

Walter Hagerty, honorary SCJ 1900-1971

Originally from Cork, Ireland, Walter Hagerty was instrumental in the development of much of the building that was done by SCJs in the 1960s. "Our present monastery in Hales Comers would probably still be in the planning stage, or least much smaller if it hadn't been for Mr. Hagerty," said close friend Fr. Linus Merz, SCJ. "And this is only one example of what Mr. Hagerty did for our congregation — the list could go on practically without end."

Walter and his wife, Katheryn, dedicated much time and effort to the SCJs over the years. Walter was a plant engineer for General Electric and in his spare time, helped Fr. Merz obtain materials for various building projects. When he took an early retirement at age 62, he worked full-time on the new Sacred Heart Monastery / Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology building in Hales Comers.

One of his greatest joys was the completion of that project. Two years after the monastery's dedication, Walter died in 1971.

Walter is remembered as a "fun" person to be around, especially by his wife, who met him when she was just 17. "When I saw how much fun the Irish were having, I thought that I wanted to have that much fun too. Experiencing that with Walter helped me open up more to life," said Katheryn.

Being a close friend of many SCJs, the Hagerty house was always a welcome spot for Dehonians passing through Hales Corners. "He and Katheryn were always gracious hosts. You felt welcome in their home," said one SCJ.

Because of the time and effort which he never ceased to donate to the SCJs, he was made an honorary member of the community.



Walter Hagerty (left)