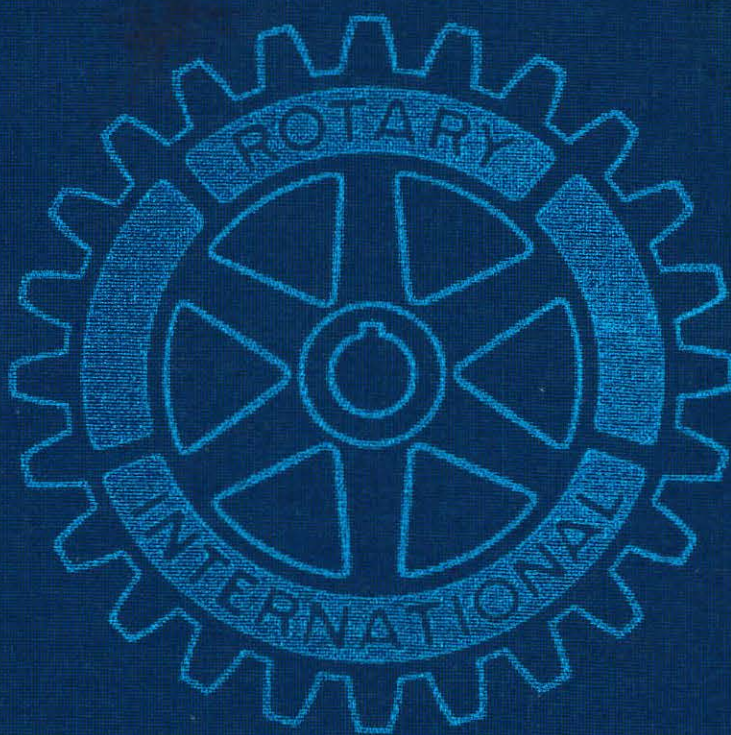


THE ROTARY CLUB OF CHARLOTTE

1916-1991



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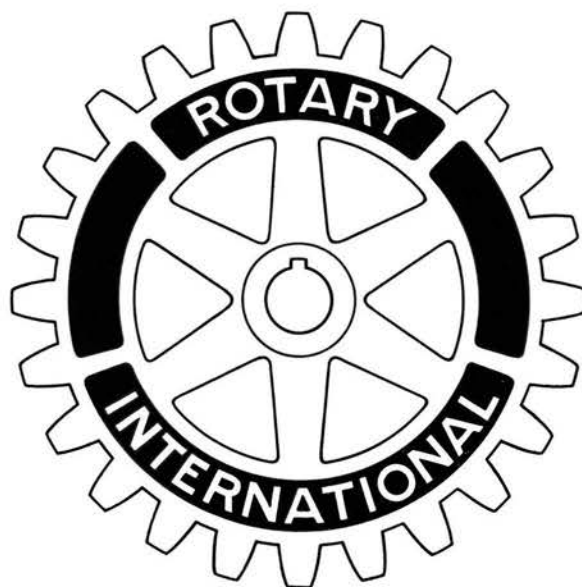
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75TH ANNIVERSARY HISTORY

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THE ROTARY CLUB OF CHARLOTTE

1916-1991



Charlotte, North Carolina

June, 1995

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Foreword

THIS IS the fourth volume containing the history of The Rotary Club of Charlotte; previous volumes were issued on the occasion of our 25th, 40th and 50th anniversaries. We are indebted to the late Charles H. Stone (1887-1963), a past president and past district governor, who had the foresight to gather first-person accounts from 39 of our first 40 presidents (Rogers Davis, our first president, was deceased). These were published in our weekly bulletin over several months and bound in one volume for our 40th Anniversary.

A Rotary Club, as any institution or person, is defined by its traditions. We did not spring full-blown to be the Club we are today; we stand on the shoulders of those hundreds of active Rotarians who loved this Club and bequeathed to us a proud heritage. We can nourish ourselves with our history and reflect on its meaning.

Your archives committee hopes this book will serve not only as a history, but also as a resource to help explain what Rotary is, what our Rotary Club has achieved over the years and what it aspires to continue. We should be mindful of the admonition Club members received in 1943 from Carl E. Balte, guest speaker: "It is all right to take your hat off to the past, but let's take our coats off to the future."

