

Significant Events  
in the History of  
The Rotary Club of Asheville, NC

1915 - 2005

Centennial History Committee  
Rotary Club of Asheville, North Carolina  
June 30, 2005

# Centennial History Committee

The A-Team (Ancient History, 1915 - 1935)

Frank Rutland, team leader  
John Kimberly  
Frank Marvin

Club Med (Medieval History, 1935 - 1975)

Dan Lepore, team leader  
Paul Penn  
Ed Shearin

The Mod Squad (Modern History, 1976 - 2005)

Bill Haggard, team leader  
Bob Turner

Bob Turner, Chairman

Alex Comfort, Director, Club Service B

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\*Videos are available on the Asheville Rotary Club's web site  
[www.rotaryasheville.org](http://www.rotaryasheville.org)

## Introduction

On April 1, 1915, our Club was chartered by Rotary International--- the first club in all of western North Carolina and only the third club in the entire state. In 2005, therefore, in addition to the Rotary International Centennial, we will be celebrating our 90th anniversary, which in itself is a very significant milestone. To highlight this celebration, President Dan and board member Alex Comfort have put together a Centennial History Committee chaired by Bob Turner along with Bill Haggard, John Kimberly, Dan Lepore, Frank Marvin, Paul Penn, Frank Rutland and Ed Shearin, and charged this committee to research the ninety year history of the Club, which has been so beautifully summarized by Jess Chapman in our Club Roster, and present the highlights of this research at the Club's weekly meetings throughout the 2004-2005 Rotary year in a series of brief historical vignettes.

Chairman Bob divided the Committee into three teams: the A-Team which will cover ancient history from 1915 to 1935, Club Med which will cover medieval history from 1935 to 1975, and The Mod Squad which will cover modern history since 1975. So, throughout this Rotary year, you will be hearing from various team members each week as we endeavor to bring back to life the most significant events in the history of our Club.

We sincerely hope you find this series to be both educational and enjoyable.

## Formation Of Asheville Rotary Club

Let's go back to the year 1914. Germany has just declared war on France and Russia, which will ultimately draw the US into World War I. Grove Park Inn, one of the finest resort hotels of its time, has just been completed. Sadly, George W. Vanderbilt, founder of Biltmore Estate and grandfather of our own George Cecil, will pass away this year. Asheville is a quiet town with a reported population of about 30,000, which I suspect can be most appropriately compared with our metropolitan area or county population today of well over 200,000. By 1915, Rotary will be only ten years old with some 200 clubs in six countries and roughly 20,000 members. Compare this with Rotary today – an organization of 31,000 clubs in 166 countries with over 1.2 million members.

This phenomenal rate of growth can also be seen in the history of our own Club, which began in 1914. George E. Lee, who was District Agent for Aetna Life Insurance Company, heard about Rotary from a friend in Richmond, VA. So, in December of that year he invited eight of his friends to meet with him at the Langren Hotel to discuss the possibility of forming such a club here - nine men with a dream. When the first organizational meeting was held a month later on January 29 at the Club Cafe and Candy Kitchen on Haywood Street, the group had already tripled to 18. The application for a Club Charter was submitted in March with some 42 names, and was issued by Rotary International on April 1, 1915. Four months from conception to completion – this certainly has to break a Rotary record! We thus became the first civic club in the City of Asheville, only the third Rotary club in North Carolina (after Raleigh and Wilmington) and the 152nd club in Rotary International. On page 14 of Rotary in Western North Carolina, there is a delightful picture of the first Club picnic held in the summer of 1915 showing Club members and their spouses all dressed up in their Sunday-go-to-meeting finery on the porch of a hotel in Black Mountain, (copy) The first Club Roster, dated April 1, 1915, listed 49 members, and this number more than tripled reaching 167 by the time the Club held its 50th anniversary in 1965.

Our Club was sponsored directly by Rotary International rather than by another club. This is a rather unique honor and we are the only club in our District with this distinction. Since formation, our Club has directly sponsored six other clubs – Hickory (1921), Waynesville (1925), Brevard (1947), Asheville-West (1952), Arden (1981) and Asheville-Biltmore (2002). Of the 49 clubs that now comprise District 7670, 35 are directly descended from the Asheville Club, including five fifth-generation clubs. I think this is quite remarkable, and provides yet another example of our organizational growth and the power of the Rotary movement!

One final point of interest, which has remarkable relevance today. In July of 1916, just one year after the Club was chartered, Asheville suffered a devastating flood resulting from the convergence of two hurricanes. Sound familiar? I'm sure many of you have seen pictures of the flood and heard the debate about which was worse - 1916 or 2004. The very first community project adopted by the Asheville Club was a campaign to raise funds for homeless and destitute flood victims. Our own District Governor, Jim Efland, has just recently announced a very similar campaign for relief of hurricane victims in the Caribbean. *Deja vu.*

Well, that's all for today folks. Next week, you will hear from Steve Taylor about the Asheville Club and the Boy Scouts. Stay tuned!

## Revolving Education Loan Fund

At the beginning of this series, I mentioned the very first community service project adopted by our Club, which was a campaign to raise funds for homeless and destitute victims of the flood of 1916. Today, I want to cover several other significant projects sponsored by the Club during these initial years:

1. An Industrial Commission composed of Club members, which made a comprehensive survey of Asheville and the surrounding area listing available factory sites and applicable utility and freight rates, in an effort to enlist the interest of perspective manufacturers. A project such as this certainly resonates today.
2. A City Planning Commission, which prepared the first long-range Plan for the City of Asheville, prompted by traffic congestion on Pack Square resulting from poorly arranged street car tracks (too bad they didn't look at Merrimon Avenue while they were at it!).
3. Support for a street widening program, which resulted in the widening of Patton Avenue.
4. Construction of public rest rooms located on Pack Square (pity they are no longer there!).
5. Support of a bond election for construction of Oak Street High School ~ the old Asheville High School, which later became David Millard Junior High. The entire membership left the Club meeting on Election Day and succeeded in getting the bond election passed, even though it had been conceded a lost cause.

Last week, Steve Taylor told you about the strong support our Club has given to the Boy Scouts over the years. Today I want to highlight another important program for boys ~ the Educational Fund of the Rotary Club of Asheville, established in September, 1922, as the result of a member's request. This project set up a Revolving Education Loan Fund to aid "worthy young men, without means or support, in their efforts to pursue either Collegiate or University training." The Fund was governed by a Board of Trustees, elected from Club membership, and functioned much as the Rotary Foundation operates today. Club members and other interested parties could obtain membership in the Fund with a donation of \$20 per year. Typical of the times, the Fund operated with the slogan "A cigar a day ~ will pay the way"

Let me read from a brochure prepared by the Trustees after the first four years of Fund operation:

"During the past four years four young men have received assistance from the Fund, one of whom will graduate with honors from Duke University next June. Another is making a splendid record at the University of North Carolina in Electrical Engineering and still another at State College preparing himself for county Agricultural work. Another is applying himself to Forestry. Each of these boys made good records in their respective High Schools and were highly recommended by school authorities and Rotarians. The Club has a right to feel proud of this worthy work, and every Rotarian should participate in it. The cost is small. Only eternity can measure the results."

This Fund is no longer in existence and, unfortunately, I do not know its exact fate. However, it certainly represents a fitting beginning to the long standing commitment this Club has made to the field of education, culminating today in the Harry Morill scholarship fund, which is now one of our most popular and rewarding projects.

That's all for today, but next week John Kimberly will take us all on a trip to Scotland – stay tuned.

