



Number 624

The International Association of Rotary Clubs

Hereby Certifies that the ROTARY CLUB of

Charleston, S.C.

has been elected to membership in this Association and, having agreed to be bound by the Constitution thereof, which agreement is duly evidenced by the acceptance of this certificate, is declared to be an affiliating club of the International Association of Rotary Clubs, to be and remain such as provided by the Constitution of this Association.

Witness the seal of the International Association of Rotary Clubs, duly attested by its officers, this

first day of March, Anno Domini 1920.



H. Adams
President

Charles R. King
Secretary



SERVICE

Foreword

Ask yourself the question, “What is Rotary?” You would probably need a couple of pages to describe it, based on your own experiences in the Club. Perhaps one of the best definitions comes from the founder of Rotary, Paul P. Harris. In 1941, on the 36th anniversary of Rotary, Paul said in a radio broadcast:

“Rotary is a miniature model of a world at peace — one which might advantageously be studied by nations. Rotarians believe that the universal application of tolerance and friendliness would bring about the international peace so earnestly desired by everyone.”

This statement is from one of the great Americans of our time. Not only did Paul Harris start Rotary in 1905 with Club Number 1 in Chicago, but he spent the next 42 years of his life traveling the world to spread the ideals of Rotary. He traveled the European continent in both World War I and World War II. He saw the horrible carnage that war caused and this made him more determined to further peace through Rotary efforts. I wish every Rotarian would study the life of Paul Harris.

After the Club in Chicago was started, the second Club was chartered in San Francisco. Others soon followed in Seattle, Washington, Los Angeles and New York.

Our Club was the 624nd Club started in 1920. We were chartered by the Columbia Club. In the 1920s, Rotary started to become truly global when the movement spread throughout continental Europe and reached South and Central America, Africa, Australia and Asia. Today there are more than 31,000 Rotary clubs with over 1.2 million members located throughout the world.

Clubs are administered through organizations called Rotary Districts. Our district is Number 7770, one of over 560 districts in 166 countries of the world. We have 74 Clubs in the district, and we were the third club chartered. Our district covers the eastern half of the state of South Carolina.

In reading through the years of our existence, you'll be impressed with the caliber of our presidents and of the many projects our Club has undertaken.

It is impossible in this synopsis to give explicit credit to the hundreds of Rotarians who have contributed so much to the Club. From the fellowship of the Rotary Club of Charleston, many have stepped forward to serve the community and have accepted responsibility for many needed tasks. Suffice it to say that the contributions of these individuals will be found in the chronicles of nearly every community effort and every charitable and cultural organization of the area.

The projects we have provided to the community are numerous and varied. I will name some of the important ones:

- We started the first Boy Scout Council.
- We helped secure capital for the construction of the Francis Marion Hotel.
- Our wives started the first Ladies Auxiliary, eventually known as the Rotary-Anns.
- The Crippled Children's Society was organized.
- We beautified Marion Square in the 1940s and again in early 2000.
- We built a Rotary Fountain at Marion Square.
- We also constructed a fountain in Wraggsborough Square.
- We helped start a Traffic Department in the city.
- We started the Trident Community Foundation. Today called the Coastal Community Foundation, it serves needy organizations throughout the eastern coast of our state, and has grown its assets to more than \$100 million.

Over the years, our Club's community involvement has included the Wood for Warmth Program, the Gift of Life Program, the Polo for Polio Program, a Scholarship Fund, restoring a Habitat for Humanity house, the financing of four water purifiers sent to Ecuador, Rotary Readers and Mentors, and the creation of our own Charleston Rotary Fund to finance worthy humanitarian projects in Charleston.

Finally during our 85 years, we have chartered six other Rotary Clubs in our district: North Charleston, Charleston Breakfast, Summerville, St. Andrews, Mount Pleasant and Beaufort.

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In 1972, I was fortunate to join the Rotary Club of Charleston while stationed in the Navy. In part, I was very pleased to have joined because my father was a terrific Rotarian, having had 23 years of perfect attendance before he died, and he also was a charter president of a Club he helped start in California. The fact that I was a Rotarian while in the Navy stationed in Charleston was a great factor in my family's decision to retire in Charleston. The friends I made in Rotary were most supportive of my decision and I still value their friendship highly. My year as District Governor was of great education to me because of gaining knowledge of the many towns and cities of South Carolina when I visited all the Clubs in our district.

I urge you to delve into this complete history of our Rotary Club, brought to you by the work of this fine committee. As you read this history, please pay tribute with me to a past president, now deceased – Rucker Newbery, who assembled years of minutes and notes to write the first 50 years of our Club's history, from 1920 to 1970.

For more than three decades, participation in the weekly meetings of the Rotary Club of Charleston has been one of my life's highlights. Not only have deep friendships developed, but being a member has provided me with many opportunities to enrich our community through public service. For the hundreds of alumni of the Rotary Club of Charleston, "service above self" is more than a motto. It's a way of life.

— *Jerry Nuss*
Past president and district governor
January 2005