WILLIAM E. LOFTIN, SR.
Editor

PAST DIRECTORS ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

David Clark	1929-1930
C. W. Gilchrist	1962-1964

PAST DISTRICT GOVERNORS

Rogers W. Davis	7th District	1919-1920
David Clark	58th District	1927-1928
George M. Ivey, Sr.	188th District	1935-1936
J. Mack Hatch	188th District	1938-1939
Charles H. Stone	188th District	1944-1945
Everett Bierman	194th District	1948-1949
Malcolm R. Williamson	280th District	1951-1952
John Paul Lucas, Jr.	280th District	1952-1953
H. Stanley MacClary	271st District	1953-1954
Robert S. Woodson	682nd District	1954-1955
C. W. Gilchrist	767th District	1959-1960
Charles A. Hunter	767th District	1968-1969
Joseph D. Moore, Sr.	767th District	1986-1987
William E. Poe	7680th District	1994-1995

Object of Rotary

THE OBJECT OF ROTARY is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

1. The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
2. High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying by each Rotarian of his occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
3. The application of the ideal of service by every Rotarian to his personal, business and community life;
4. The advancement of international understanding, good will, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.



The Spirit of Rotary

A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY is always under construction. Rotary is helping to build it. Wherever Rotary is strong, community life is better. By its very nature the spirit of Rotary promotes the common good. We uphold high ethical standards in business and recognize the worthiness of all useful occupations as an opportunity to contribute to the well-being of humankind.

Rotary has really come into its own in this rapidly shrinking global village. International understanding is imperative. Through our world-wide fellowship — 1,200,000 strong in 27,000 clubs in 150 countries — and our student exchange program, Rotary is helping to break down barriers and to build bridges of goodwill and interdependence across the earth.

President Warren G. Harding recognized the problems persons of state and the various forms of government have. He applauded Rotary and said if we could plant the spirit of Rotary in every community and turn it into practical application it would go a long way toward guaranteeing the tranquility and forward march of civilization. As one who first joined Rotary in Atlanta in 1958, I agree. I find the Four-Way Test to be a masterful regimen for daily living: truthfulness, fairness, friendship and the good of all concerned.

What a privilege is ours to be members of the Charlotte Rotary Club! As we celebrate our 75th anniversary, let us rejoice in the illustrious legacy bequeathed to us by many of the Queen City's finest leaders. Yes, and let us resolve to make our membership as meaningful as possible, knowing — as International President Bill Huntley said in his Christmas message (1994) — that the spirit of Rotary, put into everyday practice, "spreads the warmth of human service and understanding wherever the cold darkness of hunger, disease, ignorance or conflict throws its long shadow."

L. Bevel Jones, III
Resident Bishop
Western North Carolina Conference
United Methodist Church

June 2, 1995

Paul P. Harris, Rotary's Founder

PAUL PERCY HARRIS, Rotary's founder, was born in Racine, Wisconsin, on April 19, 1868. His father fell on hard times in 1871; for economic reasons, he took Paul and his brother to Wallingford, Vermont, to be raised by their grandparents, whom Paul loved deeply all his life.

In 1885 he matriculated at the University of Vermont, but he was expelled in his second year after being wrongly accused of hazing a freshman. Subsequently, in 1933, the university conferred on Paul an honorary doctoral degree.

Paul entered Princeton University in the fall of 1887. The next year Paul's grandfather died, followed by his grandmother in 1890. Paul left Princeton and took a job with the Sheldon Marble Company, West Rutland, Vermont, for a year.

In 1889, Paul studied law in Des Moines, Iowa, in the office of St. John, Stevenson & Whisenand, and then entered the law department of the State University of Iowa. At Paul's graduation ceremony in 1891, the speaker emphasized the value of broadening oneself through travel and new experiences. Paul resolved to take five years to travel and work at various trades before actually beginning a law practice.

He began his journeys in San Francisco, California, where he got a job on the *Chronicle* as reporter. There he became close friends with Harry Pulliam, who later in life became president of the National Baseball League. Together they worked their way around California as fruit pickers.

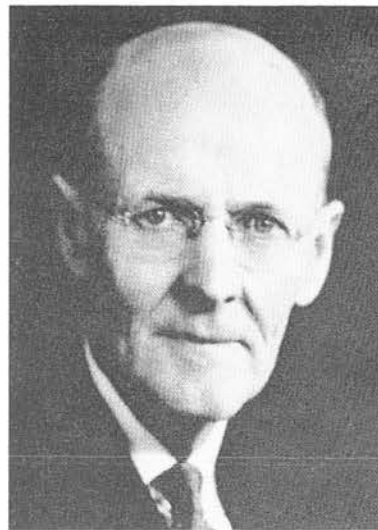
Paul continued to fulfill his plan to travel and experience a variety of occupations. In Los Angeles, he taught in a business college. In Colorado, he was an actor in a Denver theatrical company, a reporter at the *Rocky Mountain News*, and a ranch hand.

