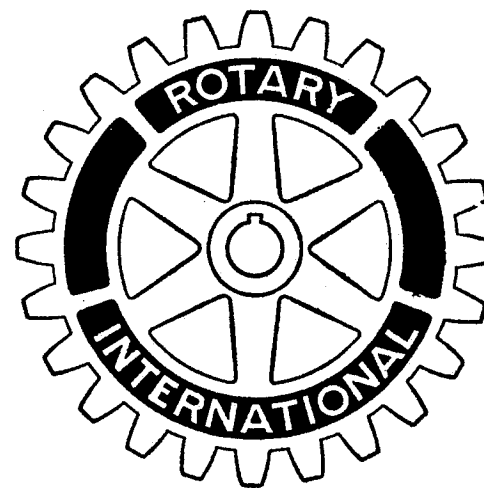
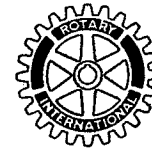


*Fifty Years of
Rotary in Danbury*



A REVIEW OF FIVE
DECADES OF SERVICE
1926 - 1976



AS DOUBTLESS most everyone connected with Rotary in Danbury is aware the club was formed from what had been The Boosters Club, a group of Danbury and Bethel men. They met each Wednesday noon at the Hotel Green and followed a general program quite similar to that of the Rotary Club which they were later to form. They discussed local topics, usually, but on occasions had a guest speaker from outside. They used to have outings, similar to those of Rotary, and quite often a party at Christmas.

They were business and professional men and a large percentage of them were connected with the hatting industry. It was this latter that created a real problem when overtures were made by Albert Lavery, of Bridgeport. He was active in the Rotary Club of Bridgeport and was connected in business affairs with many members of The Boosters Club, when he presented the idea of forming a Rotary Club in this city.

The Boosters were willing, but insisted that the club be taken into Rotary as a unit, with the exception of those members who did not wish to join.

The Rotary system of classifications with only one member of a business or industry, could not permit of many connected with the hatting industry, as such. Apparently this hurdle was overcome with the result that Rotary International and some of the guiding lights in Danbury and Bridgeport agreed on a plan, by means of which a charter membership list was made up. It also was agreed that during the first year the new club "shall elect not more than three new members in any one calendar month and that no members shall be admitted until the club has been elected to membership in Rotary International."

MEMBERSHIP DOUBLES

Membership doubled between July 30 and November 3, 1926, as the list of members on Charter Night shows. This list included the original 25 names and 27 others. A third list was found among some of the early records. This followed the pattern of the original list, also giving the name and classification of the members, their business address and their home address.

The additional charter members were: Rev. Elliot B. Barber, Leonard E. Brady, William E. Bulkeley, Judge William H. Cable, Charles E. Carter, Rev. A. C. Coburn, John W. Cuineen, Howard H. Davis, William A. Deakin, Dr. John C. Downs, Denis E. Durkin, Royal F. Foster, Martin H. Grifing, Jr., Charles E. Hallock, George E. Hamilton, John Harris, Dr. Thomas A. Hart, Emile Hemming, William H. Hoyt, Charles H. Merritt, William H. Redfield, Charles Rider, Charles W. Stevens, Philip N. Sunderland, Frank K. Watson and Ira R. Wildman.

CHARTER NIGHT GALA AFFAIR

Charter Night was a gala affair. Concerning that occasion the Danbury News of November 4, 1926, had this to say, in part: "Rotarians to the number of nearly 400, representing 20 clubs in the 30th Rotary district, attended Charter Night of the Danbury Rotary Club when the local branch of Rotary International received its charter and become a constituted branch of this world-wide organization.

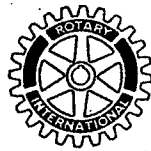
"It was the privilege of the Rotarians to see and hear two men among the leaders in the movement. Donald A. Adams, of New Haven, who not long ago completed his term as International President, and Alvin D. Colvin, of Hartford, governor of the Thirtieth district.

