



MELANIE HAYES

# Exchange student Melanie Hayes: Her only regret will be in leaving

For what started as a spur of the moment decision, Melanie Hayes has had no regrets.

Now that the Rotary Exchange student from New Zealand is nearing the end of her stay here, she is viewing her approaching departure date with mixed emotions.

The 17-year-old arrived here Jan. 26 and since then has stayed with the Tom Proctors, Gerald Prieskorns, Jerry Clelands and is now living with the Vic Guernsey family.

In her native country, she attends a high school of 1,200 students in Hamilton, a city of 100,000.

An announcement was made in school one day that students interested in the Rotary Exchange program should apply with the principal. Fifteen did so and one of them was Melanie. "It was a spur of the moment thing to do," she explained, adding that she didn't have a "hope of going."

But she was one of seven selected by the principal to

be interviewed by a panel of Hamilton East Rotary Club members and one of two chosen for the exchange program.

Now that the majority of her stay is behind her, she can say, "I've never regretted it. I'm glad I did it. I've learned so much."

What has she learned? Learning to get along with other people, fitting in with new family and friends, becoming more open minded, accepting other opinions were among items

she mentioned. "I think you become a better person for the experience."

**SHE HAS LEARNED** some other things.

"One is that, 'I love skiing.' Where she lives in New Zealand, a cold winter day is 40 degrees. A hot summer day is 85. She had skied once in her own country, but has skied several times here.

She has learned that New Zealand English isn't always the same as American English.

She was warned before coming here that mistakes on paper are removed with an "eraser" and not with a "rubber." She forgot only once here and made the mistake of asking for a "rubber."

Then there was the time she was riding around with friends here and they asked her if there was any place in particular she wanted to go. "I'm easy," she replied, which is the New Zealand equivalent of "I don't care."

**SCHOOL IS EASIER** here, Miss Hayes has found. In her country, it's unheard of for teenagers to go out during the week. They have too much studying to do. Here, weekday activities are common.

Sports are also much more common here. Practice for interscholastic sports in New Zealand is held only two days a week, with games played on Saturdays.

Melanie was a discus thrower on her track team at home and participated in the same event last spring for the Red Hawks. She was also on the softball team, the first time she had played the sport.

She earned letters in both sports. The prized souvenir she will be taking home with her will be her varsity letter jacket. There aren't such things back home.

Miss Hayes has one year of high school remaining when she returns home. She

doesn't receive credit for her year here. "It counts for me, but not for school." After graduation, she plans to study medicine, dentistry or pharmacy in college.

**THERE HAVE BEEN** two highlights during her stay here.

One was her four-week trip this summer with 60 other Rotary exchange students from 22 countries.

Starting from Chicago, the group, traveling in two buses, saw such places and states as the Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountains, Disneyland, and Oregon, Washington (including Mount St. Helens from 30 miles away), Vancouver, Idaho, Yellowstone National Park, Mount Rushmore, Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Best part of the trip was being with the other exchange students," Melanie said. "Rotary has a fantastic reputation. We were treated like kings and queens wherever we went."

**THE OTHER HIGH-**point was in June, when she and two other exchange students went with Tom Proctor to the Rotary International convention in Chicago.

Melanie carried her nation's flag in the opening ceremonies. "It was probably the proudest moment of my life. It was really great."

Melanie departs for home Jan. 8, in time for the start of the new school year. Seasons being the opposite of here, so is the school year.

"I'm not looking forward to it," she said of her impending departure. "She knows she will see her parents and one brother and friends in New Zealand, but "I don't know if I will ever see my friends and families here again. That's the saddest part."

But then she adds with a note of optimism, "I'll be back."

**St. Michael's Altar Society plans events**

The St. Michael's Ladies Altar Society meeting Monday, Nov. 10, was called to order by President Florence Szostak and was opened with a prayer read by Maxine Kozlowski. Twelve members were present along with guest Mrs. Julie Klein.

Virginia Bilicki of the Christian Service Commission reported on the Halloween party after mass Oct. 25. The next social hour was to be held Nov. 15.

Monday, Dec. 1, was designated by Father William O'Shea for packing boxes with clothes that are being collected for the annual Thanksgiving clothing drive. It will begin at 5 p.m. in the rectory clubrooms with a poor man's supper for all who help. The Altar Society will participate in this endeavor.

Pat Chisolm was to speak at the Christian Service Commission meeting Monday, Nov. 17, regarding photographs for a parish directory.

Mary Lou Wolak of the finance commission reported on its continuing work on the church budget and some of the future activities being formulated, such as the feather party Sunday, Nov. 23, at 7 p.m. Bingo will be played with turkeys as prizes. Proceeds will go to the religious education program. Refreshments will be available.

Maxine Kozlowski of the liturgy commission reported that at their last meeting plans were finalized regarding the liturgy, music, transportation and nursing assistance for the mass of the sick held Oct. 19. The service was well attended, after which refreshments were served by the Christian Service Commission.

Dec. 10 was selected as the day to clean the church, beginning at 9 a.m. All parishioners are asked to help.

Approval was given to purchase material and have draperies sewn for the rectory clubroom windows.

Arlene Marz and Linda Zyrowski were named to the nominating committee for the election in January of president and treasurer. The terms for these posts run for two years.