## Charles H. Honess Attends Rotary International Convention in Edinburgh, Scotland

In the first program of our committee presented by Frank Rutland, Frank discussed how our club was founded because of the dreams of nine men. That was 1915. One of those men was Dr. Charles Henry Honess, my great grandfather.

Charles Honess was born in Greenwich, England on Christmas day in 1873. He came to Asheville from Pittsburgh around 1900. He was an optometrist here from about 1903 until 1946. For 29 years his practice was located on Patton Avenue in the S&W cafeteria building. He relocated his office to the Flat Iron building around 1932. He was a charter member of our club, its second president in 1916-17, and the club secretary from 1925-29. He held the classification of "Honorary Emeritus".

Throughout our committee's series of programs, we will learn about the roots of our club and how these founding members left a great legacy of community service. The community service projects that our members have been involved in throughout the years are quite humbling to folks like me who struggle to fit "service" into our daily lives. How did these early members do what they did for our community when it's hard for me to make the meetings every week? Perhaps the things we don't hear about that often are the most impressive. My father grew up here with three brothers. They attended the Appalachian School for Boys in Penland and later Christ School. One of my uncles remembered that his grandfather and "some men from Asheville" would make an annual trip to the Appalachian School to spend time with the boys. They brought gifts, played games, and took walks around the campus. These trips were very much enjoyed by the students there and endeared these men to all of them. No doubt these were Rotarians from Asheville.

These were not the only trips Charles Honess and his fellow Rotarians made. In 1921, he and Emmet Galler represented our club at the Rotary International Convention in Edinburgh, Scotland. The Edinburgh convention was the first Rotary convention held outside of the United States. Twenty-five nations were represented. The Rotary Club of Asheville played a very important role. Mr. Galler, this club's fourth president, was our first member to receive reCOGNition at an international convention. Mr. Galler was elected chief sergeant at arms of the Atlantic City Convention in 1920 and served in the same capacity at Edinburgh in 1921. My great grandfather was asked to represent the American delegation in Edinburgh as Uncle Sam in a colorful pageant of nations that was part of the convention's opening ceremony. On October 7, 1948, he presented the club with this photograph of himself at the convention with Tom McElrich, the head of the Boy Scouts in Edinburgh. He also brought home several souvenir programs. As I was reading through this information, I had to remind myself that Rotary had only been around for 16 years at the time. Clearly, there was an amazing amount of enthusiasm, internationally, about the good works of Rotary. None other than His Majesty King George V was the Patron of the Convention. The greeting in the program from Tom Hunter, president of the Edinburgh club, sums up the mood of the convention, "I sincerely trust that this souvenir will be accepted by all our friends who attended the Convention, with our best wishes that the many warm friendships formed may only grow warmer, and with great hopes that Rotary all around the world will bring an abiding blessing to humanity, and that Rotary will become a stronghold of peace and goodwill among men".

Another section of the program reads, "For the first time in its brief but eventful history, Rotary has held its Annual Convention in a land other than that of its origin. Edinburgh, the beautiful and grandly situated capital of Scotland, a city of the hills, with traditional and romantic associations stretching back into the dim beginnings of British life, in which every close has its legend and every street is a by-path of the high road of history, was chosen as a Mecca of the new and wonderful commercial philosophy of Rotary, - a strange blending of the mellow and the modern, which must have left a deep impression upon the pilgrims of the new faith of brotherhood who had traveled so far to hold out the right hand of fellowship to British Rotary.

From the first a wonderful enthusiasm marked the proceedings of the Convention. From the moment when the first trainload of guests arrived at the Caledonian Station, the staid streets of Modern Athens, echoed to the sound of friendly laughter and a spirit of comradeship prevailed, to which the delegates of twenty-five countries contributed, - for America, Canada, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, many South American Republics, and more than one Asiatic country were represented".

This must have been a very exciting time to be a Rotarian. The organization was in its infancy and yet twenty-five countries sent delegations to the 1921 convention. From Chicago in 1905 to Asheville in 1915 to Edinburgh in 1921 Rotary was taking off and becoming the stronghold of peace and goodwill among men that the president of the Edinburgh club envisioned. We should be proud that our club was right in the middle of it.

Thank you for the opportunity to share a little about my great grandfather's trip to Scotland. Clearly, Rotary was a very important part of his life. Perhaps this trip helped energize him and his fellow Rotarians to encourage the great works that are our club's legacy today. We will learn more about one such project next week as Frank Marvin presents some information on Asheville's first community festival.

[Presented by John Kimberly]



## The Rhododendron Festival

It has been difficult to find a direct connection between the Rotary sponsorship of the first Community Festival of Asheville in 1921-22 which was called Nanah Yonah, and the revival of the festival we know as the Rhododendron Festival, which was instituted as an annual affair in June of 1928.

How great a part the Rotary Club of Asheville played in this development is hard to say. We did not get very much credit in the newspaper accounts I looked at in the Pack Library archives.

However, our club sponsored the golf tournament on June 5, 1928, and the visiting golfers were given trophies and rewards by the Rotary Club of Asheville, and apparently our club sponsored a luncheon for all the players.

I did find out that the Rhododendron Festival was first connected with celebrations held at the Old Battery Park Hotel. These celebrations were known as the Rhododendron Ball. In the spring of 1929, The Citizen newspaper ran this ad: "direct paved roads lead to the 'land of sky\*' from all parts of the United States. A thousand miles of paved roads take motorists to many points of interest in the mountain region where blossoming mountain shrubs border these paved roads which enter Asheville during the Rhododendron Festival". By 1935, this festival had become a nationally famous event.

The most colorful unit of the festival was the rhododendron Brigade of Guards, a group of very colorful uniformed men who kept alive the spirit of the festival throughout the year. Sixty-four members were in the guard in 1936.

As I was looking over these papers at the library, there were a lot of familiar names coming back to mind. In 1938, Paul Whiteman and his orchestra were the great attraction. In 1939, Ben Bernie and All the Lads and Bob Crosby's Bobcats were featured in 1940.

During those years in Asheville, it seems there was a mythical realm throughout the mountains when the rhododendrons blossomed, and apparently thousands of residents and visitors attended the festival's capital city to pay homage and fealty to the chosen royalty that presided over the festivities. There were pages and crown bearers, princes, princesses, and emissaries from neighboring kingdoms.

Before it lost this momentum during World War H, the accounts in even distant newspapers said that Asheville's Rhododendron Festival gave every evidence of approaching the scope of the Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans. Following the war, there was a revival of the festival.

In 1963, two Knights of the Laural were recognized for their service to the Brigade of Guards, and their service to our city. Walter Lee was knighted for his service to the guards and our own Rotarian, George Cecil was made a civilian knight for his service to Asheville. The commander of the Rhododendron Brigade of Guards was Rotarian Robin F. Phillips who will be the subject of our remembrance on December 23rd.

## Establishment of Florida Days

How many of you know Irving Washington, our perennial summertime visitor? Irving lives in Plantation, Florida and is a member of Rotary there. Like many Floridians, however, he spends his summers here in the mountains out at Wolf Laurel and is a regular guest at our Club meetings. This influx of Florida visitors during the summer has had a significant impact on a number of clubs in our District, particularly those in resort areas. In the book *Rotary in Western North Carolina*, the Blowing Rock Club reports an increase in summer attendance of as much as 50 percent and the Highlands Club has had to limit their membership to 95 in order to make room for the summer influx.