"The presentation of the charter to the Danbury club was made by Mr. Colvin and it was accepted by the Rev. John M. Deyo., first president of the local club. A. Z. Bodine, of the Bridgeport club, gave the Danbury club its banner. Albert E. Lavery, of Bridgeport, a past governor of the Thirtieth district, was the presiding genius. Mr. Colvin and Mr. Adams were the principal speakers."

"It was brought out during the evening that the Danbury club was the 20th in the district when it was accepted, but that since then and the time of the presentation of the charter, Saybrook had been accepted."

FIRST OFFICERS

The first officers of the Rotary Club of Danbury were: President, Rev. John M. Deyo; vice presidents, Frank H. Lee and Charles S. Peck; secretary, George F. Green; treasurer, Martin H. Griffing, Jr.; executive committee, Charles E. Carter, Frank H. Lee, Charles S. Peck, James F. Doran, George F. Green, George E. Hamilton, A. Shelton Davenport, Judge Martin J. Cunningham.



CIVIC ACTIVITIES

The Rotary Club of Danbury has been interested in civic affairs from the very start. Back in 1927 it was active in securing property in Miry Brook district as the site of an airport. At the June 29 meeting several personages who were leaders in aviation at that time were present. They also viewed the field. The present airport has developed from that time.

Again in its first year the Rotary Club was host to the governor of Connecticut at a meeting on Wednesday of Fair Week, a custom which has been followed through the years.

It was in 1946 that the Rotary Club of Danbury really began to function as a service club. It was then that plans to do something for crippled children and adults began to take form.

The directors of the club at their meeting on December 12, 1946 voted to sponsor the daily transportation of crippled children to a "workshop" in Bridgeport. Tom Tuohy suggested a station wagon be obtained to transport the children, and Judge William Cable, then president, named a committee of three past presidents to work with Tom on the project. Jim Stone, Frank Stevens and Bob Dobbs made up this committee.

The first station wagon was obtained in 1947 and for a time the children were taken to Bridgeport. Not long afterward arrangements were made to take them to Danbury Hospital and also to Newington, New Haven and Stamford.

Several station wagons were purchased by the Rotary and each time "Van" Van Houten did much to make possible the purchase of these vehicles. The Club, through fines paid by late arrivals at the weekly meetings, and gifts by members on their birthdays, met the cost to a great extent. An increase in the yearly dues also helped!

The cost of the gala party at Christmas for the crippled and handicapped children was also in part taken care of by reverse birthday gifts and special Christmas contributions. The first such party was held on December 21, 1948. This event was continued for many years and was one of the highlights of the club's program.

The approximately 50 to 75 children who were guests of the club enjoyed an excellent meal, were entertained by a magician or similar act, and thrilled to the appearance of Santa Claus who distributed gifts. These gifts to a large extent were made possible through the generosity of local merchants.

HALLOWEEN PARADES

Another project of a direct civic nature was the annual Halloween parade and parties. The first parade was held in 1947 with Frank Stevens the prime motivator of the plans. Announcement of the parade was made at the club meeting on October 16th and for the next two weeks a large committee was busy with arrangements only to have to postpone the affair from Halloween until the following week because of heavy rain during the day.

The News-Times estimated that the parade was viewed by fully 20,000 persons. Following the parade, in which several hundred young people from toddlers to teenagers took part, Halloween parties were held in several different halls for the various age groups. The Rotarians received excellent cooperation and assistance from the teachers in the Danbury schools. But perhaps the most rewarding result was that the Danbury Police said of this first parade, and repeated the statement each year the event was sponsored, that none of the usual Halloween "pranks" or destruction of property had been reported to them.

The Rotary Club of Danbury, ever since it was formed, has been generous in its contributions to community and nationwide movements such as the Red Cross, Christmas Seals, Community Chest, United Way, Easter Seals, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc. Throughout the available records are found reports of the financial support given these and similar organizations.

For several years the International Service committee of our club sent a gift at Christmas to the Rotary Club in Walton-on-Thames, England. This was during the second world war when conditions in England were somewhat more depressing than they were in the United States.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

The club was also civic-minded in other ways. If not for Rotarians, the educational center on White street, where the buildings of Western Connecticut State College now stand, might not have been as it is now. There was a movement to sell the property to a private bidder for what in these days might be termed "a sub division". The emphatic stand of the Rotary Club against such a sale was a big help in blocking the movement.