Moving on to Jacksonville, Florida, he became night clerk in the St. James Hotel, and then traveling salesman for a marble and granite concern owned by George W. Clark, who later organized the Rotary Club of Jacksonville.

In 1893 he worked for the *Washington Star* in Washington, D.C. He then went to Louisville, Kentucky, traveling for another marble and granite company. Then he found a job on a cattle boat and set sail for England. Returning to Maryland, he worked at a farm and a corn-canning factory. Having missed seeing London on his first trip to England, he worked another ship-board job and visited the historic sites of London and Wales.

On his return to the USA, he took a train to Chicago to visit the Columbian Exposition. Intrigued by Chicago's atmosphere of boldness and vigor, he would be drawn to that city when he finally chose to settle down. Then he went to New Orleans, Louisiana, picking and packing oranges and assisting in rescue efforts during a hurricane.

He returned to Jacksonville to his old position with the marble and granite company. This time he traveled to Scotland, Ireland, Belgium, and Italy as a buyer. He



PAUL P. HARRIS
1868-1947

visited all major European countries while there. When he came home to the USA, he was sent to New York City to manage the company office there.

Having fulfilled his plans for traveling and broadening himself over a five-year period, he moved to Chicago in 1896 to open a law office. Chicago became his permanent home, where he maintained a successful law practice and some years later was active in the cause of Rotary.

In 1900, Paul visited his boyhood scenes in Vermont and realized that he lacked close friends in his adopted hometown of Chicago. Back in Chicago, he visited a professional friend and, following a walk in which he met various merchants in the neighborhood, Paul conceived the idea of a businessmen's club that could recapture some of the friendly spirit experienced among businessmen in small communities.

In 1905, Paul invited three young business acquaintances — Silvester Schiele, Gustavus Loehr, and Hiram Shorey — to his office and explained his idea of a different kind of businessmen's club, one in which the various businesses and professions of a community are represented. From this meeting on February 23, Rotary was born.

At that inauspicious meeting, Paul Harris challenged his three friends in attendance to dream. Members agreed that subsequent meetings would be held on a rotating basis at various places of business, thus the name "Rotary" was born. In order to build a diverse base of membership, it was also agreed that membership would be restricted to one from any given business or profession.

Rotary and its ideals quickly began to grow. In 1908, the second club was formed in San Francisco, followed by Oakland across the bay in 1909. By 1910, there were 10 registered clubs in the United States. Just two years later, the ranks had grown to 50 clubs. In 1912, Rotary became the International Association of Rotary Clubs. The Rotary Club of Charlotte, organized in 1916, was the 256th club in the world.

Paul Harris died in 1947, but he has left a rich legacy and a challenge to all Rotarians. He wrote, "When you look back over a period of years, much which seemed important fades into insignificance, while other things grow into such commanding importance that one may say in truth, 'Nothing else matters.' Sacrifice, devotion, honor, truth, sincerity, love — these are the homely virtues."

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL



One Rotary Center
1560 Sherman Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201-3698 USA



27 February 1992

To All Members of
The Rotary Club of
Charlotte, North Carolina

Dear Fellow Rotarians:

