they were breeding improved varieties of coffee, bananas and other tropical fruits.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to keep in contact with the group with whom I spent four years at university during such a tumultuous period so many years ago.



Ray Gross and Harold Chapman at Ray's home in Costa Rica.

## Chapter Seventeen

# Opportunities to Apply Adult Learning and Management Concepts

Perhaps I had difficulty saying no, or perhaps I recognized that adult learning and management concepts being taught in the Co-operative College had important application in many different situations in the community. In any case, over the years I found myself serving on many boards and committees in the community and giving leadership in applying these to various community organizations. Here are a few of the organizations in which I was particularly active:

*Adult Development Course for United Church Ministers, 1960–65.* My cousin Rev. Don Browne was the minister at Bethel United Church in Saskatoon. In his congregation were Phil Rothery, instructor at the Co-operative College, and Cliff Larson, who worked with the retail personnel department of FCL. One day in 1960, Don received a carefully worded letter from Cliff and Phil indicating they had not retained much from the last sermon, and advising him to take the Basic Adult Education course at the Co-operative College. Don took up the challenge and enrolled in the five-day course, in which he participated actively along with field men from co-operatives across Western Canada. The course provided instruction in the principles of adult learning, yearly program planning, activity planning, effective communication and group development.

Don was impressed. He persuaded the Saskatoon Presbytery to sponsor an adult education course for Ministers at the Co-operative College. This was a five-day course with the same pattern as the Basic Adult Education Course at the College. Harold Baker and I conducted the course. There was no doubt it had many challenges

for the ministers, whose training focuses on ‘preaching’ to a passive and silent congregation.

Although there was a lot of interest, the course was not repeated except for several weekend institutes. Part of the reason was that it did not follow the pattern taught at St. Andrews College, the United Church Training Centre for ministers. Don Browne did, however, apply a number of the concepts in his work as a minister.

During the next few years, I was invited to conduct leadership seminars for members of several United Church Presbyteries in Saskatchewan.

*Saskatoon Region Community College, 1974–1980.* In about 1974, the provincial Department of Education established several community colleges in the province, one of which served Saskatoon and the surrounding area. I was nominated to be one of the six members of the Saskatoon Community College Board, along with Fred Gathercole, John Stratychuck and Gladys Rose. At our first meeting, Fred Gathercole was elected as chairman and I as vice chairman. Within a few days Fred went to the hospital where he was to be for some time, so I chaired the board for its first two years.

No guidelines for planning procedures had been established, so in order to develop some, I suggested using the approach being taught at the Co-op College. We had appointed Betty Pepper, a former student of mine, as CEO and Walter Cooke as treasurer.

The Community College had been operating for several months when we held a weekend workshop for board and staff at the 4H Camp near Beechy, Saskatchewan. Using lecture and workshop sessions, we developed a statement of objectives (general statements of purpose of the College) and a statement of goals (measurable amounts of progress or activity desired in a stated period). We then listed key performance areas, areas in which measurable amounts of activity would take place. These were also areas that, if neglected, could lead to serious problems in the organization. Examples of key performance areas were income, expenses, number of courses, number of students, and public information.

For each key performance area we identified key indicators, items in which goals (amount of progress desired) could be set, and on which actual progress could be reported. For example, for the key performance area of finance, a key indicator could be tuition fees collected.

The sessions provided training in setting goals and establishing

reporting structures for each key indicator in each key performance area. Periodic reports would inform both the board and staff of progress with each key indicator in each key performance area.

This was a very productive weekend. Both board and staff learned and planned together. This process was well accepted by board and staff and worked well throughout the period I was on the board.

*Northern Saskatchewan Regional Council of Boy Scouts of Canada, 1982–84.* In the 1980s, I was on the Northern Saskatchewan Region Council of the Boy Scouts of Canada for several years. John Hanlin was the administrator and Tom Simmons, a Saskatchewan Wheat Pool field man, was president. I felt the approach used in the Community College would apply to the scout organization, and so I proposed to the council that it use this procedure in its annual planning meeting. In the late fall of 1983, the Northern Saskatchewan Regional Council of Boy Scouts held a weekend workshop for board and staff members at Waskesiu. The key planning concepts of objectives, goals, key performance areas, key indicators and reports were introduced and identified. The group worked diligently in the application of each to the North Saskatchewan Region, producing a plan whereby the writing of the reports would provide the information needed so the council and staff both knew what was expected and what was actually achieved in measurable periods of time.

