



The History of Rotary in District 6860

(NORTH ALABAMA, USA)

The Very Early Days

While visiting a brother in Denver during 1912, Harry B. Wheelock, a leading Birmingham architect, learned of a new organization called Rotary which had originated in Chicago and was spreading fast. Upon his return home, he discussed Rotary with his business and professional friends, and it was decided that further information was needed. Wheelock, along with Thomas H. Molton, John W. Sibley and John E. Shelby, visited clubs in Denver, Los Angeles and other cities, and returned home with enthusiasm for this new ideal of service. On the following page is a letter sent to Harry Wheelock in March, 1912, from Paul P. Harris.

On February 6, 1913, at a meeting held in the Directors Room of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, 32 men heard an address by Chesley R. Perry, Rotary's Perennial Secretary, and that day completed the organization of the Birmingham Club with Charter No. 56.

The Birmingham Club immediately began extending Rotary by assisting in the organization and formation of clubs in Atlanta, Memphis, Montgomery, Mobile, Nashville, Savannah, Macon, Tampa, Selma, Ensley, Bessemer, Tuscaloosa and other areas. At the 1914 Convention in Houston, Texas, John E. Shelby, a charter member of the Birmingham Club, was elected Regional Vice-President with territory covering most of the Southeast and duties similar to those of a present-day District Governor.

District No. 5

At the 1915 Convention in San Francisco, the U.S. was divided into districts and District Governors were elected. Our area became District No. 5, and Frank P. Glass, a member of the Birmingham Club, became District Governor of the three-state area of Alabama, Georgia and Florida.

In the early days, it was the belief of the National Association that a club could not survive in towns with a population of less than 50,000, so the formation of clubs in Pensacola and Selma was delayed somewhat. However, Pensacola was organized in 1915 and Selma in early 1916, so the barrier had been broken, opening the door for the formation of clubs with

men of good will regardless of the community size. Today, the vast majority of Rotary Clubs are located in population centers of less than 50,000.

At the 1916 Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, District 5 was expanded to include Cuba, a club having been organized in Havana.

At that time, District Conferences had not been established, so the District 5 delegates at the Cincinnati Convention held a caucus and nominated Ralph D. Quisenberry, of Montgomery, as District Governor. This nomination was confirmed by the Convention.

The First District Conference

District Conference guidelines were established at the Cincinnati Convention, and the first District 5 Conference was held in November, 1916, at Jacksonville, Florida, with District Governor Ralph D. Quisenberry presiding and 125 Rotarians in attendance.

In 1917, the first Convention with the new name of the *International Association of Rotary Clubs* (IARC) was held in Atlanta, Georgia, on June 17-21, and the clubs of the 5th District acted as joint hosts. As their part of the entertainment, the Alabama clubs secured the floats used in the Mardi Gras parade in Mobile and repeated this pageant in Atlanta. It was said that this was a brilliant undertaking.

The Gadsden Club was organized and chartered by Governor Quisenberry in April, 1917.

Malcolm D. Jones, of Macon, Georgia, was elected District Governor at the Atlanta Convention. He approved the election and chartered the Anniston Club in September and the Huntsville Club in November, 1917.

The second District Conference was called to order in Selma on March 4-5, 1918, by District Governor Jones. The special representative of Rotary to the Conference was H. J. Brunner of San Francisco who addressed one hundred seven Rotary Club delegates who were in attendance.

At this Conference, John G. Gay of Jacksonville, Florida, was nominated District Governor and was elected at the Kansas City Convention held June 24-28, 1918.

DISTRICT NO. 8

At the Kansas City Convention, our District number and area changed. A Rotary Club having been chartered in San Juan, Puerto Rico, our District was expanded to include this new area. The territory now included in District No. 8 was Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Cuba and Puerto Rico.

The Dothan Club, which had been operating as an independent club along the lines of a Chamber of Commerce, was reorganized under the direction of District Governor Gay into a Rotary Club in September, 1918, when it was elected to membership in the International Association of Rotary Clubs.

April 9-10, 1919, was the date of the District Conference held in Albany, Georgia, with District Governor Gay. Chesley R. Perry, General Secretary of Rotary, was the representative of the President to this Conference.

This District Conference passed two resolutions adopting policy and procedure:

1. A regular program of work among boys which led to Rotary Youth Programs.
2. Established a ten-day period of time in which a club member could object in writing to a proposed member.

Truman L. McGill of Selma was nominated as District Governor and was elected at the Convention in Salt Lake City, June 16-20, 1919.

The Rotary Club of Opelika was chartered in May, 1919.

