



- in foundation

The start of the Rotary Organization

Some notes prepared by Leif B AXELSSON

Paul Harris 1868 - 1947 (78) born New England USA

Humble and meager beginnings; three brothers

Small enterprise childhood.

Grand father support – expelled from Academy in Vermont but did well in the Military Academy but was wrongly expelled for misconduct.

They later apologized and he got a B.A. in physical culture in 1919 and honorary Ph.D. in 1933.

He was however admitted to prestigious Princeton University and did well. Later Law School and graduation at the University of Iowa.

Wanted to see the world

Five years of reporter, fruit picker, actor, night clerk, sales men, crew man in a cattle boat, other boats back in the US various jobs – ending up as a marble and granite sales man with lots of travel – very successful.

Ending up 1900 in Chicago as a lawyer. Founded eventually his own firm.

The stature meeting of Rotary was held on 22 February 1905 in Chicago at the office of Gustavus H Lehr. .

Founders;

Silvester Schiele – coal dealer

Paul Harris - lawyer

Hiram E Shorey – merchant tailor

Gustavus H Loehr - mining engineer

A special memory of Paul Harris, is the nomination PHF – Paul Harris Fellow a notable distinction. It can be presented with a person through a RC and is received from Rotary Foundation.

Suggestions at first meeting;

To form a club different from any other

– *"a very simple plan of mutual cooperation and informal friendship such as all of us had once known in our villages"*

- One member from each profession or line of business
- A "booster club" – in first instance, trade with each other
- Enjoy fellowship
- Expand by engaging new members



On second meeting, three more members joined

Harry Ruggels – printer (served for 55 years and outlived Paul Harris)
Bill Jensen – estate broker
A.L. White – organ manufacturer

At the third meeting on 23 March 1905 15 people were present.

The first decision was then the name of the Club. **Rotary Club** was unanimously approved over suggestions as;

Windy City Roundup
Chicago Fellowship
Chicago Circle
Booster Club
Friends in the Business
FFF – Food – Fun – Fellowship
Trade and Talk Club
Rotation Club

Club expenses should be paid out of a fund for penalties for missed meetings. Membership for only one year and every member had to re-qualify annually with a three-fourth vote. A single objection was enough to disqualify someone. All addressing on first name basis – a mister added to the found. Silvester was elected the first president. Both Hiram and Gus left departed early but by October 1905 the RC had 30 members and a year later 20. By the fifth meeting they elected a hotel to host them the tradition to share a meal started. Since 1911 a permanent meeting place was Sheraton in Chicago.

The first constitution was adopted in January 1906

- Promotion of business interest among its members
- Promotion of good fellowship and other desiderata ordinarily incident to social clubs.

In 1907 a third Object was added

- The advancement of the best interests of Chicago and the Spreading of the spirit of civic pride and loyalty among its citizens.

In the same year Paul Harris became president. With some oppositions Paul suggested to Manuel Muñso, an old friend, to get somebody interested starting a rotary Club in San Francisco when having a business trip there.

The start of the Rotary Movement was initiated.