*North Saskatchewan Division of CNIB, 1984–88.* After I retired in 1982, I accepted the task of reading books onto tapes for the CNIB. I was then invited to participate on the fundraising committee. The CNIB followed procedures and programs provided by Head Office in Toronto. I invited Ole Turnbull and Eric Rasmussen, who had been with me at the Co-operative College, to participate on the committee. They presented new and fresh ideas that I think were helpful for the fundraising task.

The CNIB board and manager invited me to conduct a planning workshop for board and staff of both the North and South Saskatchewan Regions of CNIB, which was held on a weekend in the facilities of the old sanatorium at Fort Qu'appelle. With about thirty people in attendance, we worked through the same general planning concepts, applying them to the Saskatchewan Regions of CNIB. I felt we made useful progress. However, we had to cope



with the CNIB Toronto head office's terms and procedures and the resistance of several Saskatchewan board members who had been in place for a number of years and did not want to see the terms and procedures changed.

*Saskatoon's United Way, 1990–2005.* One day in July of 1990, Brian Gustafson, FCL's representative with Saskatoon's United Way, invited me to a meeting with the United Way's CEO. The topic for discussion was the effective canvassing of Saskatoon seniors by the United Way. I proposed canvassing the seniors' high rise apartments in Saskatoon. I invited Graham Sheppard and John Cristo to join me in planning and conducting a canvass of the seniors' high rises, using my home base, McClure Place, as a test case.

Our procedure was to advertise the United Way in the McClure Place newsletter, then to set up a table in the lobby at coffee time on two mornings. Two people would be there who could either write income tax receipts or provide an addressed envelope so the cheque could be mailed to the United Way. We later reported to the residents the amount contributed in McClure Place.

The members of my committee each selected about six apartment buildings and carried out the same procedure in each. For several years we added to our committee and thus increased the number of buildings canvassed. I chaired the Seniors' Committee for about eight years and continued as a member for another five years with Bill Bender as chair.

*United Church Presbytery Committee on Church Development, 1982–90.* Shortly after I retired in 1982, Rev. Bert Mather invited me to be a part of a new committee appointed by the Saskatoon Presbytery of the United Church to study needs in the presbytery for new programs, church buildings or major repairs and to help churches plan for whatever was needed. With Lionel Wilson as chair, members included Bert Mather, Harold Baker, Ernie Barber, Muriel Baxter, Wendell Stevens, Grev Jones, Gerald Buhr, Elaine Thomas and myself.

Over several years, we helped plan new churches at Humboldt and Lanigan and for Mayfair, Meewasin Valley and McClure in Saskatoon. The committee held many meetings with churches, planning changes including closing, amalgamation or establishing new congregations. We helped to arrange for temporary services at

Martensville, Warman, Aberdeen, Rosthern and Wakaw. It was an active, positive committee on which I served for about eight years.

We discovered that there were no established guidelines for a church board and congregation to follow in strategic planning. My experience on the committee and with the development of co-operatives helped me prepare a draft of a manual for churches to use on a regular basis in assessing their situation and planning for the future. The manual was tested by a number of churches. It was edited and published with two copies given to each church in the presbytery. I still have my copy.

One issue I pursued on the committee was that of having chairs rather than pews in the sanctuary or auditorium. My concern over the years developed from my study of, and experience with, adult education principles and methods. Chairs provided more flexibility, with the ability to rearrange the seating order to allow greater participation, group discussion and questions to the minister or other leader. They also permitted greater use of the facility by the congregation. McClure United Church is an excellent example of the variety of uses that can be made of an auditorium.

In a reorganization of the Saskatoon Presbytery, this committee was dissolved in about 1990. Over the time it was active, I am sure it was very helpful to many congregations and communities lacking the services of a United Church. I have no idea what assistance is now available to churches in the Presbytery studying their situation and planning for the future.

A side benefit of this work, for me, was the opportunity to help McClure United Church decide on its future. This included building a new church with a seniors' high-rise attached. Mary and I were among the first to move into the new building in the spring of 1989. It has been my home for twenty-two years.