The 1920 District Conference was held at Tampa, Florida, on March 28-29, with Governor McGill presiding. Rotary Vice-President Estes Snedecor represented the President. Attendance was 457 men and 202 women for a total of 659, by far the largest attendance to date. W. R. C. Smith of Atlanta, was nominated for District Governor and was elected at the Atlantic City Convention, June 21-25, 1920. Also, at this Convention, Puerto Rico was removed from District 8 due to the distance from other clubs.

Governor McGill delivered several club charters in Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Cuba. Those in Alabama were Bessemer in February, Sheffield in March, and Troy in April, 1920.

Birmingham was the site of the 1920 District Conference with a registered attendance of 698 men and 210 women for a total of 908, a new high. District Governor W. R. C. Smith presided, and John C. Henley, Jr., of Birmingham, was Secretary of the Conference. Dr. Crawford C. McCullough, First Vice-President of Rotary, was the official representative to this Conference. There were 47 clubs in the District at this time.

It was at this Conference that a resolution was passed asking the International Association of Rotary Clubs to consider scheduling a Constitutional Convention to be held separate from the International Convention.

John A. Turner of Tampa, Florida, was nominated District Governor and was elected at Edinburgh, Scotland, June 13-16, 1921.

The Cuban delegates, because of the language difference as well as local conditions, asked the Conference to adopt a resolution requesting that the International Board consider the formation of a separate district for Cuba.

Governor Smith delivered charters to four new Alabama clubs: Andalusia in November, Talladega in December, 1920, Florence in January, and Eufaula in May, 1921. The average attendance in the District this year was 61.5 percent.

The 1922 District Conference was held in Savannah, Georgia, March 23-24, with Governor Turner presiding and R. W. Groves as Secretary. Second Vice-President William H. Coppock represented the Rotary President. Attendance was 762 men and 113 women, for a total of 875. James S. Thomas of Tuscaloosa was nominated District Governor and elected at the Convention held in Los Angeles. Governor Turner delivered charters to Tuscumbia in November and Brewton in April.

This Conference passed several resolutions, but we will mention only two here. One resolution complained of the large amount of material and forms being sent out by "Headquarter Officers." Another was related to "stunts." The resolution "conceded that stunts are a necessary part of Rotary entertainment," and suggested the District Governor's office be the clearing house for "stunts" in order that each club have a good supply.

DISTRICT NO. 26

At the Convention held at Los Angeles, July 5-9, 1922, a new constitution was adopted and the name changed to *Rotary International*. The clubs in North America were restricted and an attempt was made to eliminate state lines. The 8th District was then too large to be properly supervised by one District Governor and it was divided into two, nearly equal parts and renumbered, the western half being the 26th and the eastern part the 39th.

The original plan was for the territory in western Florida, including Tallahassee and the western part of Georgia, including Rome, West Point, LaGrange and Columbus, to be in the 26th District. After petition of the clubs named, however, the Board assigned them to the 39th, and the 26th District was then redefined as the state of Alabama and that part of Florida located west of the Appalachian River. This change left Pensacola as the only club in the 26th District not located in the State of Alabama.

Governor Thomas delivered charters to the clubs in Demopolis in January and at Jasper in March, 1923.

On November 17th, an "All Alabama Rotary Day" was held in Mobile. The District Governor's report on the day had this to say, "Mobile, replete in history, famed for hospitality, beautiful in buildings, harbor and scenery, fairly outdid itself when the Rotarians arrived. George Lining and Bill Lott must have lain awake nights thinking up all the nice

things they were going to do to the gang, and Haygood Patterson of Montgomery brought the most beautiful posies and decorated every Rotarian until one would have thought it was the Auburn football team on parade after winning from Tech. In the evening a regular feed with ladies and all and a real Rotary talk by Bill Armbrecht on "Springs." The Governor also spoke, as did Bob Mangum (Selma) and Haygood Patterson (Montgomery). Pat was accepting the attendance cup when he spoke, so he made it snappy and full of big words but Bob—he was talking of the ladies in Rotary and Bob has had some experience and with his inspiration right at hand—how he did let it fly."

The first Conference of the 26th District was held in Birmingham on March 15-16, 1923, with Governor Thomas presiding and L. L. Doty as Secretary. The attendance was men, 327; women, 196; total 568. Harry Bert Craddick of Minneapolis, a member of the Board, represented Rotary International. L. D. Dix, of Mobile, was nominated District Governor and was elected at the Convention held in St. Louis in June, 1923.