The Christmas Bazaar will be Friday, Dec. 5, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Articles for sale will include knitted and crocheted items, ceramics, toys, plants, home baked and canned goods, candy, popcorn, knick-knacks, Christmas wreaths, ornaments, decorations, cake and coffee.

Next meeting will be Monday, Dec. 1, at 7:30 p.m., one week earlier than usual.

**O-G names students of the month**

Becky Howard, a senior at Owen-Gage High School, has been named student of the month for October by the school board following recommendation by her teachers.

Becky is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Howard Jr. of Owendale.

She has been on the varsity basketball team four years, volleyball and softball teams, three years. Becky is a member of National Honor Society and has contributed time to Future Homemakers of America (FHA) activities.

She plans to attend college after graduation.

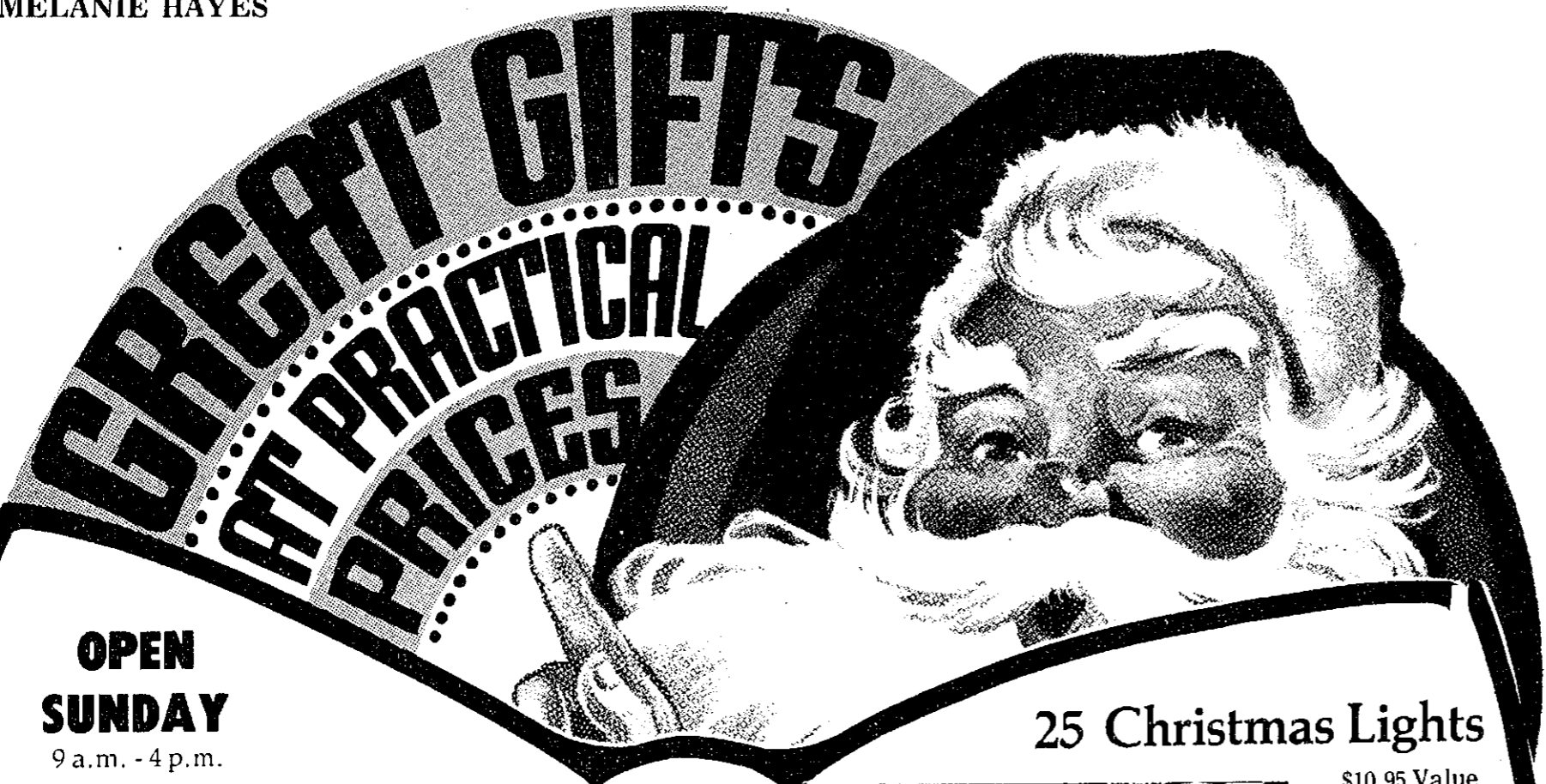
Peggy Berube, a senior, was September student of the month. She is the daughter of Mrs. Irene Berube of Owendale.

She is past treasurer of the FHA and is secretary of the Business and Office Education Club. She is a member of the Honor Society and has been a library aide for three years. Peggy has played on the volleyball team three years.

Dana Laurie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Laurie, Dodge Road, Cass City, was August student of the month.

A senior, she plays on the basketball and softball teams and is a member of the Honor Society. Dana teaches first and second grade Sunday school, sings in the choir and is a member of the youth group at the Gageton United Methodist church.

She plans to major in cosmetology at Ferris State College.



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