*Saskatoon Community Clinic Foundation, 1969–99.* I joined the Saskatoon Community Clinic in July 1962. It is a co-operative that was originally organized to provide health services at a time when universal health care was introduced and most of the doctors were on strike, opposing it. I remember asking myself, "What are you going to be able to tell your grandchildren many years from now when they ask what action you took at that time?" I can now tell them that I supported universal health care and was part of the group that organized a co-operative in Saskatoon to provide health services.

My family and I have had good service from the co-operative over the years. Except for helping with financing for facilities, using the clinic and attending meetings, I did not play an active role until 1969. In that year, with Smokey Robson as administrator, I became part of the group that organized the Community Clinic Foundation. Its purpose was to raise funds to provide and update equipment required by the clinic and provide other services not included in its annual contract with the Department of Health. I served as a member of the foundation for thirty years. It has used a variety of fundraising methods and received much support from the members and patrons of the clinic.

I still play a member relations role by serving coffee, visiting with patrons and encouraging people to become members of this co-operative.

*McClure Place Foundation, 1991–2010.* I was a member of the board of McClure Place Foundation from its formation in the early 90s. It reports to the Board of McClure Place Association. For a number of years, this foundation was rather dormant, but when the decision was made in 2002 to construct an assisted living facility attached to McClure United Church and McClure Place, the foundation accepted the task of raising the funds that would be required.

With Rev. Dale Morrison, now semi-retired, as Executive Director, the Foundation carried out many fundraising projects. This provided enough funds that, with a mortgage, Amy McClure House with its twenty-one rooms and attractive accommodations and premises was opened in February 2005. My friend the late John Griffiths was the first resident.

The Foundation continues with its task of raising funds to pay off the mortgage. Its funds will then be used to subsidize the cost of accommodations for low-income residents. Two of the sources of funds are an annual Golden Heart Dinner in June and an annual canvass in May, encouraging people to make the Foundation a “charity of choice.” In 2007, I was honoured to receive a Golden Heart award in recognition of my work with seniors over the years.

*Station 20 West, 2008 to present.* The Station 20 West project was organized by the leaders in five core communities in Saskatoon following several years of study and discussion. Its purpose is to provide an integrated facility offering a wide range of services, including a food store; health, library and other services; and low-income housing for the core communities.

The city provided a site for one dollar on which housing for low income people and a branch of the Saskatoon City Library have already been installed. The community centre was planned to include a co-op food store, and dental, health and other community services.

I became aware of the project when longtime community activist Don Kossick, who was on the Station 20 West Board, was speaker at the Saskatoon Nutana Rotary Club. I was present when an \$8 million government cheque was presented by Premier Lorne Calvert in 2007 to assist with the financing. The cheque was placed in trust with the Saskatoon Health Region. When it was withdrawn by the new government, I became actively involved with many others in raising funds so the project, even though reduced in size, could go on.

I have been a member of a major fundraising committee. With a committee of friends from McClure Place, I have organized two major fundraising events at McClure United Church. I have



Opening in 2012, Station 20 West Community Enterprise Centre and the Good Food Junction Co-operative Grocery Store will provide food, health, and other services to the people in the core neighborhoods of Saskatoon.

also encouraged other individuals and groups to contribute to this worthy project. This included a major fundraiser organized by my friend Brenda Baker, a singer/songwriter and entertainer, held at Grosvenor Park United Church. The program featured prominent Saskatoon performers. Joan Bell and I were invited to encourage people to make an extra contribution. We performed a skit and then sang and danced off the stage. From tickets and extra donations, over \$58,000 was raised.

Many other fundraisers were held, including those organized by church groups, individuals and the Saskatoon Symphony. In the past year a number of individuals and the Saskatoon Kinsmen Club have made major contributions. This worthy project finally broke ground in the summer of 2011.

**Political activity, 1982 to present.** As mentioned in Chapter 1, I have been in agreement with the philosophy and values of the CCF-NDP and have supported it ever since I was of voting age. However, I have always respected the choice of others to have differing political philosophies.

Since my work was with co-operatives, which are politically neutral, I did not take an active part in politics during my working years. This changed when I retired in 1982; I am now on both the Greystone (provincial) and the Blackstrap (federal) executives for the New Democratic Party. I have attended provincial conventions and have been able to present resolutions relating to the needs of seniors.