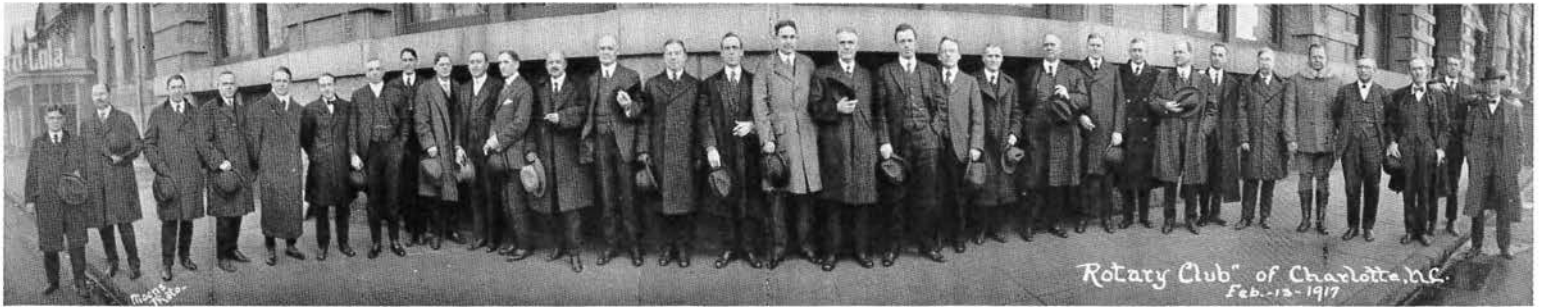
It is indeed a pleasure to congratulate each and every one of you as your club celebrates 75 years of service to the community.

The Rotary Club of Charlotte has a fine history. It has undertaken a variety of projects locally and internationally. I encourage you to continue and build upon this record as you heed this year's Rotary theme, **LOOK BEYOND YOURSELF** to those who need your club's assistance.

You have my best wishes for continued success this year and in the years to come.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rajendra K. Saboo".
Rajendra K. Saboo
P r e s i d e n t



CHARTER MEMBERS ROTARY CLUB OF CHARLOTTE

December 1, 1916

C. A. Bland	D. H. McCollough
L. C. Burwell	Herbert McDonald
Dr. D. S. Caldwell	W. L. McDonald
Banks R. Cates	Dr. J. P. Matheson
P. M. Cave	C. A. Mees
E. H. Chisolm	R. W. Miller
C. C. Coddington	S. R. Moore
W. S. Creighton	C. W. Parker
John L. Dabbs	H. B. Patterson
Rogers W. Davis	R. M. Pound
R. H. DeButts	J. Perrin Quarles
W. C. Dowd, Sr.	B. F. Roark
Brent Drane	F. M. Simmons
J. D. Duncan	M. B. Speir
J. W. Ferguson	J. L. Staton
George Fitzsimmons	W. B. Sullivan
H. B. Fowler	E. C. Sweeney
John W. Fox	Z. V. Taylor
F. W. Glover	H. M. Victor
V. J. Guthery	J. O. Walker
H. S. Hall	J. Frank Wilkes
C. C. Hook	C. A. Williams, Sr.
C. O. Kuester	W. M. Wilson
Thomas G. Lane	

The Year 1916

To lead off our year-long exposition of our history during the presidency of Bill Loftin, Sr., 1986-1987, Jack Claiborne, then associate editor of The Charlotte Observer, presented a program on July 15, 1986 describing the local and national scene in the year 1916, the year of our organization. Excerpts from his remarks appear here.

NINETEEN SIXTEEN was the last year of one of the happiest, most idealistic moments in American history. It was the high water mark of the Progressive Era, a period that began shortly after the turn of the century with Theodore Roosevelt's ascension to the presidency. It was a time when Americans began to realize that industrialism and mass production had significantly altered American life and human relationships, that frontier individualism had given way to a complex organization of interdependent peoples. Citizens were calling on their government to do more to balance competing interests and promote economic fair play. For more than a decade, under Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and finally under Woodrow Wilson, the federal government responded with a long series of progressive measures.

Many of the reforms sought by William Jennings Bryan and the agrarian Populists in the 1890s and 1910s were written into law in this period: a parcel post system to compete with the monopolistic express companies, the regulation of railroads and utilities to end discriminatory rates, an income tax to replace the protective tariff as the government's chief source of revenue, a limit on immigration to protect the jobs of industrial workers, the popular election of U.S. Senators to take national politics out of the grasp of brokers in state legislatures, direct primaries to defeat the cliques that controlled local and state nominating conventions, and the Australian ballot to insure the privacy and integrity of the voting privilege.

In that reformist atmosphere, the Prohibition movement took root as a means of "purifying" American life, and the movement for women's suffrage gained new converts and momentum. Indeed, in the year 1916, Jeannette Rankin became the first woman elected to Congress — from Montana, one of about 20 en-

lightened states that allowed women to vote prior to 1920's ratification of the 19th Amendment. Also, as if to demonstrate the breadth of tolerance and opportunity in America, a Jew, Henry Louis Brandeis from Louisville, Ky., and Harvard University, was confirmed as the first adherent of his religion to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. Southerners who remembered the assistance Jews gave the Confederacy were among the earliest supporters of the Brandeis appointment.