On another occasion, the club named a committee to talk to officials of the New Haven Railroad on the possibility of obtaining land on Ives Street for the parking of automobiles. The present parking lot is the outcome of that action.

On several occasions, Bob Dobbs talked on the need for a larger and better trade school. His efforts bore fruit as witness the present Henry Abbott Regional Vocational Technical School on Hayestown Avenue.

During the 60's and 70's the Rotary Club continued its efforts on behalf of the community. It pledged \$10,000 to the Danbury Hospital for the establishment of the Physical Therapy Department, which has grown to be a very important facet of hospital care.

During the presidency of Bud Sweet, a \$1000 annual scholarship to an outstanding graduating student of a local high school was established.

When the Danbury Nature Center needed help with their building, Don Stone donated the paint and a dozen or so Rotarians went down there on two Saturdays and painted the entire exterior of the building.

When the Danbury Library was being moved, many Rotarians helped pack and transport thousands of volumes from the old building to the new. Mrs. Bill Sunderland took pictures of the gang at work and they are in the files of the library.

The Rotary Club donated and furnished all the equipment needed to establish a Clinic Room in Wooster Manor building for the elderly on West Wooster Street. Much work on that project was done by Joe Canale, John Creasy and Dr. Peter Jameson.

During the presidencies of Bob Hull and Ben Heyman, the club pledged \$10,000 for the establishment of the Renal Dialysis Department at Danbury Hospital. Now that the pledge has been paid, we annually contribute from \$1000 to \$2000 towards its support. There are at least 32 patients receiving treatment every few days, and the Rotary is playing an important part in saving these patients' lives.

Our club has donated a mini-bus to DATAHR (Danbury Association To Advance the Handicapped and Retarded) for use in their programs. We also donated \$1000 to the Capital Building Fund of the Salvation Army.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

An outstanding Rotary activity which merits attention is the Youth Exchange Program. This is a program in which young people from our region live with Rotary families in other nations, and students from those countries visit in our area and live in the homes of local Rotary members, usually for one year. This has been a most active program and has enriched the understanding between American youths and their peers in the various foreign countries. Rotarians who have supplied the leadership for this activity include Jack Flatau, Arne Hultberg, Tom Rounds, Nilo Herrera, Don Hamilton and Art Erhardt.

The club also sponsors the National Scholastic Honor Society chapters at the local high schools and at the Henry Abbott Technical School. Each year's president presents these students their membership pins, and a "Fun Day", which they plan, is underwritten for them by the club.

PAST PRESIDENTS

*1926-27	Rev. John Deyo
*1927-29	Martin J. Cunningham
*1929-30	Alfred A. Hodshon
*1930-31	Ralph K. Reynolds
*1931-32	Charles E. Carter
*1932-34	Lynn W. Wilson
*1934-35	Wilbur F. Tomlinson
*1935-36	J. Harry White
*1936-37	Harold F. Dow
*1937-38	George H. Crofut
*1938-39	Winfield S. Holman
*1939-40	Gerald B. Curtis
*1940-41	George F. Green
*1941-42	Howard H. Davis
*1942-43	MacDonell Moore
*1943-44	James L. Stone
*1944-45	Robert J. Dobbs
*1945-46	Frank P. Rollins
*1946-47	William H. Cable
1947-48	Ellis A. Tarlton
1948-49	Edmond G. Hawley
1949-50	Walter P. Sweet
*1950-51	Frank S. Stevens
1951-52	Wm. Webb Sunderland
*1952-53	Raymond E. Claffin
*1953-54	Thomas H. Touhy
*1954-55	Thomas H. Middleton
1955-56	Rudolph Anderson
1956-57	George F. O'Brien
1957-58	Vincent P. Ray
1958-59	Walter J. Van Lenten
1959-60	Joseph E. Canale
1960-61	Joseph E. Taylor
*1961-62	Harold D. Van Houten
1962-63	Dr. John W. Jovell
1963-64	Dr. F. Burton Cook
1964-65	Frederick W. Kasack
1965-66	Dr. Paul L. Sweet
1966-67	Eduard Baruch
1967-68	Patrick J. Murnane
1968-69	Robert J. Hull
1969-70	Benjamin Heyman
1970-71	Dr. Peter C. Jameson
1971-72	Joseph F. Taylor
1972-73	Thomas E. Rounds
1973-74	John A. Lucchesi
1974-75	Robert J. Durgy