In reCOGNition and appreciation of these Florida visitors, back in 1928 our Club began to hold a regular annual Florida Rotary Day event, at which the meeting would be conducted entirely by visiting Florida Rotarians. This became an extremely popular program, which we know lasted at least into the mid-1960s. Let me quote from the January 29, 1965 issue of the *Asheville Citizen-Times*: "It was in the year 1928 that the Rotary Club began having Florida Day, an annual event which continues to be a highlight each year. Once each summer, a meeting is turned over to Florida Rotarians in the Asheville area for the summer season. The fine fellowship pervading these meetings, the generous and thorough manner in which these occasions are entered into and the fine attendance of Florida visitors have made this program one of the outstanding successes of the Club during the years. It has stimulated close cooperation between winter-resort Florida and summer-resort Western North Carolina. — Each year an outstanding speaker is provided, including the late Governor Dan McCarty of Florida and several Florida state senators and prominent Florida businessmen. Decorations for the hall have been made by a representative of the Florida Citrus Commission, who is sent in from the Charlotte office. They have also furnished club members with plenty of Florida orange juice. Oranges passed out to Rotarians during the past seven or eight years are known as the Pope Summer Orange — and the Indian River Citrus League of Vero Beach, Fla., has provided about 12 boxes of the fruit each year. The fruit is usually shipped to — Asheville early in the summer and stored by the Asheville Ice & Fuel Co. to await distribution at the meeting, which usually takes place about the second week of August. More than 250 attended the 1964 Florida Day Aug. 13."

In the Club Archives, we found a printed program from the Florida Rotary Day held on August 21, 1930, at the Battery Park Hotel. (I have a copy of this if anyone would like to take a look at it after the meeting.) In addition to an elegant meal, Rotarians and guests were treated to an assortment of Florida souvenirs, including ferns from Apopka, potatoes from Hastings, Guava Jelly from Jacksonville, Cigars from Key West and from Tampa, Candy from Orlando, Coffee from Tampa and Sugar Cane from West Palm Beach.

What an absolutely wonderful tradition this represents and a very great pity it is no longer celebrated. Come next June, I think perhaps we should have a very serious talk with Irving. What do you think? That's all for this week. Thank you.

## The Crippled Childrens' Clinic

In the early years of the twentieth century, birth defects and congenital deformities were common. In 1926, a number of handicapped children were found to be isolated in the rural mountains of Western North Carolina.

The Asheville Rotary Club came to the rescue, establishing the Crippled Children's Clinic, where hundreds of children were treated in a variety of locations at no charge for the next several years.

In 1938 Rotarians, along with the Asheville Junior League and a local orthopedic surgeon purchased the 33-acre Clyde Reed Estate to establish a permanent location for the clinic. In 1939 the Asheville Orthopedic Home opened its doors with 20 beds and 12 patients.

In 1945 the polio epidemic struck the US, and the Asheville Orthopedic Home began to see its first polio cases. In 1946, it was the only facility in North Carolina to accept acute polio cases; for the first time, adults were admitted as patients.

The institution's name changed in 1949 to the Asheville Orthopedic Hospital, and throughout the 1950s services were expanded to include other disabling conditions. In 1976 the name changed to Thorns Rehabilitation Hospital in honor of Harold Thorns, President of the Board of Trustees for more than a decade.

In 1996 Thorns became a founding member of CarePartners, which also includes Visiting Health Professionals (VHP), Mountain Area Hospice and MountainCARE. The CarePartners Foundation supports the full continuum of CarePartners services.

Today, CarePartners has a staff of approximately 1000 serving nearly 2000 patients at any given time, with annual care revenues in excess of \$60 million. Facilities include a 100-bed inpatient rehabilitation hospital; six outpatient rehabilitation clinics; an adult day facility; and home health offices in Asheville, Hendersonville and Waynesville. In the spring of 2005, a new \$6.5 million inpatient facility for Hospice will open on the CarePartners main campus at 68 Sweeten Creek Road near Biltmore Village.

## District Governors from the Asheville Club and the History of the Rotary COG

At the 1915 Rotary Convention it was decided to reclassify the 19 Regional Divisions then in existence as Districts and change the title of the officer in charge from Vice President to District Governor. This was also the year that our club, the first club in Western North Carolina, was chartered and marks the beginning of what has now become District 7670. Eight District Governors have come from our club including Fred Kent in 1925-26, Robert F. Phillips in 1933-1934, Charles G. Tennent 1943-44, Chandler W. Gordon in 1951-1952, Jesse P. Chapman, Jr. 1969-1970, William H. Haggard in 1977-1978, Charles E. Reiley 2003-2004, and currently James O. Efland. Mr. Kent, the first District Governor from our club, was in the cold storage business. He built the first cold storage plant in Asheville and operated Storage Supply Company until his death in December 1926. Mr. Phillips went on to serve as a Director of Rotary International during the year following his term as District Governor and Mr. Tennent served as Director of Rotary International in 1948-1949, Rotary International President in 1957-1958, and Chairman of the Rotary Foundation Board of Trustees in 1959-1960. As you can see, there is a great tradition of leadership within the Rotary Club of Asheville both at the District and International level.

Mr. Phillips also has the distinction of introducing the Rotary COG, our club bulletin, during his tenure as club secretary in 1930-1931. Prior to this year, there is no record of a club bulletin. The original publication was one 8/2x11 inch sheet of paper printed front and back with a mast head designed by George E. Colt, a club member and a commercial artist. The COG was published for six months and then became a victim of the worsening conditions of the depression. For about a decade the turn over in club membership was very rapid and almost all the old club records were lost, at least temporarily. In 1939-1940 there was a project to bring all of the missing club records together again. It was a very successful project as many old records were recovered from attics, garages, warehouses, the homes of past officers, and in some cases garbage cans. That same year the club was determined to establish a club bulletin. About that same time, Mr. Phillips original COG was found among the old club records and the bulletin that began in 1930-1931 was resurrected. Mr. Tennent was the club President at the time and also edited the COG. He edited the COG for four years taking a leave of absence only to serve as District Governor. During that four year period the COG became nationally and internationally known. It was quoted throughout the world by other club bulletins and was frequently mentioned in the Rotary Magazine and other Rotary International Publications. It is believed that Mr. Tennent's contributions to Rotary through his efforts to resurrect and enhance the COG had much to do with his ascension within the ranks of Rotary International. The COG is one of the many ways that members of our club played a significant role in the development and growth of Rotary.

## Robert F. Phillips District Governor, 1933-1934

As we celebrate our 90th year as a Rotary Club, it is my pleasure to recall a great Rotarian of yesteryear. It is the late Robert F. Phillips, known to his friends and acquaintances as "Robin". He was certainly an outstanding Rotarian, both in our Asheville Rotary Club and in Rotary International.

Robin Phillips became attorney for Carolina Power and Light Company in 1925. He joined Asheville Rotary Club in 1929, after he moved here from Raleigh.

Robin's first official duty with our club was to serve as secretary in 1930-31. He then compiled a long record of service: director, club president (1931-32); district governor of the former 58th district (Robin was our second district governor), in 1933-34, during those very difficult early years of "The Great Depression". In 1934 Robin became a director of Rotary International. In 1935 he chaired the International Executive Committee; in 1936 he chaired the International Aims and Objectives Committee and served on the International Convention Committee.

Before his Rotary service, Robin had been a reporter for the Raleigh Times; a clerk in the office of the North Carolina Secretary of State, then a graduate of the University of North Carolina and the Columbia University School of Law.

Robin was a dedicated servant in many ways. "Rotary" he said, "finds its reason to be in service and for that service to be vital and purposeful, it must be personal service". On another occasion, he said,

"We believe that Rotarians brought together in friendly understanding, realize a higher sense of obligation to their community and have a stronger urge to render unselfish service".

Robin Phillips practiced what he preached. He served as president of our Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Asheville-Biltmore College (now UNCA where Phillips Hall was named for him), director of our civil defense during World War II, president of the Community Chest, past grand praetor of the Sigma Chi fraternity, and commander of the Knights of the Laurel of Rhododendron Brigade of Guards.