To the American work ethic was being added a strong emphasis on selflessness and on service. People were being encouraged to reach out to be good neighbors. Women's clubs were important expressions of this service phenomenon. Women's clubs were so numerous and so popular that *The Observer* devoted a regular column to the chronicling of their activities.

But hanging over all that reform and idealism like a threatening cloud was the bloody war in Europe, which had developed into a stalemate on both western and eastern fronts. The incessant German shelling of Verdun provoked the British and French to mount an offensive across the Somme, with a terrible toll in human life and misery. Within a few weeks, more than a million men were killed. But Americans still hoped they could avoid being involved. They were busy working, building new homes and factories, expanding their railroads and cities and making money. The market in American horses for shipment to Europe was booming, and so was the market for American cotton, an important ingredient in the manufacture of explosives. In the fall of 1916, cotton in Charlotte was selling at 18, 19 and 20 cents a pound, bringing nearly \$20 more per bale than it did a year earlier. An ad for the American Trust Co. said, "Wages are high, work is plentiful, business is brisk, everyone has money." The ad suggested that people save some.

The American Trust Co. was one of eight banks flourishing in Charlotte, all of them locally owned and managed. The day of branch banking had yet to dawn. Early in January, 1916, two of those banks, Charlotte National (now Wachovia) and Commercial National (later NationsBank) purchased what an *Observer* headline termed "An Uncanny Machine." It was a

Burroughs calculator built especially to record transactions on bank ledgers, eliminating the hand book-keeping of clerks. It marked the opening of the age of automation which has brought us to today's computers.

About once a week *The Observer* ran a boxed notice on its editorial page under the headline: "Convincing Facts Showing Charlotte's Growth and Resources." Information in the box was intended to boost the city's image and promote growth. The notice said Charlotte had an "estimated population" of 50,000 — it was more like 40,000. It said the city was served by four railroads and sixty-two daily passenger trains, diverging in eight directions. It said the city had 140 manufacturing plants and was surrounded by 400 cotton mills within 100 miles. It cited Southern Bell as "the largest telephone exchange between Washington and Atlanta." In addition to the eight banks, the notice said Charlotte had four building and loan institutions, the largest homeownership community and the lowest per capita tax rates of any city in the state. It also boasted that Charlotte had sixty-seven miles of paved and macadamized streets.

Many Charlotte institutions were beginning to break out of the close-knit grid of downtown streets in favor of more room and cleaner air in the suburbs. In March, 1916, Mercy Hospital moved from College and First streets to new buildings at East Fifth and Caswell Road on the edge of the city limits. Presbyterian Hospital, then in a converted hotel at West Trade and South Mint streets, was eyeing a site in Fourth Ward. Memorial Hospital (now Carolinas Medical Center), of course, did not exist until 1940. Many people were moving out of Fourth Ward into the new and exclusive suburb called Myers Park.

Having designed Myers Park, landscape architect John Nolen of Harvard was urging Charlotte to draw up a comprehensive plan for the future development of the city, a plan that would take full advantage of Charlotte's rolling terrain, the drainage of its many creeks, and its rich variety of trees. At the suggestion of the Women's Club and the Chamber of Commerce, he drew a sample plan for the city to study and encouraged it to raise money for a more detailed "civic survey." But his proposal was never acted on. Forty years later, when Charlotte finally got around to drawing a comprehensive plan, it borrowed heavily from some of the ideas Nolen had enunciated — but it was too late to save many of the city's creeks.

While the Charlotte of 1916 was busy tooting its horn and promoting its growth, there were increasing signs that the city was beginning to sense a change in its status. It was beginning to accept an emerging role as a regional city and a servant of people in surround-

ing towns and counties. Consider these developments:

Under the masthead of *The Observer* was a slogan that called Charlotte "the Metropolis of the Carolinas." About once a week, the paper and the Chamber of Commerce gathered up information to document Charlotte's increasing importance as "a medical center," as a film exchange (this was still the day of silent movies; remember, talkies didn't come until about 1927) or as "an auto center" distributing not only new cars but also auto tires and auto accessories. In January, 1916, the 160 workers at Ford Motor Co.'s four-story plant in the Hagood building at East Sixth Street and the railroad tracks turned out its first Model-T, and began gathering momentum toward a projected production rate of one car every 20 minutes. Next door, the Ford people maintained a four-story warehouse of spare parts for distribution to auto dealers throughout the Carolinas.