*Deceased

DISTRICT LEADERS

The Rotary Club of Danbury is included in Rotary International District No. 798, and two of our members have served as District Governors. Dr. Ralph C. Jenkins, then president of Danbury Teachers College, was elected Governor in 1941. Participating actively in the observance of our 50th Anniversary is our other Past district Governor, F. Burton Cook. Also a college president, Burt served District 798 during 1973-1974, and in 1976 was made a Paul Harris Fellow!

During the 1975-1976 Rotary Year, Governor of District No. 798 was John J. (Mickey) Walsh of Old Saybrook, Connecticut; President of Rotary International was Ernesto Imbassahy de Mello of Brazil.

As the Rotary Club of Danbury completed its 50th year of service, the Anniversary Party celebrants honored Jim Biggs - the only one of our Charter Members with us on April 24, 1976.

PRESENT OFFICERS

President of the Rotary Club of Danbury for 1975-1976 is John D. Dolan.

Serving with President John are: Vice-President Duke Hubbard, Secretary Mike Gauss, Assistant Secretary Bob Stockman, Treasurer Bill Morse, Assistant Treasurer Kevin McMahon, Sergeant-at-Arms Rudy Springer, and Official Photographer Chet Floyd.

Members of the Board of Directors are: Pat Crafton, Al Geddes, Bob Durgy, John Lucchesi, Mort Siegel, Tary Tarlton, Pete Darling, Bill Hellawell and Carl LaMar.

PRESENT MEMBERS

Anderson, Rudolph <i>Senior Active</i>	Durkin, Robert M. <i>Banking Management</i>
Anthony, B. Kenneth (Rev.) <i>Senior Active</i>	Edson, Dr. Dean H. <i>Senior Active</i>
Bantz, Robert <i>Personnel Manager.</i>	Epple, Karl H. <i>Metal, Semi-Manufacturing</i>
Baruch, Eduard <i>Senior Active</i>	Erhardt, Arthur H. <i>Plumbing</i>
Biggs James D. <i>Honorary (Charter Member)</i>	Feinson, Abraham <i>Senior Active</i>
Bolduc, Joseph C. <i>Pension Consulting Service</i>	Ferrier, George <i>Senior Active</i>
Borner, Stanley W. <i>Social Service Associations</i>	Floyd, Chester E. <i>Honorary</i>
Brancato, Leo J. <i>Senior Active</i>	Gauss, Michael R. <i>Additional Active</i>
Campbell, Kenneth B. <i>Pencil Manufacturing</i>	Geddes, Dr. Alfred T. <i>Senior Active</i>
Canale, Joseph <i>Senior Active</i>	Godfrey, Harold A. <i>Budget Management</i>
Canfield, David <i>Stock Broker</i>	Grunow, William R. <i>College Personal Officer</i>
Chisholm, Jon D. <i>Moving and Storage Service</i>	Hamilton, Dr. Donald M. <i>Government Psychiatric Consultation</i>
Cirilli, Dante <i>Children's Book Distributing</i>	Harrison, David C. <i>Funeral Service</i>
Collins, Thomas A. <i>Real Estate Agency</i>	Hawley, Edmond G. <i>Senior Active</i>
Cook, F. Burton <i>Senior Active</i>	Hellawell, William E. <i>Senior Active</i>
Cook, David B. <i>Additional Active.</i>	Heyman, Benjamin <i>Senior Active</i>
Coon, Donald G. <i>Senior Active</i>	Hooper, G. Reginald <i>Senior Active</i>
Crafton, Patrick H. <i>Radio Broadcasting.</i>	Hubbard, Dr. Richmond C. <i>Medicine, Psychiatry</i>
Crawford, Malcom Douglas <i>Finance - Hospital</i>	Hull, Robert J. <i>Senior Active</i>
Darling, Peter S. <i>Law, Commercial</i>	Hultberg, C. Arne <i>Senior Active</i>
Deegan, John <i>Civil Engineer</i>	Hyde, Judson G. <i>Accounting Taxation</i>
Dolan, John D. <i>Fuel Oil Distributing</i>	Ingham, Clare M. <i>Antiquarian</i>
Durgy, Robert J. <i>Accounting, CPA</i>	Jameson, Dr. Peter C. <i>Medicine, Obstetrics</i>