In his spare time he was a member of the board of managers of Wachovia Bank and Trust and a director of Farnum Manufacturing Company, and president of the Sunset Mountain Company.

While he was our club secretary, Robin began publication of "The COG" in 1930. Robin died in June of 1970, and I would be willing to wager, that he continues to find many more avenues of personal service in heavenly places.

## 1935 - 1942 Period

January 1940 - In the early 1930's the Rotary Club of Asheville began publishing a "Monthly News Bulletin". Publication was rather sporadic until January 7, 1940 when the "Rotary COG" became the first continuing club bulletin. It was published monthly at the beginning and later became a weekly publication. One of the supporters of a continuing bulletin was Charles Buzz Tennent. During his term as president (1939-1940) he also took over the position of "editor" of the COG.

- January 29, 1940 - Club Silver Anniversary celebration. The Rotary Club of Asheville met at the Battery Park Hotel on January 29, 1940 to celebrate "25 years of Rotary in Asheville". Featured speaker was the founder of Rotary, Paul P. Harris. He spoke as to the world-wide mission of Rotary, saying: "Rotarians have always been a stabilizing influence in countries where war is beginning or ending. Force cannot stop wars. Peace must be achieved through good will and understanding among men". Paul spent three days visiting our city.

Members of the club in 1940 included Charles Honess (great grandfather of current club member, John Kimberly), E. Bretney Smith, Sr. (father of current club member E. Bretney Smith, Jr.), Charles Webb (grandfather of club member Chic Webb and great grandfather of Laura Webb) and Frank S. Smith (father of club member Frank Smith).

- From the November 1940 COG - "For years now the people of Asheville have been talking piously about the need for more adequate hospital facilities for the Negroes. The net result of all this discussion is the simple but ugly fact that the situation is just as appalling as it ever was." In the January 1941 COG, Dr. Arthur C. Ambler, president of the Buncombe County Medical Association declared that the lack of adequate hospital facilities for Negroes in Asheville is a shameful and deplorable condition. He urged his association to lend its efforts to correcting this shameful situation. He further stated that there is NOT ONE hospital bed in Asheville for Negro obstetrical patients.

A survey was authorized by the club to address better hospital facilities for Negroes. Based on the results the club urged that a city-wide committee be named to carry forward the project. Charles Webb of our club was appointed chairman. Several other Rotarians served with him. The amount of \$22,000.00 was raised - \$4,000.00 from Rotarians. A building was purchased and the hospital opened in October, 1942. Later on this hospital merged with Memorial Mission in 1946.

## 1942 – 1946 Period

- 1942 - Our club launches movement to have new warship named after the city to replace first ship with Asheville name sunk in the Java Sea. Original "City of Asheville" so named at the suggestion of our club hi 1918.
- War Bond Sale - Committee chaired by Jim Keith of our club sold \$60,000.00 worth of bonds in this war bond campaign, leading all other organizations in total sales.
- 1943-1 944 Charles "Buzz" Tennent serves as District Governor.
- 1946 - Club voted approval of plan to merge Asheville hospitals and create new Memorial institution to serve Western North Carolina. Rotarians assisted in campaigns to raise local funds so as to obtain national and state financial aid. New institution was named Memorial Mission Hospital erected on Victoria Hospital grounds costing \$3,250,000.00. Biltmore Hospital, original Mission Hospital and the Negro Hospital were merged into this new modern facility

## 1947 - 1949 Period

- January 27, 1947 -Death of Paul Harris (Video) [Video prepared and narrated in part by Ed Shearin]
- 1947/48 - Scholarship established to honor Paul Harris.
- 1947 - Brevard Rotary Club is organized.
- 1948/49 - Charles "Buzz" Tennent serves as 1st Vice President of R.I.



## 1951 - 1952 Period

- 1951 - Chan Gordon serves as District Governor. (Video) [Video prepared and narrated by Ed Shearin]  
Chan Gordon Scholarship Fund.
- 1952 - West Asheville Rotary Club was organized.  
Fourth club sponsored by the Rotary Club of Asheville.

## Charles G. "Buzz" Tennant

President, Rotary International, 1957-1958 (Video)\*

[Video prepared and narrated by Ed Shearin]

## 1965 – 1968 Period

- January 29, 1965 - Golden Anniversary celebration held in the Asheville City Auditorium. Featured speaker was R.I. president Charles N. Pettengill of Greenwich, Conn. At this time R.I. was comprised of close to 12,000 clubs with an estimated 560,000 Rotarians in 127 countries and geographical locations. Our first roster in 1915 listed 49 members - for our Golden Anniversary hi 1965 we listed 165 members. From our beginning to our 50th year, a total of 652 men had held membership in our club.
- Some of our current members who were members during the club's Golden Anniversary are: Bill Haggard, Jack Westall, Sr., Jesse Chapman and Roger Morrision.
- Golden Anniversary Resolutions
  - City of Asheville, signed by Mayor Earl Eller (club member). Read.
  - YMCA, signed by President Harmon Lee (club member). Read first three paragraphs.
  - Asheville Orthopedic Hospital. Read first three paragraphs.
  - Buncombe County Commissioners. Read paragraph and first sentence of second paragraph.
  - Asheville Chamber of Commerce. Read first two paragraphs.
  - United Fund of Asheville and Buncombe County. Read first two paragraphs.
- 1967/68 - Organized Asheville Buncombe County Youth Council for which the club received an Outstanding Achievement Award from R.I. President Luther Hodges. Main goal of the council is to provide positive youth leadership development through community service projects and local/state government issues. Made up of representatives of the local High Schools through which teenagers could undertake a variety of projects, both for their own entertainment and "service to others". This council was patterned after the Greensboro Youth Council.

## Three Rotary International Presidents

Let's start with a game of six questions:

1. Who among you here today have attended one or more Rotary International Conventions?
  2. Who of you remember Asheville Rotary Club meetings in the Gold Room of the Battery Park Hotel?
  3. Who knows who the President of Rotary International was in 1947-48; 57years ago?
  - 4 Who knows the name and club of the R. I. President on 1957-58 - ten years later - 47 years ago
  5. Who knows who was R. I. President in 1967-68 - another 10 years later - 37 years ago?
  6. Who among us has met three Past Presidents of Rotary International?
- 
2. If you were present at an Asheville Rotary Club meeting in the Gold Room of the Battery Park Hotel in July, 1968 you could have met those three, as they were there.
  3. S. Kendrick Guernsey - from Jacksonville, FL Ken Guernsey was the 37th President of Rotary. He felt most Rotarians knew too little about the true meaning and purpose of Rotary and made the major objective of his year the full indoctrination of new members.
  4. Charles G. "Buzz" Tennant - from Asheville, NC. Buzz Tennant was the 47th president of Rotary. You'll hear his full biography in one of these 5 minute historical vignettes.
  5. Luther H. Hodges of Charlotte, NC. Luther Hodges was a textile executive who managed Marshall Field's Textile business. He became Governor of North Carolina in 1954 and served six years.

He was Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce ten years later. He was the founder of the North Carolina Research Triangle, and the 57th President of R.I. in 1967-1968.

I was privileged to know him - as "my boss" in the 1960s - as the Weather Records Center in the Grove Arcade Building was part of the Department of Commerce, and Luther Hodges visited to see what we did.

In June 1968, I was further privileged to attend Luther Hodge's R.I. Convention in Nice, France with our Club's President Bob Crouch.

Then, in July 1968 when I happened to be serving as President this Club, Luther Hodges asked to participate in one of our meetings "to make a special presentation."