I believe that people should know their candidate, what he or she stands for, and be prepared to give comments, suggestions and guidance. I am impatient with people who say they wait until Election Day to decide for whom they are going to vote. Each party has a philosophy and I encourage people to decide which they wish to support.

**Consulting with Boards of Directors.** I've taken numerous opportunities over the years to work with boards of directors for organizations that invited me to help them to be more effective in their role of directing their organizations. These sessions often involved planning and conducting meetings, preparing reports, taking minutes and communicating with members.

**Recognitions Received.** Over the years I was honoured to receive a number of significant awards in recognition of my volunteer activities. In addition to those mentioned earlier in the text, these included:

1986. Distinguished Graduate in Agriculture Award: Presented by the University of Saskatchewan on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the College of Agriculture; "for valuable services to the co-operative movement and pioneering contributions to co-operative education at the Western Co-operative College."

1996. Saskatchewan Co-operative Enterprise Award: Presented by the Government of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Co-operative Association, "for leadership in Co-operative Education and Development."

2005. Saskatchewan Centennial Medal: Presented by Lieutenant Governor Lynda Haverstock, on the occasion of the Province of Saskatchewan's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Confederation, "for leadership in co-operative and community development."

## Conclusion

Peter Manniche's warning that a co-operative without an education program will only last a generation and a half applies to our co-operatives today. The three prairie Wheat Pools, organized in the mid 1920s, became for-profit corporations in the mid 1990s and are no longer part of the co-op family. Many of the large retail co-operatives and credit unions had their origin in the 1930s and 40s. Their membership is approaching the third and fourth generation of the original organizers. The co-operative community health clinics in Saskatchewan were organized in 1962. Many other co-operatives have been operating for more than a generation.

The challenge of member education applies to any co-operative, large or small, that has survived beyond its first generation of members. What is involved in helping the second and third generations to move towards being fully functioning in their role, thus cultivating loyal members? As I've described, I see an effective education program to be the answer.

I have often seen the co-operative principle "co-operative education" listed, and its importance explained and discussed, in co-operative literature. Except through the efforts of the Association of Co-operative Educators and the Co-operative College, however, the full implications and challenges of implementing this principle are seldom recognized. The challenges involve motivating and assisting adults to learn and to change their behaviour in order that they move towards being fully functioning members of their co-operative or credit union.

Members of co-operatives are adults. They sign an application agreeing to abide by the bylaws and to accept their responsibilities as members of the co-operative. Many sign up with little or no understanding of the philosophy and principles on which the co-operative is based or their rights and responsibilities as a member. The objective of co-operative education is to help these members to understand their responsibilities and to carry them out to the best of

their ability. As I have detailed, this entails recognizing their unique requirements for learning. The Co-operative College developed a program of training in adult education principles and methods that was used by co-operative field men, managers and directors. This is no longer available, but the need remains.

I recognize the board of directors of each co-operative as the body responsible for maintaining the philosophy, applying the co-operative principles, and educating members. To carry out this role effectively, the board should appoint a member relations committee, adopt appropriate policies, and approve education programs and a budget to cover expenses. A staff person with training in the application of adult learning principles and methods should be available to assist with the program.

It is my sincere belief that co-operative education is an important factor in achieving and maintaining successful co-operatives. My experience in working with other organizations has shown that an investment in education can be helpful to any organization that has members and a board of directors, not just co-operatives.

My early interest in co-operative education and farm management opened the door to a whole series of opportunities for working with co-operatives and giving leadership in co-operative education. This involved working with and being guided by many dedicated co-operative leaders. I enjoyed the support and friendship of many directors, managers, field men and members of co-operatives. It was a rewarding and exciting career. I hope my experience and observations will raise questions that are helpful to the co-operative movement and that can be pursued for the betterment of all.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1

Delegates and Visitors Attending the First Annual Meeting of Western Co-operative College, Saskatoon, Sask., October 4, 1960.

