

ROTARY BACKGROUND

Rotary International is a worldwide organization of over 29,500 local Rotary Clubs in more than 162 Countries. Rotary International is responsible for the administration of its member clubs. Each of us is a member of a Rotary Club and the Club is in turn a member of Rotary International. About 1/3 of the clubs are in the United States.

Rotary International is dedicated to the advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace through the fellowship of business and professional people around the world. There are well over a 1 million 400,000 Rotarians worldwide.

In the early part of the last century, a Chicago attorney, who was a graduate of the University of Iowa Law School, was concerned about the lack of ethics, and general honesty of the business community with which he was dealing. His name was Paul Percy Harris.

In early 1905 Paul Harris called together three of his business associates to discuss with them an idea he had to form a club that would promote fellowship, high ethical standards in business and the professions, community service and good will. That same year the first Rotary Club was formed in Chicago. Rotary takes its name from the fact that the original members met in rotation at their places of business.

By 1910 fifteen other clubs had been formed in the United States and the national association of Rotary Clubs was formed. This was the year of Rotary's first convention. It was held in Chicago. It was at this convention that Rotary's motto "He Profits Most Who Serves Best" was used.

In 1912 the first Rotary Club organized outside of the United States was chartered in Winnipeg Canada.

In 1914 Hugh Shepard had a desire to form a Rotary Club in Mason City. At the time Mason City was a city of approximately 17,000 people with 300 business and professional offices which would be available to form clubs such as Rotary. After some disappointments and considerable correspondence concerning Mason City's relatively small size, Mr. Shepard's persistence won out, and on July 16, 1916 the Mason City Rotary Club was founded. The original membership was 22 men who included, Ward R. Hamilton President of the University of Commerce (Hamilton Business College) ; Charles H. MacNider, President First National Bank ; Frank R. Currie Proprietor Curries Hardware Co ; Ralph W.E.. Decker secretary treasurer of Decker Meat Packing, and William F. Muse Proprietor of the Mason City Globe Gazette. The first meeting place was the Cerro Gordo Hotel. Hugh Shepard was a member of our Mason City Rotary club he helped found for 50 years.

In 1915 following the establishment of Rotary Clubs in other nations, the organization adopted the name of International Association of Rotary Clubs.

In 1917 an endowment fund was established. This was the forerunner of the Rotary Foundation which today endows Rotary programs including Rotary Scholarships, Youth Exchange, Rotary Group Study Exchange, Polio Plus and matching grants for community projects.

In 1922 Rotary adopted the name Rotary International. Also in 1922 Rotary International adopted the standard Rotary Club constitution which outlines administrative techniques for clubs to follow in holding weekly meetings, procedures for membership and membership classifications, conditions of attendance, payment of dues, and other policies relating to public issues and political positions. This Club constitutional document provides the frame work for all Rotary Clubs in the world, and is considered one of Rotary's greatest organizational strengths.

By 1926 the Mason City Rotary Club had grown to 61 members and was actively involved in the local Boy Scouts and providing guidance to pre delinquent boys.

In 1927 the first Rotary youth exchange began in Nice France, since then the program has expanded around the world. It is one of Rotary's most popular programs to promote international understanding. Youth exchange offers young people opportunities to be involved in cultures outside of their home country. These students usually spend a full academic year abroad, with three month stays each with different Rotary host families.

In 1933 the four way test was formulated in Chicago. All of us received a copy upon entry into Rotary membership.

In 1933, during the last depression, our local Mason City club sponsored "Feed, Swim and Game programs for boys who's parents were on welfare.

In 1942 Dr. T.E. Davidson was elected as the first District Governor from our Mason City Club.

In 1945 forty nine Rotarians helped draft the United Nations Charter in San Francisco.

In 1947 Paul Harris died. Paul Harris brought men together and enriched their lives by demanding of them an extension of the humanitarian ideal. It was written about Harris; "He organized a strange kind of club, from which men get nothing, but actually pay for the privilege of doing good. Harris death set up a movement to send funds to the Rotary Foundation, which continues today..

In 1949 Rob Roy Cerney was elected as the second District Governor from the Mason City Club.

In 1955 Ward Halmilton was elected as the third District Governor from the Mason City Rotary Club.

In 1957 Rotary first established the Paul Harris Fellows, recognition for contributors of one thousand dollars to the Rotary Foundation.

In 1959 the Mason City Rotary Club presented the Rotary Cannonball Steam Locomotive to the City of Mason City. The locomotive is on display in East Park and was donated by the American Crystal Sugar Co.

In 1965 for the first year the Rotary Foundation received total contributions of a million dollars in a single year. Today more than 45 million is given annually, contributions total more than \$750 million.

In 1967 the Mason City Rotary Club held its first Rotary Radio Auction.

In 1973 Herbert Jacobs was elected as the fourth District Governor from the Mason City Rotary Club.

In 1975 Rotary held the worlds largest international convention in Tokyo

In 1978 Thor Jensen was elected as the fifth District Governor from the Mason City Rotary Club.

In 1980 - 1982 the Mason City Club used proceeds from the radio auctions to plant trees throughout the City to replace those lost to Dutch Elm disease

In 1985 Rotary International announced the Polio plus Program to immunize all the children in the world against Polio, Rotary asked for \$120 million and raised in excess of \$250million for the goal to eradicate Polio world wide by the year 2005, Rotary's centennial year.

In 1987 women were invited to join a Rotary Club in California. Rotary had previously been an all male club. In 1989 a constitutional change was made in the Rotary Clubs of the United States and all U.S. Rotary Clubs were allowed to have both male and female members.

In 1988 Bill Killpack was elected as the sixth District Governor from the Mason City Rotary Club.

In 1989 the Mason City Noon Rotary Club sponsored the River City Sunrise Rotary Club.

In 1991 the club celebrated its 75th anniversary, at this time the Mason City Noon Rotary Club had 133 members, 54 Paul Harris Fellows and 10 sustaining members.

In 1994 the Western Hemisphere was declared polio free with an estimated 500,000.000 children in 97 countries being immunized between 1988 and 1993.

In 1996 Don Ambrosion was elected as the seventh District Governor from the Mason City Rotary Club.

2003 Rosie Hussey serve our District as District Governor and is the eighth District Governor from the Mason City Noon Rotary Club, but surely not the last.

2003 The Mason City Noon Rotary Club raffled off a domestic sports care. The raffle paid for the car and raised \$42, 000 for community and world benefit.

Rotary is the first service club ever organized in the world; it is the largest and by all ways of judging is considered the best.