J. Bertram King - Asheville architect - volunteered to fly his Cessna 310 to Chapel Hill and bring Luther and his wife to our meeting. I flew down and back with him.

After his year of service as R. I. President, Rotary gave Luther Hodges a \$3,000 honorarium.

He chose to return it to Rotary by donating the funds to sponsor three active Rotarians as Paul Harris Fellows. One of those three was Asheville's Buzz Tennant, and the presentation was made at our Club.

Ken Guernsey visited that meeting to honor both Buzz and Luther.

We were all privileged to meet three R.I. Past Presidents who served in three successive decades and to learn first hand what Rotary meant to these three great Rotarians.

I hope those of you who could not be at that meeting will have a similar experience and an opportunity to see dedication of Rotary's leaders to the purpose and objectives of Rotary.

I've put a few copies of a February 14,1962 photo on each table.

It shows then Secretary of Commerce Luther Hodges presenting Dr. Harold Crutcher a Silver Medal for Meritorious Service. Four years later, Harold joined the Asheville Rotary Club.

[Presented by Bill Haggard]

# Jess Chapman

District Governor, 1969-1970 (Video)\*

[Video prepared by Ed Shearin and narrated by Jess Chapman]

William H. Haggard  
District Governor, District 767  
1977-1978

The Asheville Rotary Club has furnished our district(s) eight District Governors in its 90 years of existence.

Fred Kent served in 1925-26, when the club was 10 years old.

Robin Phillips - of whom we've heard a glowing report served in 1933-34 when the club was 18 years old.

Then came Buzz Tennent's turn ten years later in 1943-44. You have heard much about Buzz and his service to Rotary.

Chan Gordon became District Governor for 1951-52, but died before serving his full year.

Eighteen years later, Jess Chapman served the District in 1969-70 with distinction.

Bill Haggard's turn came eight years after Jess in 1977-78.

Today, I'd like to tell a little about that year.

Following Bill, there was a quarter of a century gap in our club providing a D.G. until 2003-04 when Chuck Reiley was elected to that position.

He was followed the next year by our present District Governor for this Rotary year, Jim Eflin.

So, we've provided the District Leadership on the average of once in every 11¼ years for the last 90 years.

Jess, Bill, Chuck and Jim can tell you it is a tremendous and very gratifying job, which really tests the Rotary Motto of "Service above Self."

In 1977 District 767 reached from Andrews to Monroe and contained 50 clubs.

The District Governor - then - did not get a two year "running start" on the job. He [and Rotary was all "He" until 1988] was sent to a training program held at that time in Boca Raton, Florida, along with all of Rotary's incoming D.G.s and was "indoctrinated" into the duties of the upcoming year.

Armed with a Manual of Procedure and literature on everything Rotary does, he visited all 50 clubs in the 1st half of the year; met with their Board and Committees; reported to the club on its strengths and areas needing strengthening; wrote a report to RI; got answers to all the clubs questions; served as a mentor; and participated in their special functions and celebrations; ran the District Assembly and Conference; oversaw the selection of Group Study Exchange Leader and Team and the Selection of Scholarships and Special Projects.

On the other hand he was generously hosted and feted by the individual clubs - often with a personalized gift.

The banner at the room entrance was given to Bill Haggard on the occasion of his official visit to the Hendersonville Club during his year as D.G.

The Group Study Exchange in Bill's year was with India and was led by Asheville Rotarian Kent Salisbury. It led to a series of follow-on visits to India and the gift by our District of a huge amount of medical equipment from North Carolina Hospitals to hospitals in India who had no other means of acquiring such equipment, equipment which was "obsolete" here and being replaced by newer things, but was "years ahead" to that available to the Indian hospitals.

The Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship that year went to an Asheville student of piano who studied in Paris for a year thanks to Rotary.

Bill's theme for the District was "A World of Difference."

Gas was 50¢ a gallon and Bill used over 1,000 gallons while driving to and from the 50 clubs in the District at least twice (sometime 3 or 4 times for special events); meeting with District Committees; and attending functions.

Bill describes himself as a weather guy who worked in the Arcade Building from 1961-1975, then started the Climatological Consulting Corporation, for which he is a consultant today. Bill was born in Woodbridge, CT in November, 1920, during a snow storm, which probably predestined his love for weather. He was sponsored into Rotary by Jim Davis of the U.S. Eastern Aerial Photo Lab in 1964.

Bill tells me his term as District Governor was an extremely gratifying year, although he wished he'd had more training before plunging in, and that Rotarians do truly make a "World of Difference."



## Women in Rotary

When Paul Harris founded Rotary in Chicago a century ago, it was a men's club. Article III of the Standard Club Constitution said it was a male organization, and it remained so from 1905 to 1987.

When the Asheville Rotary Club was formed in 1915, it was an organization of business men.

For the first 73 years of our existence as a Club, the ratio of women members to male members was zero % of women and 100% men. That changed in 1988 when Margaret Gormley-Chapman became the first woman member invited to join the Rotary Club of Asheville.

Today, the membership of our Club is 20% women and 80% men - with about 35 women and 150 men listed in our roster of members.

In June of 1950 the Rotary Club of Ahmedabad, India proposed to the International Convention in Detroit that the word Male be deleted from the Constitution. The proposal was overwhelmingly rejected.

In 1964, the agenda of the Council on Legislation of Rotary at the RI Convention in Toronto contained a proposal for an enactment for the admission of women to Rotary Clubs. Convention delegates voted to withdraw the item from the agenda.

In 1972, the Rotary Club of Upper Manhattan, NY proposed an enactment to admit women to Rotary Clubs. The members of the Council on Legislation had a brief discussion - with much laughter and rejected the proposal.

In 1977 - the year I began service as District Governor - there were four proposals before the Council on Legislation that would permit women to become members of Rotary. One, again made by the Rotary Club of Upper Manhattan that would have prohibited membership rejections based on gender was rejected. After heated discussion, the other three were withdrawn.

The Rotary Club of Fortaleza in Brazil proposed to allow women to become honorary members. Their proposal was rejected.

Before continuing this chronology, let me digress and comment on the fact that Paul Harris, who had founded Rotary in Chicago in 1905 met and married Jean Thomson in 1910, the same year the National Association of the 16 Rotary Clubs in existence was formed. Paul Harris was elected President of the Association and served two terms.

At that convention, some delegates proposed the sanctioning of "women's auxiliaries" of Rotary Clubs. The proposal was overwhelmingly rejected.

In 1912, 49 clubs from the U.S. and Canada met and Rotary became "The International Association of Rotary Clubs." The Rotary Club of London joined as the 50th club. The International Convention was held in Duluth with 598 delegates. They rejected a 2nd proposal to permit "women's auxiliaries."

In 1914, there were 1288 delegates to the June 121 convention in Houston. A special train ran from San Francisco to Houston. Henry Brunier of San Francisco brought his wife, Ann with him. She was the only woman on the train. The delegates began calling her "Rotary Ann." At Houston, the Brunier's met Guy and Ann Gundaher from Philadelphia

Both wives were soon called "Rotary Anns." The title spread to the wives of Rotarians regardless of their first name.

In 1921, the wife of the President of the Chicago Rotary Club formed an organization called “Women in Rotary.”

That same year the International Convention in Edinburgh updated the Rotary Manual of Procedure. It prohibited women’s clubs from using the Rotary name, but allowed Rotary clubs to have “Ladies’ Auxiliaries.”

The term “Inner Wheel” came into being in Manchester, England in 1923 for Ladies Auxiliary.

In 1949, for the first time, the Rotary Foundation permitted women to be the recipients of Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship.

