

# Rotary Global History Fellowship

[www.rotaryhistoryfellowship.org](http://www.rotaryhistoryfellowship.org)

## The Fellowship Chairman

The Founder of Rotary Paul P. Harris once said, *“Everyone needs friendship. Friends may disagree, but in a spirit of goodwill and fellowship, we can solve our differences. The same is also the case with families, communities, states, nations, and ultimately, the whole world.”*

These are universal values everywhere in the world at any time in history. Paul Harris lived according to these rules.

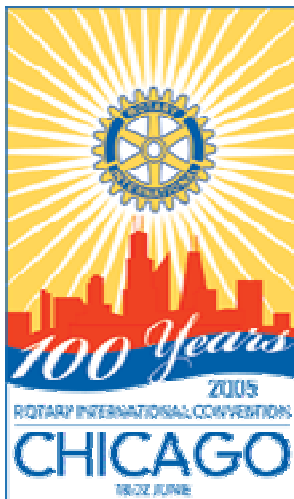
I was told that in the early years of Rotary when the Rotary leadership could not agree on a controversial issue, they would visit Paul Harris in his home, Comely Bank.

Once Paul had listened to them and talked to them, they all ended up in agreement and the conflict was resolved. I believe this is why Paul Harris had such a strong position in Rotary for the rest of his life, even though he did not hold an official Rotary Office



Chairman of the Board, RGHF  
Mats Ingemanson

after 1912, when his term as the First President of the National Association of Rotary Clubs ended (the name was later changed to Rotary International in 1922).



**Visit the Rotary Global History Fellowship Booth at the Chicago International Convention**



Paul P. Harris

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*"It is well that there is nothing in Rotary so sacred that it cannot be set aside in favor of things better."*

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## What Paul Harris Said

*"It is well that there is nothing in Rotary so sacred that it cannot be set aside in favor of things better. This is an experimental age in a changing world, and all things which are worth while and progressive are the cumulative effects of preceding successes and failures. The trees planted in Valparaiso and other cities we visited during the course of our trip presumably will stand for generations as living expressions of international peace and good will. Thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of people will rest in their grateful shade, and the eyes of most of them will be directed to the tablets bearing the message of good will."*

Paul's comments were written after planting a "friendship tree" in Valparaiso, Chile.

*From Peregrinations, Volume III "Our Neighbors on the South" by Paul P. Harris, President Emeritus, Rotary International - copyright 1937, Jean T. Harris, courtesy of the Rotary International Archives*

**Quoted from "What Paul Harris Said" - This service is prepared by The Rotary Global History Fellowship (an Internet Project) and is available by a free email weekly subscription from the website: <http://www.whatpaulharrissaid.org/>**

# One Hundred Years Later

Paul Harris inspired the creation and growth of Rotary to become the most prominent service organization in the world today.

Paul Harris was only 37 years old when Rotary was founded in 1905 and only 42 years old when he became President of the organization that became Rotary International.

One hundred years ago on February 23, 1905, Paul Harris had dinner with his closest friend, Chicago coal dealer Silvester Schiele

Afterwards they walked over the river to **Room 711** of the Unity Building at 137 North Dearborn Street in Chicago where they met their host, Gustavus Loehr, a mining engineer; and another friend, Hiram Shorey, a merchant tailor.

Harris proposed that they form a club. This was how Rotary was born. You can see pictures and read more about it at: <http://rotaryhistoryfellowship.org/711/>.

One hundred years later on February

22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005 at 12:00 PM, the Rotary Club of Chicago will have their regular meeting only five blocks away from where the founders first met.

The Rotary Club of Chicago meets at the Chicago Athletic Association on 12 South Michigan Ave, Chicago, Illinois USA



**Room 711**

## The First Meetings

They discussed Harris's idea that business leaders should meet periodically to enjoy camaraderie and to enlarge their circle of business and professional acquaintances. The club met weekly; membership was limited to one representative from each business and profession. Though

the men didn't use the term Rotary that night, that gathering is commonly regarded as the first Rotary club meeting.

As they continued to convene, members began rotating their meetings among their places of business, hence the name Rotary. After enlisting

a fifth member, printer [Harry Ruggles](#), the group was formally organized as the Rotary Club of Chicago. The original club emblem, a wagon wheel design, was the precursor of the familiar cogwheel emblem now used by Rotarians worldwide.



