

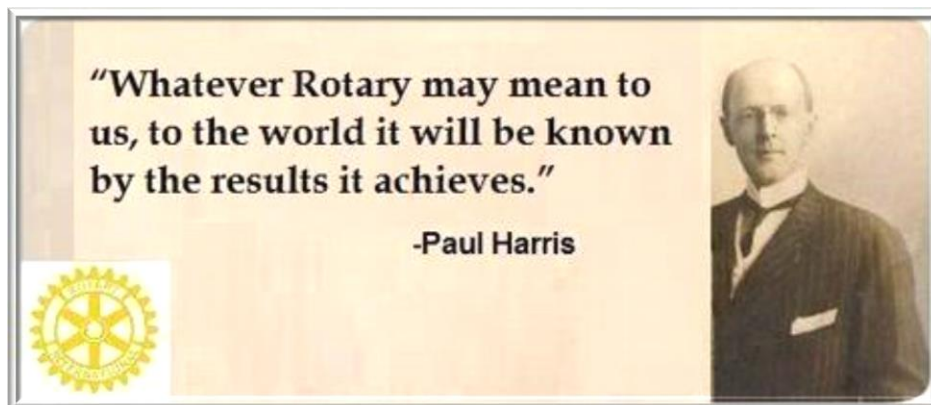
The original purposes of Rotary

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In 1930, the Rotary Club of Chicago---The Rotary Club Number One---has a committee at work in the endeavor to prepare a history of the Club. An examination was made of all the available literature of the early days of the Club. It was decided to report first a statement as to what was "The purpose of the Club or the Character of the Club" at the time of its founding and immediately thereafter. The report when made was wholly subscribed to by a majority of the committee and of the 1905 members (*see photo on Page 3*). It was submitted to the Chicago Rotary Club and adopted by the Club as a correct and fair statement as to the character of the Club at its founding and immediately thereafter. Here below is the full text of the Statement:



The Purposes of The Rotary Club of Chicago During the Earliest Years of its Existence

(1) Whatever may have been the exact thought, if there was an exact thought, in the mind of Paul Harris, when he made an explanation of his plan to the other three men who sat with him in the first preliminary meeting, whatever may have been in the minds of Silvester Schiele, Harry Ruggles, Will Jenson, Charlie Newton, and others who joined in the early days, it is undoubtedly true that the early meetings were largely experimental in their character and the various members, according to their points of view, found fellowship, business benefits, fun, or whatever most appealed to them in the Club.

(2) As have been stated by Paul Harris, it was his purpose to organize a fellowship of business and professional men in the large city of Chicago whereby they could have the advantage of acquaintance and friendship and business opportunities such as men in a small community ordinarily have. Friendliness and good fellowship prevailed in the new club from the beginning, but the unique purpose of the Club was for the members to give and to influence business to, and to get business from, fellow members and persons influenced by them. It took direct issue with social clubs and other institutions wherein it was considered dishonorable or unethical to belong for business purposes. No such taboo existed in the Rotary Club. It was declared to be a business club and that it therefore was proper to join it for business purposes.

(3) However, although the inducement given to get a man to join usually was the promise of how much business benefit he would get from his membership in the Club, it was very early agreed that the best exemplar of the Rotary idea was not the one who was trying to get all he could out of his fellow-members, but the one who was trying to be of the greatest helpfulness to his fellow-members.

(4) Furthermore, a direct exchange of business between any two members was not required. For example, "A" might be able to give business to "B" without being situated so as to receive any return from "B", but "B" might be able to do something of value for "C", and "C" in turn might be able to patronize "A". This was called the rotation of business. Therefore, as each Rotarian undertook to help his fellow-Rotarians, without demanding a direct return to him from them, there was produced a condition of altruistic endeavor which lifted the members above or out of the usual selfish attitude of commercial relations.

(5) Notwithstanding the spirit of altruism with regard to one's membership in the Club, it soon became evident that in the opinion of the outside community, the Club was regarded as a self-centered organization in that the good deeds of its members were all done for fellow-members of the Club. Consequently, perhaps partly to quiet criticisms from the outside, and partly because some members of the Club really had a desire to render a service to others besides those who belonged to the Club, an effort was made to engage in civic and charitable work.

(6) The membership originally was limited to one executive from each occupation in order that each member might have all the opportunity to obtain all the business benefit that might come from representing his line of business in the Club. After a while it was seen that while the membership was limited, the method of limiting it created a very representative group of

business and professional men, and therefore an ideal assembly for the consideration and discussion of public affairs and of matters pertaining to business in general.

(7) To summarize the original purposes of the Rotary Club of Chicago, it may be said that, as is shown in the first stated objects, the *first* purpose was the promotion of the business interests of its members. The methods used to accomplish this purpose were:

(a) By affording opportunity to its members to explain their business and display their wares at Club meetings.

(b) By constantly emphasizing to its members that any man engaged in a reputable calling should receive the patronage and support of his friends in the conduct of his business.

(c) By steadily encouraging the practice of actually doing for the other fellow as we would like to have him do for us.

(8) The *second* purpose of the Club was the development of an intimate, personal acquaintanceship, a friendly fellowship, and the play spirit among its members.

(9) An additional feature or by-product early developed was the enlightenment of a member as to businesses other than his own, thereby making him a broader business man.

(10) A year or so after the founding of the Club, a *third* purpose was developed which was the enlightenment of its members with regard to, and the participation of its members in, public affairs or community welfare work, thereby making each member a better citizen.

The above statement was approved by The Rotary Club of Chicago in May 1930, and therefore stands as an official statement of the purposes of The Rotary Club of Chicago during the earliest years of its existence.