On June 1, 1977, the Rotary Club of Duarte, California took three women into membership in defiance of Rotary’s Manual of Procedure.

Rotary revoked the Duarte Club Charter and told them to expel the women if they wished their charter reactivated.

The club filed suit; named itself “the Ex-Rotary Club of Duarte”; and placed a large X over the Rotary symbol.

Los Angeles Superior Court refused to reinstate the Club [i.e., Rotary won].

The California State Appeals Court reversed the lower Court and stated Rotary Clubs were business establishments subject to state regulations which banned discrimination based on race, gender, religion or ethnic origin.

Rotary appealed to the California Supreme Court, which refused to hear the case - leaving the Appeals Court Rulings in effect.

In July 1986 the Seattle International District Rotary Club unanimously voted to admit women and took in 15 women members.

Rotary appealed the Duarte decision to the U. S. Supreme Court.

In May, 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court - by a vote of 7-0 - affirmed the 1986 ruling of the California Appeals Court that Rotary Clubs—as business establishments could not discriminate.

Rotary Clubs began inviting women members.

In 1988, the Rotary Club of Asheville invited Margaret Gormley into membership, though Rotary had not yet amended its Constitution.

Several clubs had women members and a few elected women to be President.

## Rotary Safe Trick-or-Treat Fun Fair

Imagine if you will Halloween is only a few days away and radio stations, newspapers, and television reporters are all encouraging parents to use extreme caution in order to protect their children from harm. Stories of poison in candy and razor blades in apples made Asheville parents reluctant to allow their children to go trick-or-treating at all. Seeing a real need in the community the Rotary Club of Asheville undertook this issue with their Safe Trick-or-Treat Fun Fair.

Our Rotary Club felt the community as a whole should take responsibility for the safety of its children and the Rotary Club, as a service organization, should take the lead in putting together a safe alternative to traditional trick-or-treating. The idea was presented and in 1983 the Safe Trick-or-Treat Fun Fair was created.

Civic clubs were invited to set up booths at no cost. They could provide games, candy or any appropriate activity for the children with the only condition being that there be no charge and every kid would be a winner.

The first Fun Fair was held at the Innsbruck Mall on Tunnel Road with nine service clubs and we were hoping for 300 to 500 kids for this to be successful.

Whether you call it successful, incredible or a nightmare depends on your point of view. Scheduled to begin at 6:00pm, by 6:15 about 5000 people stretched in a line from the mall all the way to the Pizza Hut. By 6:30 we were out of candy and organizers, parents and volunteers were going all over Asheville buying anything to give away.

The Fun Fair was obviously too large for the Innsbruck Mall so in 1984 we moved to the Asheville Civic Center with the assistance of Bill Murphy.

In the years that followed 40-60 civic clubs along with 5,000-6,000 children annually enjoyed Halloween in a safe environment.

As our Rotary Club looks back at its long history and many accomplishments we can point to this project as one of our finest.

Through ingenuity and perseverance we united a community to protect our children. Proving once again there is no greater service the "Service Above Self".

## Harry Morrill Endowment Fund

How many of you here today knew Harry Morrill?

How many of you know of his legacy to our Club?

How many of you here today know what the Buzz Tennent Associates are?

How many of you are Buzz Tennent Associates?

How many of you here today know what the money (at least half of it) from the weekly drawings goes to?

How many of you are aware that our Club has three charitable funds maintained by the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina?

I don't know whether to be heartened or disheartened by your responses. Had they been substantially larger, I'd not need to give this vignette. You've told me - by the number of your hands up - that I should go ahead and tell you about Harry; the Associates; our scholarship endowments; the Community Foundation of Western Carolina; and "The Charitable Fund."

One more question - and be honest about it: How many of you read and know the contents of the written materials in the final (back) 20 pages of the Club Roster?

I'm sure you all know that the Rotary Foundation supports the efforts of Rotary International in the fulfillment of the Objects of Rotary, and one of those is the sponsoring of Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarships - and we heard last week from one of those how significant the scholarship was to him.

I presume most of you know that our Club has two principal scholarship programs of its own - one Merit based, and one Needs based.

The Merit based scholarships are part of the Rotary Club of Asheville Endowment Fund started by Harry Morrill.

The Needs based scholarships are supported by proceeds from our weekly drawings.

Harry Morrill - as a young man - had a respiratory problem and spent part of youth in the mountains of Western North Carolina. He remembered how nice it was here.

Later in life, he became a commercial Real Estate Developer in California and developed several malls in the Los Angeles area.

While there, he was a Rotarian, a Club President, and a District Governor.

When he retired, he came to Asheville, bought a house on Kimberly Avenue, and joined the Asheville Rotary Club.

On his 90th birthday in 1981, he made a donation to the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina to establish the Rotary Club of Asheville Endowment Fund. The purpose of the fund was to provide financial support for college scholarships and for worthwhile community projects in the Asheville area.

The Community Foundation maintains the principal as an endowment. We can add to it at any time.

The annual earned income is 75% awarded as scholarships and 25% awarded to Community projects (with no more than 10% of that amount being awarded to any one organization).

Harry left his house on Kimberly Avenue as an asset to augment the fund after his death.

Every year our club selects scholars to benefit from the fund, and chooses projects and organizations to benefit from the fund.

The fund grows by contributions. Any individual who makes donations to the fund totaling \$1,000 or more - or any individual who designates a future bequest of \$2,500 or more to the fund becomes a Buzz Tennent Associate.

The scholarships from the 75% of the earned income of the fund are selected on the basis of merit.

Our club decided in 1998 that we should have a scholarship program based on needs. We established another fund - the Charitable Needs Endowment at the Community Foundation. We contribute to that primarily by buying drawing tickets at each meeting. \$2 per week for 3 tickets times 52 weeks of "perfect attendance" makes an annual contribution of \$104.

We also have a "pass through" fund - maintained by the Community Foundation called "The Charitable Fund" - Any one can contribute to it via the Club's Executive Secretary.

I was privileged - as were several of you - to know Harry Morrill as a friend, a neighbor, and a Rotarian. He was a warm, friendly, compassionate and kindly person. His legacy was made in the true spirit of Rotary's motto of "Service Above Self" and as an example to all of us that we can leave a legacy that will benefit others and causes for years to come.

## The Legacy of J.W. and Rose Byers

In the back of the 2003-04 Roster of our Club, Jess Chapman - our Club Historian - included a three paragraph tribute to J.W. and Rose Byers.

Many of you have become Paul Harris Fellows as the result of a bequest the Byers made to the Rotary Foundation on behalf of our Club.

J.W. Byers joined the Asheville Rotary Club 60 years ago - in 1945 - when the Club was 30 years old.

He served actively and was elected President of the Club for 1953-54 only eight years after joining the Club. He was an educator and administrator in the Asheville City School System at that time.

When J.W. retired from the City School System, he became an officer of the Asheville Federal Savings and Loan Association - later to become the Asheville Savings Bank.

When Jack Peete, who had been secretary of the Asheville Rotary Club for many years, resigned in the late 1960s, J.W. Byers took on that task and served the Club as Secretary for over 20 years.

Whenever a new member was inducted, J.W. was the last at the head table to shake their hand; congratulate them; and then hand them their bill for their club dues.

J.W. became a student of Rotary and the Club authority on Rotary History, Procedures, Service, and opportunities, and was a great help to 20 successive Asheville Club Presidents from Bill Highsmith in the early 70s though Staley Roberts in the early 90s.

I've asked a few of them to comment on J.W.'s service during their Presidency, and the common theme was that "he was a dedicated and committed husband and Rotarian" who they could depend on totally.