Name	Organization	Address
<i>Delegates</i>		
Mrs. Agnes Mowbrey	Alberta Co-operative Women's Guild	Edmonton, Alta.
Mr. L. A. Boileau	Saskatchewan Wheat Pool	Prince Albert, Sask.
Mr. J. R. Stilborn	Saskatchewan Wheat Pool	Lorlie, Sask.
Mr. H. M. Tyler	Saskatchewan Wheat Pool	Regina, Sask.
Mr. G. A. Charbonneau	Credit Union League of Sask.	Regina, Sask.
Mr. Ted Prefontaine	Credit Union League of Sask.	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. C. J. Hewitt	Credit Union League of Sask.	N. Battleford, Sask.
Mr. D. Downing	Can. Co-op Implements Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. R. J. Marcotte	Conseil de la Co-op, de Sask.	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. E. T. Mowbrey	Alta. Co-op Wholesale Association	Edmonton, Alta.
Mr. J. R. Love	Alta. Co-op Wholesale Association	Edmonton, Alta.
Mr. O. M. McCreary	Federated Co-ops, Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. C. A. Robson	Federated Co-ops, Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. E. F. Scharf	Federated Co-ops, Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. C. N. Wells	Federated Co-ops, Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. C. E. Wood	Federated Co-ops, Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mrs. Betty Cappie	Man. Co-op Women's Guild	Viriden, Man.
Mr. Emil Lautermilch	Sask. Co-op Credit Society	Regina, Sask.
Mr. B. G. Munro	Sask. Co-op Credit Society	Regina, Sask.
Mr. J. Shields	Sask. Co-op Credit Society	Nokomis, Sask.
Mr. L. L. Lloyd	Co-op Union of Saskatchewan	Moose Jaw, Sask.
Mrs. Lorayne Janeson	Sask. Co-operative Women's Guild	Foam Lake, Sask.
Mr. Alex Gilliland	Co-operative Trust Company	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. Harvey Pinch	Co-op Fire & Casualty Company	Regina, Sask.
Mr. John Peters	Co-operative Union of Manitoba	Altona, Man.
Mr. George Urwin	Interprovincial Co-ops. Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
<i>Visitors</i>		
Mr. H. L. Fowler	Federated Co-ops. Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. Floyd Griesbach	Farmers Union & Co-op Dev't Association	Edmonton, Alta.
Dr. W. B. Francis	Barrister & Solicitor	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. Art Turner	Western Producer	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. John Poth	Labour Union	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. A. J. Doucet	Conseil de la Co-op. de Sask.	Domremy, Sask.
Dr. B. N. Arnason	Department of Co-operation	Regina, Sask.
Mr. H. W. Webber	Sup. of Co-op Activities & Credit Unions	Edmonton, Alta.

Mr. D. L. Trapp	United Grain Growers Limited	Harris, Sask.
H. F. Simon	Federated Co-ops Limited	Saskatoon, Sask.
<i>Staff</i>		
Mr. H. E. Chapman	Western Co-operative College	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. J. A. Fehr	Western Co-operative College	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. Phil Rothery	Western Co-operative College	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. Wm. Hlushko	Western Co-operative College	Saskatoon, Sask.

## Appendix 2

### Functions and Responsibilities of the Delegates

1. Functions:
  - i. Represent the members through participating in annual, special and district meetings.
  - ii. Represent their co-operative through carrying out responsibilities assigned by bylaws or by decisions made in meetings of the delegates.
  - iii. Give leadership in his or her co-operative or subdistrict in promoting the aim and objectives of the organization and of the co-operative movement.
  
2. Responsibilities:
  - i. Participate in annual, special and district meetings, transacting business as specified in the bylaws, including:
    - a. Electing a director or directors and appraising their performance.
    - b. Establishing or recommending overall objectives and policies.
    - c. Appraising the performance of the organization.
    - d. Receiving and considering reports of the board.
    - e. Amending bylaws as required.
  - ii. Provide communication link between the members and their organization, including receiving guidance from and reporting back to the members or the board of the local co-operative represented.
  - iii. Carry out organization work in the co-operative or sub district represented, as delegated by the bylaws or the district director.
  - iv. Carry out tasks in the co-operative or sub district as requested by the board.

## *Appendix 3*

### Decisions Made By the Delegates of Major Co-operatives

1. Election of President and others required in the organization of the Board.
2. Adoption of Board report and financial statement.
3. Originating or receiving resolutions and voting on them.
4. Proposing and voting on changes in the articles and /or bylaws.
5. Changes in assets - selling off portions of the enterprise or adding to the facilities.
6. Change in structure - for example, change in number of delegates and directors.
7. Amalgamation or merger - including dissolution of one organization, the merging of two or more organizations, or the amalgamation of one with another.
8. Change services - for example, add farm supply services, consolidate country facilities or streamline delivery services.
9. Allocation of earnings.
10. Establish overall objectives and policies.
11. Decisions about joining and supporting other organizations, for example, the Canadian Co-operative Association and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.
12. Make recommendations on government policies and programs, for example, legislation.