Further evidence of the city's regional responsibility was a push, led largely by Clarence O. Kuester, a charter member of Charlotte Rotary, to expand and improve Charlotte's warehousing and distributing facilities. He understood how important those facilities would become to the city's future. Under Kuester's prodding the Chamber was making plans to sponsor a "Piedmont Dinner" to give business and civic leaders from Charlotte a chance to gather with their counterparts from surrounding cities and towns, all in the name of promoting new industry and commerce in the region. *The Observer* strengthened those efforts by publishing two 48-page special editions extolling the value and variety of manufacturing in the Carolinas. The Chamber of Commerce also published eight-column ads in *The Observer*, calling attention to agricultural and industrial fairs in other counties and urging "every man in Charlotte who possibly can" to attend one of those fairs. The ads were headlined "Neighborliness" and drew warm responses from officials in surrounding communities.

* * *

There were many other interesting things that occurred in 1916:

The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the income tax, resolving an issue that had been fought back and forth for years;

A cornerstone was laid for the new Post Office building at West Trade and South Mint streets. An expansion of that post office 16 years later would force the dismantling of the 100-year-old U.S. Mint and its relocation in Eastover as the home of an art museum;

North Carolina held its first primary election to nominate a Democratic candidate for governor, a con-

test won by Thomas W. Bickett of Franklin County northeast of Raleigh, over Lt. Gov. E. L. Daughtridge of Rocky Mount. In those days, the governorship was rotated every four years between east and west to prevent party splits in the general election against Republicans. The year 1916 was the east's turn to elect the governor; in 1920, when it was the west's turn, Cameron Morrison of Charlotte would be chosen. If you don't think the east-west rotation was significant, think back to Eddie Knox's campaign for the Democratic nomination in 1984 and recall the difficulties he encountered against Rufus Edmisten from Down East.

Also in 1916:

Woodrow Wilson visited Charlotte on May 20th and spoke from the lawn of the old Presbyterian College at 9th and College streets;

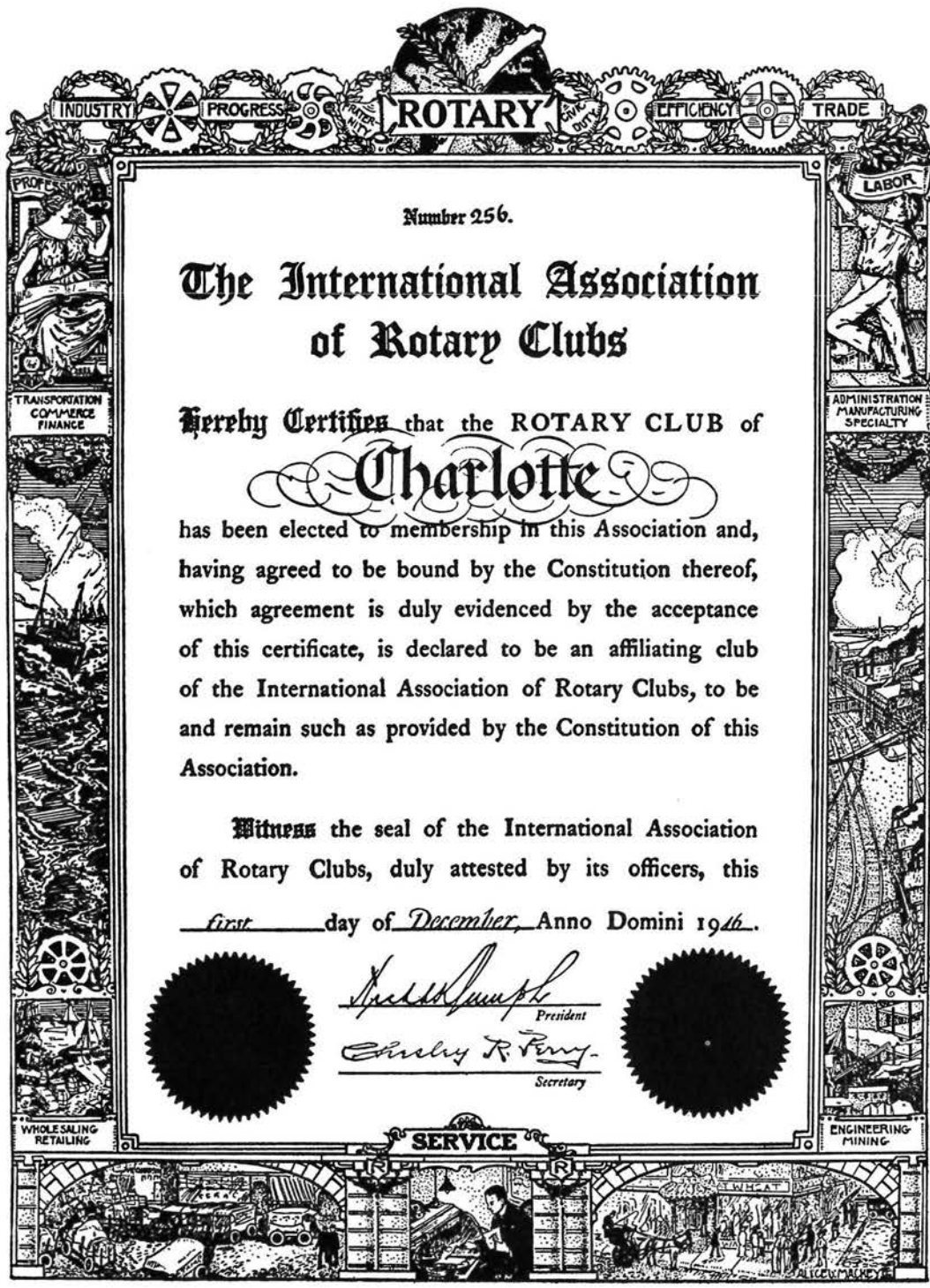
In mid July, six days of rain followed by a hurricane produced a flood on the Catawba River that washed away whole textile mills and interrupted the generation of electric power at several Duke Power dams;

