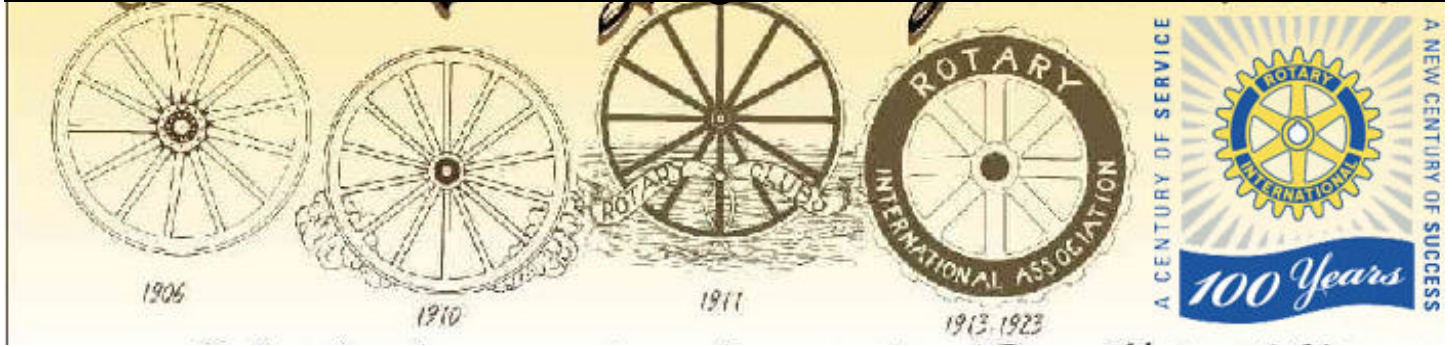


# celebrate Rotary's Centennial!



## join Rotary Heritage & History Fellowship

### Rotary in Japan

In January 1918, Umekichi Yoneyama visited the United States as a member of a financial delegation. While in Texas, he was introduced to Rotary by a member of the Dallas Rotary Club, Kisaji Fukushima.

Yoneyama organized the first Japanese Rotary Club upon his return to Japan in 1920. He applied to the International Association of Rotary Clubs for a charter which was granted the following April listing himself as President and Fukushima as Secretary.

Rotary founder Paul Harris visited Japan on February 9, 1934. Together with R. I. President Robert E. Hill and Mrs. Hill they were enroute to a pacific area conference which took place in Manila. Adverse weather delayed their arrival for 3 days leaving time for only a 1-day stay. Paul Harris planted a laurel sapling in the Imperial Hotel garden and attended a luncheon.

Umekichi Yoneyama had become Rotary's Japan-Manchuria Governor by September 11, 1940 when he spoke at the last pre-war meeting. The Japanese military pressured him to disband Rotary. He was told Rotary was treasonous.

After being forced to disband, Tokyo Rotarians decided to continue meeting as the *Wednesday Club* as that had been the club meeting day. The war ended on August 15, 1945. In January 1946 Takashi Komatsu, president of the Tokyo Wednesday Club, sent R. I. General Secretary Philip Lovejoy a letter requesting reinstatement.

In September 1948 R. I. President Sir Angus Mitchell dispatched General Secretary George Means to Japan for an investigation. March 23, 1949 the Tokyo Rotary Club was re-chartered.

By Tadashi Osaka



(Left to Right) PDG Takeshi Tanaka, Rotary International President Jonathan Majiyagbe, Past R. I. Director Ryoichi Takeyama, and Rotary Foundation Trustee Fumio Tamamura.

Fifty-seven Rotarians organized this fellowship during the 1988 Philadelphia Convention in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors of Rotary International. Some of the 57 (as the Paul Harris 711 Club) had saved the room where Rotary was born in 1905, and others (District 6450 Rotary Club of Blue Island Memorial Committee) maintain the grave site of Rotary Founder Paul P. Harris and first club President Silvester Schiele plus a monument and walkway honoring RI Presidents.

Ryoichi Takeyama visited *Comely Bank* (the residence of Rotary Founder Paul P. Harris) on his way to the 1988 Philadelphia Convention. He established RHHIF's Japan Branch in 1991. While serving on Rotary International's Board of Directors (1997-99) he advocated the purchase and restoration of *Comely Bank*.

Rotary Foundation Trustee Fumio Tamamura visited *Comely Bank* in 2003 shortly before R. I. President Jonathan Majiyagbe and Foundation Chairman James Lacy appointed a joint committee of R. I. Directors and Foundation Trustees to explore ways that R. I. and its Foundation might help acquire *Comely Bank*.

As this fellowship's liaison with the Osaka Convention Host Committee, PDG Takeshi Tanaka arranged for our literature and exhibits in the convention's House of Friendship.

### Rotary's Centennial

February 2005 is the 100th anniversary of the first meeting of the first Rotary club. A yearlong worldwide Rotary Centennial celebration is about to begin. This provides an ideal opportunity for each club to share its history of service with local news media and prospective club members.

Telling the story of Rotary accomplishments helps create a positive awareness of Rotary in the community, and this supports membership development and retention. A club historian maintains a club's story of community, vocational and international service projects undertaken. This fellowship supports club historians.

# Flip to other side and join the Fellowship today!