When J.W.'s health began to fail, and he could no longer drive, he gave up the Secretary position, but Rose would drive him to Rotary for special events.

In 2002, J.W. and Rose Byers made a large special bequest to the Rotary Foundation, allowing the Asheville Rotary Club to give the Paul Harris Fellow designation to all Club members who had not yet achieved that status.

That made the Club a 100% Paul Harris Club, which it plans to continue to be even after the generous Byers bequest is depleted.

Our Club's first 90 years have been filled with "Service above Self" contributions from members you've heard about in these vignettes of our past.

The Byers legacy was made out of commitment and dedication to Rotary, love of Rotary; awareness of the great good done by the Rotary Foundation; and a desire to motivate others to the Rotary ideal.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to J.W. and Rose Byers and their exemplary lives.

# The Rotary Club of Asheville

## Family Tree

George Lee, the District Agent for Aetna Life Insurance Company, heard about the Rotary Club movement from a friend in Richmond, and it seemed to him that such a man's club would be a fine thing to have in Asheville. In December 1914 he invited eight of his friends to meet with him in the new Langren Hotel to discuss the possibility of organizing such a club here. The group decided to meet again on January 29, 1915, for the purpose of organizing the Rotary Club of Asheville. This meeting was held in the Club Café and Candy Kitchen on Haywood Street. Officers were elected to serve until the beginning of the new Rotary year July 1st, 1915, and were then re-elected to serve for the subsequent full Rotary year.

In March 1915, an application for a club charter was signed by thirty-six men, and a few days later the names of six additional men were forwarded to Chicago to be included in the roster of charter members. On April 1, 1915, the Club was officially affiliated with Rotary International, thus becoming the third Rotary Club in North Carolina (after Raleigh and Wilmington) and the 152nd Rotary Club in the world. And the destiny of Rotary in Western North Carolina was cast.

Rob Neufeld, in his Rotary History in North Carolina, tells us that ““Destiny” was, in fact, the title of a paper that Curtis Bynum, one of the founding members of the Asheville Rotary Club in 1915, had presented to the Asheville Pen and Plate Club in 1943. “The men of ever nation,” he wrote, “must yield up a part of their power and part of their wealth for the good of the whole. There must be loyalty to all mankind.””

Neufeld continues, “Bynum’s words, full of selflessness and universalism, mirrored the philosophies behind Rotary – “service above self” and the fostering of international good will.”

In March 1916, when the Club was a little more than a year old, a devastating flood struck the Asheville area, leaving many residents destitute and homeless. This prompted the Asheville Rotary Club to initiate its first project, a campaign for the relief of flood victims. Rotarians soon became sponsors of other community improvements, many of which have been highlighted in the weekly history vignettes that have been presented during this Rotary Year, starting a legacy of “service above self” that continues with its heirs today.

The Asheville Club sponsored the Hickory Rotary Club in 1921, and from Hickory came fourteen others. Then in 1925 Asheville sponsored the Waynesville Rotary Club, and from Waynesville came ten more.

The founder of the Hickory Club was Watt Shuford, a member of one of Hickory’s pioneer families. He was president of Catawba Creamery, the same type of business as Curtis Bynum.

While in Asheville for a creamery convention in 1920, Shuford attended a Rotary Club meeting and became interested in forming a club in Hickory. Members of the Asheville Club encouraged him to do so, helping with their guidance and assistance.

In its first December as an organization, the new club demonstrated its penchant for service. It distributed 50 cents in new 5-cent pieces to each of the 23 residents in the County Home and gave 28 baskets to the needy consisting of flour, chicken, nuts, fruit, candy, sugar and toys. On the day following Christmas, the Club treated more than 1,000 children to a moving picture show in the City Auditorium. At its next regular meeting, members took up a collection of \$34 to supply fuel and food to five families who were in “dire circumstances.”

The charter meeting of the Waynesville Club was held at Waynesville First Methodist Church on March 7, 1925.

Dr. Henry Perry, a Waynesville physician, is the founder of Andean Rural Health Care (ARHC). In 1990, The Waynesville Club applied for a matching grant through Rotary International. The grant was successful and \$39,000 was presented to ARHC. Half the funds came from Rotary International and half came from District 7670. This provided clean water, sanitation and health education to peasants in an area adjacent to the City of Montero, Bolivia. The Rotary Club of Montero provided oversight and grant reports.

The Waynesville Rotary Club raised \$8,000 to build a health outpost and the Montero Club provided training and physical labor.

The Rotary Clubs of Waynesville and Montero applied for a 3-H (Health, Hunger, and Humanity) grant and were awarded \$188,614 by Rotary International through the efforts of these two clubs. A third matching grant of \$10,000 was later approved. This grant provided for health education to prevent dehydration from diarrhea, education on breast-feeding plus medicines and food supplements for malnourished children.

The Waynesville Rotary Club began with 28 charter members. In 2003, there were 124 members. On September 27, 1991, the Club inducted the first lady member, and in June, 2001 they inducted the first lady president, Kay Dossey.

The Rotary Club of Franklin was formed November 10, 1927, under the sponsorship of the Waynesville Rotary Club. In the 78 years that have passed since then, the Club has moved beyond its isolation in a valley more accessible to North Georgia than to the rest of the State of North Carolina. It is especially proud of the fact it has reached beyond itself to form new clubs in Western part of District 7670. Clubs in Bryson City (January 18, 1934), Highlands (May 2, 1945), and, most recently, a second club in Franklin, The Franklin Daybreak Rotary Club (December 1, 1997), were all sponsored by the Franklin Rotary Club.

The Franklin Club has sponsored Boy Scout Troop 202 for the past 70 years and has continuously maintained a Scouting Committee as part of their Community Service Area.

The Rotary Club of Bryson City, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Franklin, received its charter on January 18, 1934. Our own Robin Phillips, then District Governor of then District 58, was principal speaker and presented the charter to the club's president.

Bryson City Rotarians carried greetings to another newly organized club in Manteo, N.C., while at home local issues were discussed including concerns about parking problems on Everette Street during the tourist season. A newspaper article noted that Rotary took on civic projects, acting as a chamber of commerce. One of those projects entailed promoting interest in and raising funds for the Community Building. Built on the Town Square, it now houses the Bryson City Police Department.

On January 29, 1940, 40 members of the Bryson City Rotary Club traveled to Asheville to help celebrate the Asheville Club's 25th anniversary and hear Paul Harris speak.

The Bryson City Rotary Club sponsored the Rotary Club of Cherokee, which received its charter on August 15, 2002. In its short fourteen month history, that club already has several sustaining Paul Harris members, is getting involved locally with Special Olympics, and has established an international partnership with the Rotary Club of Lahore Midtown, Lahore, Pakistan.

The Rotary Club of Highlands, sponsored by the Franklin Club, received its charter on May 2, 1945. It limits the size of its membership to 95 members due to the size of its meeting place and the numerous summer residents and guests who attend.



The Highlands Club's involvement in the school system is typical of the service they render. They sponsor an annual academic banquet recognizing scholars who have achieved a record of academic excellence. They also sponsor an annual athletic banquet. Sixteen students graduated from high school last year and 13 of them received scholarships of \$30,450 to help get a start on the road to higher education. And they do this each year!

The Club also gives each teacher at the school \$100 to spend on their students as they see fit. Last year they donated \$1500 for the Highlands School New Math Renaissance Program software which will enable teachers to dramatically improve student math skills at every level.

The Highlands Club was instrumental in the formation of the Cashiers Rotary Club by sending 10 of its members to start the new club. The same thing happened in 2002 when some of its members formed the nucleus of the Highlands Mountain Top Club, chartered on April 9, 2002

The Club of Franklin Daybreak received its charter on December 1, 1997. From day one, that club, too, has had the interest and support of Macon County youth as one of its primary goals.