It was in April, 1916, that *The Observer* was sold by American Trust Company's George Stephens and Word Wood to a Tennessee publisher named Curtis B. Johnson and a partner from Columbia, SC, Walter Sullivan. A few years later, illness would force Sullivan to retire, leaving Johnson to control the newspaper. When Curtis Johnson acquired *The Observer*, it had a circulation of just under 13,000 a day. When he died in 1950, it had a circulation of more than 135,000 a day — a 1,000 percent increase. It was Johnson who built *The Observer* into a big newspaper that sold more newspapers in the region than it did in

Charlotte itself, a phenomenon that began in 1916 and still prevails today.

One of the most important events of 1916 occurred on October 24, in the closing days of Woodrow Wilson's hard-fought campaign for reelection against Republican Charles Evans Hughes. On the same day that Henry Ford pledged to pay women workers the same salary as men, on the day that the French at last smashed German lines at Verdun and began to silence the invaders' 14-inch guns, on the day after Charlotteans, at the bidding of the Chamber of Commerce, had mailed 15,000 post cards advertising the city to friends all across the country, a group of 47 men, all from different businesses and professions, gathered for a banquet at the Selwyn Hotel and chartered the Charlotte Rotary Club, an organization whose formation had been under discussion for several months. Among the 47 were some of Charlotte's most prominent business and professional men: architect Charles C. Hook, banker H. M. Victor, real estate developer V. J. Guthery, warehouseman Clarence O. Kuester, *Observer* president Walter B. Sullivan, *Charlotte News* publisher W. Carey Dowd, office supplier R. M. Pound, printing executive Banks R. Cates, stockbroker Floyd M. Simmons, mortgage banker M. B. Speir, Duke Power executive Z. V. Taylor, and ex-mayor Charles A. Bland.

In the spirit of the times, it was a selfless organization dedicated to the betterment of the community and service to humanity. The example it set was to be followed again and again over the next 50 years as, one by one, other civic clubs — the Lions, Civitans, Kiwanis, and Optimists, were founded upon similar principles.



Number 256.

The International Association of Rotary Clubs

Hereby Certifies that the ROTARY CLUB of

Charlotte

has been elected to membership in this Association and, having agreed to be bound by the Constitution thereof, which agreement is duly evidenced by the acceptance of this certificate, is declared to be an affiliating club of the International Association of Rotary Clubs, to be and remain such as provided by the Constitution of this Association.

Witness the seal of the International Association of Rotary Clubs, duly attested by its officers, this

first day of December, Anno Domini 1946.



Arthur H. Smith
President

Charles R. Perry
Secretary



SERVICE