## *Appendix 4*

### Self Diagnostic Guide for Delegate Development

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of this guide is to help the individual delegate:

1. Identify the competencies relevant to development as a fully functioning delegate.
2. Assess the present level in each competency.
3. Identify competencies requiring further development.
4. Plan a program of learning experiences for these competencies.
5. Assess gains achieved as a result of these learning experiences.

Competencies appropriated to the delegate roll	Present level of development				Projected learning experiences
	None	Low	Fair	High	
<p><b>A. Give leadership in co-op development</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Understand co-operative philosophy and principles.</li> <li>2) Able to compare types of business organization.</li> <li>3) Able to explain common co-operative practices.</li> <li>4) Able to compare the duties and responsibilities for key roles in a co-operative.</li> <li>5) Able to comprehend the law and bylaws governing home co-operative.</li> <li>6) Able to understand and explain home co-operative.</li> <li>7) Able to comprehend the various types of co-operatives.</li> </ol>					
<p><b>B. Elect and appraise director</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Know the duties and responsibilities of the Board.</li> <li>2) Able to judge the performance of the Board.</li> </ol>					
<p><b>C. Participation in meetings</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Able to apply Roberts Rules of Order.</li> <li>2) Able to be an effective chairman.</li> <li>3) Able to be an effective secretary.</li> <li>4) Able to be an effective participant.</li> <li>5) Able to plan program and facilities.</li> </ol>					
<p><b>D. Establish policies and objectives</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Able to define and appraise a policy.</li> <li>2) Able to analyze present policies.</li> <li>3) Able to define and appraise objectives.</li> <li>4) Able to analyze present objectives.</li> </ol>					
<p><b>E. Appraise performance of organization.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Able to define and analyze key performance areas for the co-op.</li> <li>2) Able to define and analyze key indicators of performance.</li> <li>3) Able to analyze standards and goals for the organization.</li> <li>4) Able to analyze key aspects of the financial statement.</li> </ol>					

\* Adapted from "YMCA Career Development Program Self-Diagnostic Guide" in *The Modern Practice of Adult Education* by Malcolm Knowles.

## Appendix 5

### Guide for Planning a Session using Discussion Groups

#### COMMENT:

At sessions involving a group of people, discussion groups help to increase the interest and the retention of information. Their use should be planned and carried out by a person with training and experience in their use. This guide was prepared to assist individuals and groups planning activities in which discussion groups are to be used. They apply most readily for groups of under 40 people. However, discussion groups can be used effectively in larger groups with appropriate planning.

#### ASSUMPTIONS:

Participants are adults who have **knowledge** and **experience**.

Adults learn by **hearing, seeing, questioning** and **contributing**.

Effective learning results from sharing information, with opportunity for discussion and feedback.

Most people will not participate unless given an opportunity that is not threatening to them.

#### OBJECTIVE:

To give all participants an opportunity to be involved and contribute.

#### PROCEDURES:

Meet as a planning committee prior to the meeting. Include a person who would organize and conduct the group discussion session.

Plan the program to allocate time for presentation of information, discussion by participants in groups and feedback from the groups.

Plan the seating for people to be in groups of 4 to 6 (no more).

Have groups appoint a spokesperson who will note and report questions and comments. (Might use a discussion guide.)

Plan the time for the information and discussion part of the agenda. Eg:

1. One third for the speaker to provide information.
2. One third for the groups to discuss the information and (depending on type or purpose of meeting):
  - ♦ Make comments.
  - ♦ List questions
  - ♦ Make suggestions (or resolutions if appropriate)

3. One third to receive reports from the groups.

Have speaker comment on comments and questions.

Have chairperson receive suggestions to consider for study and future action.

Collect group reports for the record and a summary report by the secretary.

The Planning Committee or Board, at its next meeting, would decide on followup needed.

## RESULT

Everyone at the meeting would have had the opportunity.

1. to contribute to the meeting, based on their interest and experience.
2. to learn and to retain information at a significant level.