The 1924 District Conference was held in Tuscaloosa on March 18-19, Governor Dix presiding. J. B. Brosius was Conference Secretary. The attendance was visiting men 228; visiting ladies 38; local men 61; local ladies 48; total 475. Arch C. Klumph of Cleveland, represented Rotary. Herman L. Turner was nominated District Governor, his election taking place at Toronto in June, 1924.

Charter was granted to the club at Attalla in 1923 by Governor Dix, and Governor Turner delivered charters to Ensley in October 1924, and to Aliceville in February 1925.

The 1925 District Conference was held in Mobile on March 16-17. The galaxy of international orators, as well as those from our own district, together with local entertainment and gastronomic features were above anything that had been presented at previous Conferences and were such as have not been attempted since. Governor Turner (no mean orator himself) presided and had on his program Allen D. Albert, Past President, IARC, 1915-16; Alan R. McFarlane of Vancouver, British Columbia, a member of the International Board, and the lamented William A. Burcher, a member of the National Committee on Boys. The entertainment included a seafood dinner which was served while sailing on the bay, interesting drives through historic Mobile, model luncheons, a splendid banquet, receptions, dances, etc. Dick Christian acted as Secretary and his report shows the attendance as 344 Rotarians and 211 guess, or a total of 554.

Emory Folmar, of Troy, was nominated District Governor at Mobile and elected at the International Convention in Cleveland on June 15-19, 1925. He organized the clubs at Russellville in February and at Enterprise in April, 1926.

Huntsville was the site of the 1926 District Conference which was held on April 12-13. Governor Folmar presided and John P. Moore acted as Secretary. A. F. Graves of Brighton, England, a director of Rotary International, was the official representative. Registration was Rotarians 239, Visitors 102, total 341.

Lauren E. Brubaker was nominated District Governor and was elected at the Convention in Denver, Colorado, in June, 1926. He founded a luncheon club at Auburn known as the "Villagers" and, in May 1927, he transformed it into a Rotary Club.

At this Conference, Will Archer spoke strongly and with feeling regarding the work with Crippled Children and Adults. He explained and gave emphasis to the work he felt Rotary could and should do with Crippled Children and in the rehabilitation of handicapped adults.

The 1927 District Conference was held at Pensacola on April 28-29, when we entertained another gathering of international personages. The late James W. Davidson and Mrs. Davidson, of Calgary, Alberta, who shortly before had carried Rotary around the world, represented the International Board. Richard G. Cox, of Gulfport, Mississippi, and Carl Faust, of Jackson, Mississippi, both past International Directors, helped make Governor Brubaker's program a success. The outstanding entertainment feature was a pageant, "The Making of America and Americans, Through Rotary Remaking the Nations," an original production arranged especially for this occasion. The attendance was: men 307, women 74, total 381. Perry W. Reed was the Secretary.

The "Club Executive's Conference," a forerunner of our District Assembly, was held this year. Some Rotarians questioned its value and purpose. Of the 27 clubs in the District, all but four were represented.

William H. Merrill, of Eufaula, was nominated District Governor and elected at the Convention in Ostend, Belgium, June 5-10, 1927.

Governor Merrill presided at the Convention held at Anniston on April 23-27, 1928. W. Murray Fields was the Secretary. Charles E. White, a member of the International Board from Belfast, Ireland, was the official representative. Attendance was 304.

Ernest L. Deal, of Florence, was nominated District Governor and his election took place at the Convention at Minneapolis June 18-22, 1928. The Club at Decatur was elected to membership in November, 1928, and Marianna, Florida, in April, 1929.

Attendance at Anniston was: Visiting men, 222; visiting ladies, 131; total 353.

On April 29-30, 1929, the Montgomery Club entertained the District Conference with a total registration of 379. Of these, 174 were visiting Rotarians, 92 being from the host club and 32 visiting ladies and 81 ladies from Montgomery. The total district membership was 1,341.

Governor Deal presided and W. L. Rogers was Secretary. Director John E. Carlson, of Kansas City, represented Rotary. M. Eugene Newsome, of Durham, North Carolina, chairman of the Aims and Objects Committee and later President of Rotary International, was a guest speaker, as was Floyd Allen, Assistant to the President of General Motors, of Detroit, Michigan. Morgan Richards of Selma, was nominated District Governor, his

election taking place at Dallas, Texas, May 27-31, 1929. The Club at Tallassee was organized and elected in November of that year.

The "District Assembly" was held at Pensacola, Florida, on July 22-23. Of the then 30 clubs, only 21 had representation. District Governor Morgan Richards made the following observation in his report to Rotary International following the Assembly, "It is noticeable that several of the clubs not represented are on the list of the clubs that need attention." (The picture has not changed.)