Kasack, Frederick W.
Senior Active

Kelley, Raymond L.
Honorary

Knapp, Dr. Harold B.
Senior Active

LaMar, Carl A.
Education, Managerial Services

Lombardi, Jeremiah F.
Senior Active

Lowell, Frederick W.
Savings Banking

Lucchesi, John A.
Roofing Construction

Malmshemer, Fred W.
Engineering Administration

Mann, Richard W.
Trust Department Management

Mattson, Ronald H.
Industrial Robots - Manufacturing

McKee, William
College Registrar

McMahon, Kevin J.
Banking, Trusts and Estates

Meserve, Albert W.
Senior Active

Mesinger, Robert H.
Senior Active

Morse, William S., Jr.
Savings and Loan, Management

Mullaney, John J., Jr.
Banking-Branch Operations

Murnane, Patrick J.
Senior Active

Nappi, Pasquale F.
Education - Schools Superintendent

Nugent, Edward J.
Branch Banking - Management

O'Brien, George F.
Senior Active

Palmer, Forrest C.
Newspaper Publishing

Potts, Arthur G.
Senior Active

Powell, Rev. Walter S.R.
Senior Active

Powelson, William
Bus Transportation

Raglan, John
Education - Business Administration

Rounds, Thomas E.
Honorary

Salvagne, Perry R. Jr.
Senior Active

Sharp, Ralph
Senior Active

Siegel, Morton M.
Advertising Services

Speidel, Charles F.
Inspection Devices, Industrial

Springer, Rudolph O.
Hospital Laundry Management

Staley, Frank
Cable Television

Stockman, Robert
Electronic Capacitor Manufacturing

Stone, Donald P.
Senior Active

Sullivan, William W.
Law, General Practice

Sweet, Dr. Paul L.
Senior Active

Sweet, Walter P.
Honorary

Tarlton, Ellis A. Jr.
Contracting, General

Taylor, H. Frank
Senior Active

Taylor, Joseph F.
Chamber of Commerce

Teal, Gilbert E.
Education, Teacher Training

Tuthill, Robert C.
Personnel Management

Van Houten, H. Dickson, Jr.
Automobile, Retailing

Wagenseil, Graham
Passenger Agencies

Whitcomb, Roger
Architecture

Wiggins, John H.
Banking, Credit

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

A new fund-raising endeavor proved to be a highlight of Danbury Rotary's 50th Year - this was a Rotary Amateur Day on radio station WLAD. Pat Crafton arranged for the club to "take over" the station for an entire broadcast day on February 10, 1976. Rotarians served as announcers and, during their half-hour segments on-the-air, offered various services and items for which the listening public made bids via telephone. Over \$2300 was raised during this 12-hour effort, and the proceeds were divided equally between the United Way and the Renal Dialysis Unit at the Hospital. John Lucchesi served as chairman of this event, and much credit for its success belongs to him.

A 50th Anniversary is a joyous occasion for any organization, and the Rotary Club of Danbury is no exception. Planning for our celebration was accomplished by a special committee headed by Joe Bolduc. The Honorary Chairman was our only remaining Charter Member, Jim Biggs; and the festivities were led by our Past District Governor, Burt Cook. Historical revisions were supplied by Bud Knapp; and the booklet editor was Mort Siegel.

As we observe the 50th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Danbury, we recognize that most of our accomplishments stem from the spirit proclaimed in the Rotary Motto: "Service Above Self".