Prepared by Harold Chapman, BSA, U of S, and MSc in Co-operative Extension Education, Madison, Wisconsin, in June 2011. He developed and carried out adult education programs for the Co-operative College of Canada for 18 years.

# Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the many people who have given me enthusiastic encouragement in writing, editing and publishing my book, *Sharing My Life: Building the Co-operative Movement*. The seed was initially planted by Scott Bell who suggested that I should write a book recording my experiences with many kinds of co-operatives, emphasizing the important role of adult education.

The first copy, handwritten draft, was edited by Joan Bell. Her continuous encouragement, energy and enthusiasm, as well as her expertise and guidance helped produce the first draft of 24 chapters.

Don Kossick expressed great interest in seeing this story edited and published. His effort in finding an editor and a publisher were invaluable. I have appreciated his words of encouragement throughout and his writing of the foreword for my book.

The expertise of my editor, Dave Oswald Mitchell, former editor of *Briarpatch Magazine*, resulted in the reordering of chapters and the inclusion of historical details that he knew would enrich the manuscript. Questions raised by Dave reminded me that he belonged to a younger generation and had not experienced events I described in my book.

Guided by the advice of Phyllis Baker, Brenda Baker and Art Slade, we found Articulate Eye Design where Brian Smith and Michael McCoy, through design and management, have quickly moved the book forward to publishing.

My thanks also to Lou Hammond Ketilson for writing the preface, and to her and Nora Russell of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives for assistance in publishing and marketing the book.

Writing these memoirs has provided me an opportunity to relive the privilege I had of working with and being guided by many dedicated co-operative leaders. I express appreciation to others who have assisted and encouraged me throughout the writing of the book.

Harold Chapman





## About the Author

Born in Saskatoon, Harold Chapman grew up on farms near Saskatoon and Meskanaw, Saskatchewan. After being out of school for five years, he returned, completing grades 11 and 12 at the Ethelton High School. He has a BSc in Agriculture from the

University of Saskatchewan and an MSc in Co-operative Extension Education from the University of Wisconsin.

He worked for the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development as an Extension Specialist and Director (including three years on leave with the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life); eighteen years with the Co-operative College of Canada as Principal and Program Director; and nine years with Federated Co-operatives Limited with responsibility for member and elected official development. He was active as a member and on the board of the Canadian Association for Adult Education.

Harold's concern was with providing effective learning experiences for adults who were members, directors, managers and staff of co-operatives and other community organizations.

He was a founding member and past president of the Association of Co-operative Educators and has served on numerous boards and committees in the communities in which he has lived.

Harold has contributed chapters to two books: *The Contemporary Director*, a handbook for elected officials of co-operatives, credit unions and other organizations, and *Dignity and Growth: Citizen Participation in Social Change*.



Bill and Charlie Chapman breaking land on the Laurel Co-operative Farm.



Seeding with disc seeders on Matador Co-operative farm. The community pasture is in the background.



Combines harvesting on Sturgis Co-operative Farm.



Building site, Matador Co-operative Farm, for its 17 members.



First Annual meeting, Matador Co-operative Farm, attended by, *l to r*, Hon. Toby Nollet, Minister of Agriculture; Hon. Lackie McIntosh, Minister of Co-operation and Co-operative Development; Tom Johnson, MLA; Hon. John Sturdy, Minister of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation; and Hon. Tommy Douglas, Premier.



Baseball team members on Matador Co-operative Farm. Lorne Dietrick in foreground.



Harold Chapman at Matador Co-operative Farm, with family: Mary, Bob, and Gail.



Members picking brush and roots on Algrove Co-operative Farm.



Combine harvesting on Algrove Co-operative Farm.



Burnt logs being removed on Carrot River Veterans project.



Group of students from Africa attending a course at Western Co-operative College.



Students from developing countries attending a course at the same time as a group of Inuit from the North West Territories taking a co-operative management course.



Mary Chapman beside the maxi van, our first recreation vehicle.



Family: *standing l to r*: Pat Hagel, Bob Chapman, Harold Chapman, Tom Malone, Mackenzie Malone; *seated*: Corinne Chapman Hagel, Kathy Powel, Mary Chapman, Gail Malone, Megan Malone.





Saskatchewan Centennial medal being presented to Harold Chapman by Lieutenant-Governor Lynda Haverstock, September 2005.



Harold and friend Joan Bell on Mediterranean cruise, 2010.