1930--The Depression Years

Birmingham was host to the District Conference on April 14-15, 1930. Governor Richards presided and George M. Lemmon was Secretary. The total attendance was 555, 189 Rotarians and 63 ladies being visitors and 157 Rotarians and 146 ladies registering from Birmingham. The total membership in the District was 1,326. Director Clyde L. Hulsizer, of Des Moines, Iowa, represented Rotary. He was accompanied by Mrs. Hulsizer. Joseph A. Duckworth, of Tuscaloosa, was nominated District Governor and was elected at the Convention in Chicago on June 27-30, 1930.

During the year 1930-31, the effects of the Depression were commencing to be felt; there was a decrease in membership and no new clubs were formed, all the energy being devoted to hold what we had.

The District Assembly went to Montgomery on July 7-8, 1930, and of the then 31 clubs in the District, 29 were represented.

On April 13-14, 1931, the Conference was held at Gadsden with an attendance of 321 as follows: Visiting Rotarians, 151; ladies 31; Gadsden Rotarians 68 and local ladies 71. The membership in the District was 1,242. Governor Duckworth presided, with Walter C. Bell as Secretary. The representative of Rotary International was Director Will Taylor of Springfield, Illinois, and he was accompanied by Mrs. Taylor.

The clubs at Marianna and Pensacola, Florida asked the District to approve a transfer of those clubs to the 39th District so that they could be affiliated with all the other Florida clubs. This change was approved, the International Board made it effective on July 1, and we lost our close contact with these splendid clubs. This, then, made the definition of the 26th District "The State of Alabama."

The State of Alabama

John C. Henley, Jr., of Birmingham, was nominated District Governor at the Gadsden Conference and was elected at the Convention at Vienna, Austria, on June 21-25, 1931.

The District Assembly again went to Montgomery on September 15-16, 1931. Of the then 29 clubs, 26 had representatives.

Huntsville entertained the District Conference on April 28-29, 1932. Governor Henley presided and John P. Moore was Conference Secretary. Third Vice-President John Nelson, of Montreal, Canada, accompanied by Mrs. Nelson, was the official representative. John was later President of Rotary International. Algernon Blair, of Montgomery, was nominated District Governor, his election taking place at the Convention held at Seattle, Washington, in 1932.

The District lost two clubs during the year, at Talladega and Tuscumbia, and there was a further shrinkage in the membership of other clubs which reduced the District membership to 985. The Conference attendance was: Visitors; men 88, ladies 25, from host city, men 28, ladies 25, total 166.

The District Assembly went to Mitchell Dam on July 25-26, 1932. All clubs in the District, except Russellville, were represented.

The District Conference went back to Mobile on March 27-28, 1933, with Governor Blair presiding and Herbert C. Bruner acting Secretary. Prior to this Conference, three more clubs—Attalla, Enterprise and Russellville—had resigned, reducing the District membership to 837. The attendance was: Visiting Rotarians 108; ladies 35; Mobile Rotarians 92; Mobile ladies 72; total 307. John T. Cochrane was nominated District Governor and was elected at Boston, June 26-30, 1933. Director Ernesto Aguilar of Mexico City, accompanied by Mrs. Aguilar, represented Rotary International at this Conference.

District Grows Again

Governor Cochrane conducted his District Conference at Montgomery, May 13-15, 1934, with Frank L. Grove as Secretary. Robert E. Lee Hill of Columbia, Missouri, who was later President of Rotary International, represented Rotary. The attendance was 414 as follows: Visiting Rotarians 137; visiting women 55; Montgomery Rotarians 107; women 115. The total membership in the District was now 1,028, showing that the turn had come and that Rotary in Alabama now on the upgrade. An outstanding visiting speaker was Dr. Gus Dyer,

professor at Vanderbilt University. During Governor Cochrane's administration, the club at Enterprise was reorganized and new clubs established at Hartford and at Geneva.

Zebulon Judd of Auburn was nominated District Governor, and elected at Detroit on June 25-29, 1934.

District Assembly went to Martin Dam on July 25-26, 1934. Attendance was good.

Algernon Blair, of Montgomery, was elected a Director of Rotary International at the Convention in Detroit, June 25-29, 1934.

The Conference, under Governor Judd's leadership, was held at Birmingham on May 12-14, 1935. Arthur K. Akers was Conference Secretary. The District membership at this time was 1,126. The attendance was Visitors, men 157; women 78; home folks, men 109, and the same number of women; total 453. Past Director Raymond J. Knoepfel, of New York, accompanied by Mrs. Knoepfel, represented Rotary International. Dr. William A. Harper, of Vanderbilt University, made a splendid talk on "Religion of Business."

