

1980 - 1992

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
THE SPARTANBURG ROTARY CLUB
FOR THE YEARS 1980-1992

Membership and Growth

Beginning with a total of twenty-seven charter members in the year 1916, the Spartanburg Club acquired 147 members by the year 1980. This figure advanced over the next ten years to a total of 197 when the new year began in 1990. In addition to the increased membership, two other clubs were formed—one in the west side by the North Spartanburg Club and another in the eastern part of the city by the original club. The latter was accomplished in 1987.

Scholarships

Many years ago, recognizing the unique opportunities for college education in Spartanburg, the club began giving scholarships to students to attend local schools. During the decade 1980 to 1990, the amount given for scholarships each year increased as follows: in 1980 the sum of \$2,250 was given; in 1982 this amount was raised to \$3,000; further advances were made to \$3,400 in 1984, \$3,700 in 1985, and \$5,000 in 1987; and the amount given in 1990 was \$6,500. As indicated, the recipients of the Rotary donations have been students at Wofford, Converse, Spartanburg Methodist College, the University of South Carolina at Spartanburg, and Spartanburg Technical College.

Dues and Fund-Raising

Prior to 1977 the club dues were \$35 per year. This was raised to \$60 in 1977. There the dues remained until 1987, when the amount was increased to \$80 per annum.

The innovative method of fund raising by an auction was introduced to the club by Gaines Mason, a newcomer from Sumter. Each member was asked to donate an article which he had made or which he valued. Wine and cheese were served before the actual auction at the Piedmont Club. The selections offered at each function were outstanding, and everyone enjoyed the evenings. The auctions were held about eighteen months apart. The report from the originator, Gaines, showed that the first auction netted \$10,000, the second

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brought in \$7,000, and the last, held two years ago, added \$6,000 to the Club coffers.

Polio Plus

In 1987, with the campaign named Polio Plus, Rotary International introduced the concept of working to eliminate worldwide the dread disease, poliomyelitis. For the first time in history, a group of volunteers raised money in an endeavor to wipe out a number of diseases throughout the world, or at least in those countries or territories which would invite Rotary into their boundaries. (Countries behind the Iron Curtain were virtually the only ones which did not participate. It seems likely that participation will come soon, since a Rotary Club is now being formed in Moscow. Hungary and Poland also have revived their Rotary Clubs.) A sum of \$125 million was the goal set. To everyone's surprise, the sum raised was \$230 million (\$230,000,000).

The quota for our Spartanburg Club was \$35,000. The Executive Board raised it to \$75,000. At last count, the Spartanburg Rotary Club had raised about \$78,000. The raising of these funds was a great achievement and the accomplishment of the goal on a worldwide scale was even greater. The goal was to eliminate the diseases of poliomyelitis, tetanus, measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, and tuberculosis. This was a wonderful endeavor for any organization and every Rotarian can indeed be proud to have participated in such a significant project.

Paul Harris Fellowship Program

In 1981, the Paul Harris Fellowship Program was initiated in our club. Any Rotarian who gives \$1,000 to the Rotary International Foundation, or any person who has the amount given in his or her name, becomes a Paul Harris Fellow, so named for the founder of Rotary. The persons listed on the roster at the end of this report have become Paul Harris Fellows from our club, or have been honored by our club.

Sports

This club has engaged in sporting events in cooperation with the other clubs of the area. Our club dominates in softball, and does well in golf and tennis. Some funds were raised by the enthusiastic "Runs" of one mile, and five and ten kilometers. More than one hundred entrants enjoyed the events, which were directed by Rand Bailey and Kit Jennings.

Our Sixth District Governor

Paul Wilson, the sixth district governor from this club, is an outstanding member whose contributions as district governor for the 1990-1991 term were exemplary. We take pride in Paul's tenure as governor. He became governor of District 775 (now 7750) on July 1, 1990. His chief emphasis was on increasing the attendance at the Annual District Conference and he succeeded admirably in this endeavor. Bill Monroe was conference chairman; Jim Fogartie led the singing and gave the inspirational interfaith speech at the Sunday meeting.

Governor Paul Wilson calls attention to the wide acceptance of women into the District 7750 clubs. At the end of his tenure only three clubs, out of a total of forty-seven, had no women members.

Meetings Outside

During the decade of the eighties, the club was invited to visit several local organizations and homes. Lunch was served and tours were enjoyed. The Charles Lea Center, named for longtime Rotary secretary of this club, the Girl's Home, the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind, Mountain View Nursing Home, and the Skylyn Place Retirement Community entertained the membership. These visits are always impressive and give the members an intimate glimpse of the inner workings of some of the special places in the community.

The Science Fair

The Rotary-sponsored Science Fair occupies an ever larger place in the community of Spartanburg. Under the longtime and expert guidance of Rotarian Dr. Dimitry Gagarine, this event continues to command nationwide respect.

The Spartanburg Rotary Club has sponsored this project for many years. Students from grammar school through junior high submit their projects to be judged by experts. Numerous prizes are awarded at each level and in categories including chemistry, physics, health, general science, home economics, and geology. The winner of the grand prize and the runner up are sent on an all-expense-paid trip to the National Science Fair.

Within the past ten years, the number of participants has increased from 250 to over 750 last year. Costs have risen from \$2,000 ten years ago to over \$7,000. However, the great financial difficulty

encountered at the start of the project has been overcome by the Science Fair Committee's aggressive program of contacting many industrial companies and prominent citizens throughout the area. The resulting generous contributions have enabled the committee to pay all costs of the Science Fair. The accumulated surplus funds are administered and invested by the Spartanburg County Foundation.

Rotary Group Study Exchange

During this decade, young (non-Rotarian) business leaders were sent as part of Rotary Exchange Groups to Belgium and Argentina. Rotarian Duncan Bailey was the team leader on a five-week tour of Belgium in 1987, and in 1990 he and his wife led the District 7750 team to Argentina. We received a reciprocal group from Belgium in 1988, and a group from Argentina was in Spartanburg for a week in 1990.

Rotary Interact and Rotaract U.S.C.S.

We frequently hosted the students from the Spartanburg High School Rotary Interact Club, and an equivalent Rotary group is being formed at the University of South Carolina at Spartanburg. Funds raised by the club have been used in community projects and charities, particularly those involving the youth of our area. Our Career-Shadow Days, held several times, should make a difference in the future of Spartanburg. The three Youth at Risk programs helped by these funds are VIP (a character education project under the supervision of the Family Care Council of Spartanburg), the Prince Hall Youth at Risk Program, and the Junior Achievement of Spartanburg.

Ladies Night

Ladies Night is a highlight of every year. The evening's entertainment is usually accompanied by food, either as a dinner or as *hors d'oeuvres*. During this decade, two plays and two musical concerts were most entertaining. The seated dinners with music and dancing seemed to be the most popular.

The following pages indicate the officers and the Paul Harris Fellows of the decade 1980-1990.