***From the left we have Gustavus Loehr, Silvester Schiele, Hiram Shorey and Paul P. Harris***

## The Early Years—1911

At the 1911 convention in Portland, Oregon, USA, Chesley R. Perry, Rotary's first general secretary, reads a speech containing the phrase "He profits most who serves best."

also begin to use the phrase "Service, not self." These slogans form the roots of both of the official Rotary mottoes: Service Above Self, and He Profits Most Who Serves Best. The National Rotarian magazine (later, The Rotarian) is launched,

with Perry serving as editor.

Rotary begins to cross the Atlantic, and within two years there are clubs in Great Britain and Ireland.

Later, Rotarians



## The Early Years—1919

The Rotary Club of Manila, Philippines, is chartered, launching the dissemination of Rotary throughout Asia.

Within two years there are Rotary clubs in Calcutta, India,

Shanghai, China, and Tokyo, Japan. As World War I comes to a close, continental Europe opens its doors to Rotary, and soon clubs in France, Germany, Spain, and Switzerland join the as-

sociation of clubs. Within two years, Rotary extends to Africa and Australia, and there are 1,000 Rotary clubs worldwide.



Arch C. Klumph,  
RI President 1916-17

## The Early Years—1928

The Rotary Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation that supports the efforts of Rotary International to achieve world understanding and peace through international humanitarian, educational, and cultural exchange

programs, is formally established.

Back in 1917, RI President Arch Klumph first proposed the idea of establishing an endowment fund to "accept endowments for the purpose of doing good in the

world." Its initial contribution was US\$26.50.

To date, Rotarians and friends of The Rotary Foundation, who share its vision of a better world, have contributed more than \$1.3 billion.

## Comely Bank

Much of the success of Rotary's early growth has been contributed to the charisma of Rotary's founder, a legendary storyteller and one of Chicago's most successful trial attorneys. His autobiography, **My Road to Rotary**, includes references to his knack for bringing **Rotary leaders** out to his home for discus-

sions that shaped the organization that we enjoy. Comely Bank seemed so true to the New England life Paul Harris had known and loved that the thought came to him if ever he was to have a home of his own, it would be on the top of the hill on Longwood Drive.

Harris later revealed that.. "The time came sooner than I ex-

pected ....I married my Bonnie Jean, and two years later acquired the home on the hill. We named our home "**Comely Bank**" after the street in Edinburgh where she spent the days of her childhood and youth."



Comely Bank

**You can read about Comely Bank on our website at:**

<http://rotaryhistoryfellowship.org/women/jeanharris/home/>.

**Rotarians around the world are getting together to preserve Comely Bank for Rotary. You can read more about it on our website at:**

<http://rotaryhistoryfellowship.org/comelybank/>.

## The Rotary Foundation

Arch Klumph said.....  
"There are tens of thousands of Rotarians who will look upon this opportunity (Building the Rotary Foundation) as a real privilege, men who feel that Rotary has done

much for them, who sincerely believe in its purposes and objects. Then there are other men who are seeking ways and means of leaving some part of their wealth where it may do the greatest good for hu-

manity.  
What better equipped organization or institution than Rotary International can be entrusted with such funds?"



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## Celebrate a Century of Rotary History!

*1.3 million Rotarians around the world meet every week in 33,000 different Rotary Clubs around the world. When we Rotarians visit any of these clubs, we are always welcome as friends. Why is that so? How have we become the Rotarians we are today? You can find answers to these questions in the History of Rotary*

*The History of Rotary continues to influence Rotarians today. Our website contains over 2,000 articles about Rotary's History. It is the largest such project in Rotary.*

We are on the Web:  
[www.rotaryhistoryfellowship.org/](http://www.rotaryhistoryfellowship.org/)



## Join the Rotary Global History Fellowship

We invite all Rotarians, their partners and all members of Rotaract to become members of our fellowship. You may read "[about](#)" us, find out what the RGHF "[Mission](#)" is and also read our "[By-Laws](#)". The members of our [board](#) are listed and also a list of [departments](#) where there are opportunities for service. Read about a very special group of

the fellowship, our "[History Fellows](#)." This is a group to which members are advanced based on their skill as researchers, historians, editors and writers. "[What's New](#)" is a link to our newsletter.

We have a [discussion group](#), for the general public to exchange ideas about Rotary history. Here, Rotari-

ans and non-Rotarians can ask questions and discuss the history of Rotary. You can learn more about [joining our fellowship](#). It's easy and very inexpensive though you can also be recognized as a donor.

Go to:  
[www.rotaryhistoryfellowship.org/](http://www.rotaryhistoryfellowship.org/)



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History Fellowship

Register for a free Rotary Minute  
sent to you every week via Email

[www.whatpaulharrissaid.org](http://www.whatpaulharrissaid.org)

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