The club at Sylacauga was organized under this administration.

James A. Lee, of Selma, was nominated District Governor and elected at the Convention held in Mexico City, Mexico, June 17-21, 1935.

The District Assembly returned to Mitchell Dam on July 27 and 28, 1936. Eight clubs were not represented.

On April 19-21, 1936, the Conference was held at Gadsden, Alabama, with Governor Lee presiding, and Walter Bell acting as Secretary. The attendance was 310; visitors, men 161; women 53; from host city, 48 men and an equal number of women. The District membership had now risen to 1,188. Rotary International was represented by Past Director Robert F. Phillips, of Asheville, North Carolina, and Herman L. Turner of Atlanta, was an honored guest.

Harry M. Ayers was nominated District Governor and was elected at the Convention at Atlantic City, New Jersey, on June 22-26, 1937.

The club located at Samson was elected to membership during this period.

Many New Clubs

There was a change in the Rotary policy during that year and practically the whole energy of Governor Ayers was devoted to the organization of new clubs in territories which, for the most part, had been considered too small for clubs or otherwise unsuitable for Rotary. The extension of Rotary to the smaller places in the District had its effect on the larger clubs also,

and when the District Conference was held at Huntsville on April 18-20, 1937, the District membership had grown to 1,438, with new clubs at Athens, Brantley, Marion, Reform, Tuskegee and York and, by July 1, Hartselle, Lafayette and Roanoke had been chartered and preliminary work done at a number of other places.

Governor Ayers presided at the Huntsville Conference, with John P. Moore acting as Secretary. Past Director Abit Nix of Athens, Georgia, was the representative of Rotary International. Visiting speakers were James A. Holmes of Greenville, South Carolina, and Dr. J. A. McCalla of Chattanooga, Tennessee. The attendance was: Visiting Rotarians 91, visiting ladies 38, Huntsville Rotarians 36, Huntsville ladies 28; total 193.

District No. 164

The growth of Rotary being so great, requiring redistricting, and for housekeeping reasons, District numbers were changed even though the territory remained the same.

George Klimes of Birmingham was nominated District Governor at the Huntsville District Conference and was elected at Nice, France, on June 6-11, 1937.

District Assembly was held in Montgomery on September 16 and 17, 1937. Thirty-five of the thirty-nine clubs were represented.

On April 26-28, 1938, the Conference was held in Dothan. Governor Klimes presided and the attendance was: Visiting Rotarians 185; visiting ladies 55; Dothan Rotarians 37; Rotary Anns from Dothan 32, or a total of 309 registered guests. Rotarian Claybrook Cottingham, Past Director from Alexandria, Louisiana, accompanied by Mrs. Cottingham, was the representative of Rotary International. District Governor T. T. Molnar of Cuthbert, Georgia, brought a word of greeting from the 165th District.

Houston Cole, of Tuscaloosa, was nominated District Governor and elected at the Convention in San Francisco, June 19-24, 1938. He was known in his youth as the "Patrick Henry of DeKalb County."

The membership of the District at the close of this year was 1,637. New clubs had been chartered at Ashland, Brundidge, Cullman, Evergreen, Fairhope, Greensboro and Wetumpka.

District Fund Set Up

At the District Assembly held in Montgomery earlier in the year, a new plan was adopted to care for a certain part of the expenses of the District Conferences. At the Conference held in 1923, arrangements were made for each club to put up fifty cents per member for the fixed expense of the Conference and an additional fifty cents per member for the special expense,

making a total of \$1.00 deposited for Conference expenses. This was to be disbursed by a special committee and sums left over, if any, were to be divided between the donors. This committee was appointed for several years and then it was abandoned and the matter was handled by the host club committee. For several years, this club committee attempted to get sufficient funds for their needs, leaving out those clubs which objected.

When met with opposition, it was decided to pay the entire \$1.00 per member to the District Fund, to contribute a stated sum to the Conference host club and to use the balance for district matters. Commencing with the Dothan Convention, this was done.

The District Assembly for the Rotary year 1938-39 was held in Tuscaloosa on July 26-27, 1938. Of the then 44 clubs in the District, 40 were represented.

The 1939 District Conference was held in Mobile on April 30 to May 2. District Governor Houston Cole presided and Herb Bruner acted as Secretary. The attendance was as follows: Visiting men 129; visiting ladies 110; Mobile men 110; Mobile ladies 71; total 420. The total District Membership was 1,674.

Rotary International was represented by Past Director Karl Miller of Dodge City, Kansas, who was accompanied by his wife. Past Director Walter D. Head of Teaneck, New Jersey, later named President of Rotary International, was also present and addressed the gathering. Congressman Representative Joe Starnes of Guntersville, gave a very interesting talk on the work of the Dies Committee of Congress.