The Rotary Club of Sylva was organized under the sponsorship of the Waynesville Club on March 31, 1928, when a round trip ticket from Sylva to Washington, DC, by Southern Railway cost \$15. By August, Club service activities had begun when members voted unanimously to underwrite clinics in Jackson for crippled children. The next year, at the 1929 District Conference in Charleston, SC, The Sylva Club was presented the Governor's Goblet for having the best record over the previous 12 months. The Club won the award for increase in membership, attendance at local meetings, attendance at District assemblies and annual conferences and for community service.

It was a cold evening on February 23, 1979 – the anniversary date of Rotary International – when 25 relatively young men gathered in the main meeting room at the Robertson YMCA in Canton as charter members of the Haywood County Rotary Club. The Rotary Club of Waynesville was their sponsoring club.

The Haywood County Club was born out of a strong feeling of a need of a younger member service club in the east end of the County that would get involved in hands-on service projects and provide an opportunity for fellowship, friendship, and a sense of giving back to the community.

The first service project of the Haywood Club was building a new sleeping cabin for campers at the YMCA Camp Hope on Cruso. Other Club projects over the years have included construction of playground equipment at the Canton Town Park, construction of a picnic shed at the same location, landscaping at several different locations of County Convenient Centers, landscaping at Pisgah High School, support for building a new football stadium at Pisgah High, assistance with moving Clyde Elementary School to a new building, landscaping at the new school and help with the construction of a Habitat for Humanity house.

The Rotary Club of Waynesville – Sunrise was sponsored by the Waynesville Club on the 6th of February, 1987. Its most significant activity has been obtaining a grant to establish an eye clinic in Bolivia, a humanitarian effort that won Dr. David Markoff the Service Above Self Award from Rotary International at the District Conference in 2003.

While all of this organizing was taking place to the west of us, meanwhile, down the mountain to the east, the Hickory Club had sponsored the Rotary Club of Lenoir, which received its charter on April 5, 1930. Its first project after receiving its charter was to join with the Kiwanis Club and the Chamber of Commerce to secure an airport for Lenoir.

The Lenoir Club established and sponsored a 4-H Calf Chain Program. This project began with the purchase of 13 heifer calves. 4-H members grew the calves to maturity and donated the heifer offspring back to the Club to give to another 4-H member to perpetuate the chain. This project lasted over twenty years and over 165 calves were placed. The 4-H member also agreed to keep his or her calf in show condition, and calf shows were held by the Club. These shows were the origin of the Caldwell County Fair.

The Rotary Club of Lenoir, in turn, sponsored the Rotary Clubs of Morganton, Valdese, Boone, and Caldwell County.

The Rotary Club of Morganton, with original club territorial limits to include all of Burks County, received its charter on January 27, 1941. During the early years, activities included a Rotary Float in the Mimosa Festival Parade, initiating a summer playground program, sponsoring five boys for a two week stay at Toe River Camp in McDowell County, and unanimous support for a County tuberculosis sanatorium.

The Morganton Club helped organize youth baseball in Morganton in 1951 and has continued to sponsor Little League teams for the past 54 years.

The Rotary Club of Valdese was chartered on October 13, 1947. Over the years the Valdese Club has been involved in numerous community projects, some of which reflect the way the community of Valdese and life in general have changed over the last fifty years. In 1948, for example, polio was a significant problem in Valdese and in the world. The Valdese Club supported an aerial spraying program in which airplanes were used to spray chemicals over the town of Valdese in an effort to combat polio.

In 2003 the Club initiated a Centennial Project to celebrate Rotary's 100th year. The project consists of building a "Rotary Park" which will be a permanent representation of the Club's commitment to the community.

The Rotary Club of Granite Falls, sponsored by the Hickory Club, received its charter on September 2, 1936. Taking the Rotary motto of "Service Above Self" to heart, The Rotary Club of Granite Falls has involved itself in many community projects. One early project involved area youth and for many years the Club sponsored Saturday night games and dances in the upstairs of the Town Hall. These programs prompted the Club to take an active role in developing the William B. Shuford Recreational Center.

The Rotary Club of Marion was organized by the Hickory Club and chartered on February 3, 1939. One of its early projects was corn growing contest in the county with prizes awarded to the winners. Corn grown in the county averaged about 30 bushels per acre. Through the Club's efforts providing seed and with the cooperation of farmers, average yield was raised to almost 100 bushels. The yield banquet for this project was the highlight of the year.

Sponsored by the Morganton, the Rotary Club of Burke-Sunrise received its charter on May 11, 2001. That Club's first community project provided a tribute to WWII veterans on December 7, 2001, the 60th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Their Rotary Centennial project, a Burke County WWII Memorial, will be dedicated in November 2005 to honor veterans and citizens who contributed greatly to the war effort.

Back here in Buncombe County, our Club sponsored the Rotary Club of Asheville-West. It was chartered on February 28, 1952, with 23 members. Their soap box derby was a popular community service project, lasting for several years. More recently, they have engaged in a series of International Service project, sending medical supplies and equipment to Jamaica, an x-ray machine to the Salvation Army Hospital in Zambia, and one to the hospital in Chikankata, Zambia.

The Rotary Club of Black Mountain was organized on October 24, 1958 under the sponsorship of the Asheville-West Club. Encouragement and support of students and educational institutions have long been priorities of the Black Mountain Club. An example of their efforts here includes the "Adopt a Class" program at Owen High School. Another is recognition of a Student of the Month, a senior at Owen High School who best exemplifies Rotary standards. A third example is selection of an Achiever of the Month at Buncombe County School.

On March 4, 2004 the Rotary Club of Madison County was formed, the newest club in District 7670. The Rotary Club of Asheville-West was their sponsor. Despite being in existence only a few months the new club has already exhibited a major commitment to community service particularly in the area of education. A number of new projects are already underway, including student and teacher-of-the-month awards, the sponsoring of a new Interact Club, distribution of food baskets for the needy in Madison County, and a river clean-up campaign.

"Through Rotary, we believe we will be of greater service to Brevard and Transylvania County, get a better understanding of our fellow man, recognize the worthiness of our occupation or profession and, through our weekly meetings, enjoy a fellowship that will break down petty ill feelings that oftentimes arise and build goodwill and fellowship that will last a lifetime," said John Anderson, charter president of the Rotary Club of Brevard, upon accepting the Club charter from the Asheville Club on August 21, 1947.

Following the Rotary motto in succeeding years led to many outstanding community projects, the most notable being the Rotary Youth Leadership Camp, begun in 1966. The Rotary Youth Leadership Camp began as a District project and remains so today, although the Brevard Club has always been solely responsible for its success. If any single project epitomizes the nature and goals of the Brevard Club over the years, it is Leadership Camp. Rotarians exist to serve, to make their community a better place and to look to the future with an optimistic eye. Rotary Youth Leadership Camp fulfills all of these objectives. It has been the longest running and most successful of all Club projects. It is the focal point of every president's tenure; the quintessential community project.

This litany of community and international service could go on and on, with examples from other clubs in the branches of our family tree, reaching from the Catawba to the Little Tennessee, from Grandfather Mountain to Bridal Veil Falls. We can be proud of the destiny of "Service Above Self" launched by those 36 men that met in the Club Café and Candy Kitchen on Haywood Street 90 years ago.

I hasten to add a bibliographical note here. All the material presented here is either a direct quote or a paraphrase of that contained in the publication *Rotary in Western North Carolina*, compiled by the District 7670 History Committee, chaired by Frank Rutland.