Rotarians of the Briny Deep

At this point in time, in 1938, the federal government maintained a passenger boat of 400 capacity which was docked in Mobile Bay. Regulations pertaining to its use required the request of a congressman who served the area. He was required to come to the area involved and accompany the passengers on the journey.

Governor Cole and the Conference Committee turned to Congressman Joe Starnes for his service. At that time, most travel was done by train and not plane. As a result, the Congressman traveled all night and part of the next day before he reached Mobile. It must be pointed out that the delegates at the Convention learned of the details of this adventure and insisted that we devote a part of the Convention time to this phase.

At noon on Friday, the delegates assembled at the bayside with strong expectations of the interesting event. Suffice it to say, we moved the afternoon session to the boat and sailed the mighty deep.

Fellowship and observation characterized the journey. Delegates met delegates they had not known before. This had the effect of increasing fellowship and friendship while viewing the scenes along the way.

Frank L. Grove, of Montgomery, was nominated District Governor and elected at the International Convention at Cleveland, Ohio, in June, 1939. Charters were granted to the new clubs at Greenville and Gordo during this term.

The Assembly went to Montgomery on July 24-25, 1939. Ten of the 46 clubs were not represented.

Largest Conference To Date

The 1940 Conference was held at Montgomery on April 21-23, with Governor Grove presiding and Maxie Pepperman acting as Secretary. The attendance was as follows: Visiting men 279; visiting ladies 91; local men 132; local ladies 134; total 636.

Rotary International was represented by Raymond J. Knoepfel, Past Director, of New York. Willis Sutton, of Atlanta, was one of the speakers.

One of the most elaborate entertainments was conducted on a parody on the motion picture play "Gone With The Wind."

Frank P. Samford, of Birmingham, was nominated District Governor and his election took place at the Convention held in Havana, Cuba, on June 19-24, 1940.

At the time of the Convention, the District Membership was 1,824.

Selma was host to the District Assembly on July 15-16, 1940. Eleven of the 45 clubs were not represented.

We then went to Birmingham for the District Conference on May 4-6, 1941. Frank P. Samford presided and Frank Spain was Conference Secretary. The attendance was: Visiting men 207; visiting women 88; Birmingham men 206; Birmingham women 206; total 707.

Rotary International was represented by Director Frank C. Barnes of Manistee, Michigan. Other visiting speakers were Past Rotary International Director Edward F. McFaddin of West Little Rock, Arkansas; Porter W. Carswell of Waynesboro, Georgia; Herman L. Turner, President of the Rotary Club of Atlanta; P. O. Davis of Auburn, and Charles W. Pettengill of Greenwich, Connecticut, who later became Rotary President.

Harry P. Hall of Dothan was nominated for District Governor and his election took place at the Convention held in Denver, Colorado on June 15-20, 1941. During the previous term, charters of the clubs at Marion and Samson were surrendered.

A new club was organized at Opp in May, 1941.

Invitation was extended for the 1942 Conference to be held at Gadsden. This information was referred to the District Assembly to be held in Montgomery, where it was accepted.

In January 1942, the club at Goodwater was chartered, bringing the total of 46 for the District.

Thom J. Davis of Butte, Montana, President of Rotary International, honored the District with two visits in March of this year. He conducted Intercity Forums at Birmingham, March 16, and at Dothan, March 19. They were two of the finest and best attended meetings ever held in the state. Twenty-eight Alabama clubs were represented at the Birmingham Forum—375 total attendance. Dothan had a registration of 406 from 14 Alabama clubs, 7 Georgia and 7 Florida clubs.

Four other Intercity Forums were held at Andalusia, Decatur, Tuscaloosa and Auburn. Total registration for the six forums was 1,198. In an official announcement, Rotary International gave the 164th District credit for leading all districts in Intercity Forum promotion and attendance.

We also had the distinction of being one of the two Rotary districts in which every club made a contribution to the Rotary Relief Fund. \$1,671.79 was donated by Alabama's Rotary Clubs for the relief of distressed Rotary families in the war-torn areas.

Total membership as of February, 1942 stood at 1,876.

Harry Hall, District Governor for the Rotary Year 1941-42, continued to expand Rotary at every opportunity. The information in this book should place Harry Ayers and Harry Hall as the "Rotary Extension Twins."

Governor Hall and his District Assembly in Montgomery on July 28 and 29. Of the 45 clubs in the District, 44 were represented. Governor Hall had a grand display of Rotary Information. This Assembly voted by resolution to ask Past District Governor Morgan Richards of Selma to prepare a "History of Rotary in Alabama."

Past District Governor Houston Cole was appointed by Alabama Governor Dixon to organize and administer the Alabama State Defense Council and Office of Price Administration with more than 300,000 men and women working under his direction, the largest job in the state.

The District Conference went to Gadsden this year on April 26-28, 1942. All 46 clubs, except Fairhope, were represented. Attendance records show 503 Rotarians and 358 Rotary Anns for a total attendance of 861.

Lawrence S. Akers of Memphis, Tennessee was Rotary International representative at the Conference, and Clyde Orr of Bessemer was nominated for District Governor.

During this year, the District raised and sent to Rotary International \$2,600.00 for the purchase of a field ambulance. All clubs contributed to the "Rotary International Relief Fund."

District attendance for the year was 83.17% and, at the end of the year, membership was 1,883.

The Rotary year of 1942-43 was a good year, even in the heart of the war. Travel was limited and Governor Clyde Orr had some difficulty in making his appointed rounds.

The District Assembly was in Montgomery again to conserve travel. Of the 46 clubs in the District, 40 were represented with 106 attending.

The District Conference was held in Birmingham with a total attendance of 465 men and 109 women. Frank Spain was nominated as District Governor and Abit Nix was Rotary International representative.

During this year, Rotary International was asking each District Governor to give reports on the activities of Rotary with the Defense Council work. Information asked for reflected Rotary activities in Civil Defense, blood banks, salvage drives and defense counselor training or other activities aiding the defense movement.

Total membership at the end of the Rotary year was 2,011 and the district attendance for the year was 82%—good for the war year.

International Understanding Stressed

Rotary in 1943-44 was most concerned with advancing international understanding. District Governor Frank Spain devoted much time and energy to this phase of Rotary during his year. He planned and conducted 31 Institutes on International Understanding involving all of the 47 clubs then in the District. The emphasis given to this phase of Rotary by Frank Spain is alive today in Rotary in Alabama.

The District Assembly was held in Birmingham on June 23, 1943. Fifteen of the 47 clubs were not represented—due mainly to restricted travel. Attendance was limited with only 72 present.

The District Conference was in Montgomery on April 24 and 25, 1944. Of the 48 clubs in the District, only four were not represented. Total attendance was 334 men and 95 women for a total of 429.

Robert E. Heun of Richmond, Indiana, a Past Vice President, was Rotary International representative, and John McClure of Tuscaloosa was nominated for District Governor.

The Conference adopted a resolution commending Algernon Blair of Montgomery for his interest, work and leadership in Rotary. The resolution read in part, "We believe few districts in all Rotary have so benefitted by the qualities of leadership you have evidenced throughout all the happy years we have enjoyed your wise counsel, your unceasing interest, your kindly philosophy and your wholehearted helpfulness."

The District contributed \$1,454.41 for relief to Rotarians and their families in war countries. At the year's end, there were 2,110 Rotarians and the District attendance for the year was 83.07%.

District Governor John McClure held two District Assemblies in his year; one in Montgomery on July 17 and one in Birmingham on July 20, 1944. Forty of the 42 clubs were represented at one of the assemblies.

Due to the war situation and restricted travel, it was decided not to have a District Conference during the Rotary year 1944-45. Rotary International passed this suggestion on to all districts.

Richard H. Wells, President of Rotary International, visited the District during the year. His only appearance in the District was with the Birmingham Club.

John W. Inzer was nominated for District Governor. The average attendance for the District was 83.73% and membership totaled 2,206 Rotarians on June 30, 1945.

Frank Spain Nominated for Director

District Governor John Inzer again had two assemblies during the Rotary year 1945-46, the first in Montgomery on July 2 and 3, and then in Birmingham on July 9 and 10. Thirteen of the 49 clubs were not represented. Travel restrictions continued to influence the Rotary program.

The District Conference was held in Birmingham on April 22 and 23, 1946. Of the 50 clubs at that time, 43 were represented at the Conference. Total attendance was 547 with 400 men and 147 women. Of this number, 389 were from the host club. Phillip Lovejoy represented Rotary International at this Conference. Phillip is well remembered by Rotarians of Alabama.

This Conference endorsed a resolution supporting Frank E. Spain for Director for Zone Four. Lewis Smith of Ensley was nominated for District Governor.

Phillip Lovejoy, in his report to Rotary International following the Conference, had this to say regarding a part of the program by Paul Grist, "A grand presentation of community service and it could be used in the international picture."

John Inzer, in his Annual Report, said: "Without exception, on my visits I found the clubs had a rather low and poor ebb if their officers had not attended our District Assemblies . . ."

Awards were given during the year and Tuscaloosa receive the *President's Award* for outstanding work in all phases of Rotary. The *Governor's Award* went to Decatur for Club Service, Bessemer for Community Service, Demopolis for Vocational Service and Montgomery for International Service.

Average attendance for the year was 79.47%. On June 30, 1946, the 50 clubs had 2,517 Rotarians as members.

Attendance and Membership Grows

The year 1946-47 showed continued growth in membership and attendance. The war years had its claim on both.

District Governor Lewis M. Smith started the year with his District Assembly in Montgomery on July 22 and 23. Eight of the 51 clubs were not represented. Attendance at the Assembly was 146. Governor Lewis reported, "Delegates sat behind tables facing the speaker's platform similar to that at the International Assembly."

Frank Spain of Birmingham was serving Rotary International as a Director. Frank was on his way to greater service to Rotary.

The District Conference went to Huntsville on April 20-22, 1947. Eleven of the 52 clubs were not represented. Total attendance was 344.

Percy Hodgson of Narragansett, Rhode Island, was Rotary International representative to the Conference. Percy later became President of Rotary. In his report to Rotary International, Percy described the Conference as "excellent, equipped very well, a grand Conference, well conducted and instructive." As the weakest feature he said, "Too many long-winded speeches by some past District Governors." James T. Upchurch of Montgomery was nominated for District Governor. Ensley received an award for *Outstanding Club of the Year*.

Governor Lewis' Annual Report showed 51 clubs with 2,695 members and the average District attendance 82.76%.

Governor Upchurch held his District Assembly in Montgomery on July 21 and 22, 1947. Only five clubs were not represented. Attendance was the best—164 Rotarians. In addition, in the training phase of the Assembly, Governor Jim brought to the attention of those in attendance such items of business as district financial condition, possible re-districting of Alabama and the appointment of a District Fund Committee. Action taken later in the year will reflect results of these discussions.

The District Conference was held in Montgomery on March 28-30, 1948. Of the 52 clubs in the District, 51 had representation at the Conference. Total attendance was 466. Richard E. Brenor of Chicago, was the President's representative at our Conference.

Records from this Conference indicate this was the first Conference in which each club registered 15% of their membership in advance. This was later changed to 20%. A resolution was offered Rotary International requesting the state be divided into two districts and that the dividing line be the southern boundary lines of Chambers, Tallapoosa, Coosa, Shelby, Bibb, Tuscaloosa and Pickens Counties.

Roy Hickman, of Birmingham, was nominated District Governor. During this year, Frank Spain was serving as Third Vice-President of Rotary. Rotary International representative Richard Brenor, in his report to Rotary International made the following comments: "A good conference, no weak points, the District needs to be divided in that the Governor had to travel over 17,000 miles to get his job done, and Governor Jim Upchurch is a whiz-bang."

Demopolis received the *President's Award*, and the Annual Governor's Report showed 52 clubs with 2,812 members on June 30. The District attendance for the year was 85.15%—a new high.

Alabama Divides

District Governor Roy Hickman was the last of the long list of able Rotarians serving as District Governor of the entire state. During the year, Alabama was to be divided into two districts.

Governor Roy carried his District Assembly to Tuscaloosa on June 25 and 26, 1948. The total attendance was 175 with all but three of the 52 clubs represented.

The District Conference was in Mobile this year on April 24-26, 1949. Total attendance was 712 which was the best since before the war years. It seems fitting that Mobile was host to this Conference and records reflect the fine job they did in the overall planning and execution

of every detail. The Mobile Rotarians are not to be outdone in staging a District Conference. Of the then 56 clubs in the District, only two were missing.

Charles G. Tennent of Ashville, North Carolina, was the President's representative to the Conference. Charles later became President of Rotary. In his report to Rotary International, Charles had only praise for "the excellent program and the hospitality extended by the Mobile Club."

The Annual Report submitted to Rotary International by Governor Roy showed 57 clubs with 3,005 members on June 30, 1949. The average District attendance for the year was 85%.

During this year, a committee composed of Past District Governors Joe Duckworth, Harry Hall and Houston Cole made a study of the state and, finally, recommendations were made for dividing the state into two districts. Their recommendations were accepted and approved by the Board of Directors of Rotary International. The division to be effective July 1, 1949. The northern part of the state was to be known as District 238 and the southern part as District 239.

The division gave District 238 the greater number of Rotarians — 1,433 in 25 clubs. District 239 inherited 27 clubs with 1,376 Rotarians.