

Rotary Looks Over 50 Years of A

Club Offers Series of Contrasts

Recently 244 members of the Topeka Rotary International celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of the club. Fifty years is a considerable span as men count time. And today, at the conclusion of that period, Rotary presents an interesting, a challenging, series of combinations and contrasts.

The old combines with the new, the large with the small, and the simple with the complex. Recorded clearly on one side of the ledger is an organization of influence and prestige, and on the other is written the history of a movement seeking no credit, content with accomplishment.

To most Rotarians it is well known that the classification-club idea did not originate with Rotary. Benjamin Franklin founded a club which he called the "Junto" club which was an organization designed for the purpose of mutual improvement and fellowship. This organization lasted for almost 40 years.

And even before Franklin's time, in the days of Cicero and in Socrates' time, clubs composed of men who ate together and carried on discussions were in existence.

The early 1600's, for example, saw the formation of "Rota," a club of men who held fellowship dinner meetings, and who, as its name implies, took turns at entertaining the group.

The mid-18th century saw the organization of a club named "Rotation," so called for the same reason.

Similarities between the Rotary Clubs of today and their precursors are not confined alone to a likeness in name. A parallel between the weekly meeting schedule of the "Rota Club" and the required weekly meeting of the Rotary Club is easily drawn, just as a forerunner of the present-day Rotary classification system may be seen in the membership requirement of the "Two-Penny Club" of the early 1700's, that "none shall be admitted that is of the same trade as any member of it."

To Rotary belongs the distinction of establishing as a fundamental characteristic of the movement the spirit of altruism, of service to mankind.

The growth of Rotary International has been remarkable. There are now 8,450 clubs. The first Rotary Club was founded on February 23, 1905, in Chicago and it has spread to 89 countries throughout the world. Last year alone



WEST TOPEKA LEADERS—Officers of West Topeka Rotary Club for 1954-55 are (seated, left to right) Raymond Long, president, and Floyd Brown, secretary. Standing are Bob Remley, treasurer, and Dr. Don Williams, vice president. The club, organized in 1950, has 48 members now.

service thru Rotary. Romance, Germanic, and Oriental tongues—totaling some 30 different languages—are used by Rotarians in conducting their meetings, and in their daily lifework. And in at least 15 different scripts and alphabets, the story of Rotary takes written form.

In these terms, Rotary is a large organization, impressive in size. Yet in other terms, it

And now a look at the structure of Rotary. Complex though its component parts may be, its administration setup is amazingly simple. The more than 8,400 individual Rotary Clubs are Rotary International. This simple, direct relationship of the clubs, on one hand, and the world-wide organization, on the other hand, makes for the simplicity of the Rotary administrative setup.

from one community to another, from country to country, and to all the continents.

Just as the organization of new clubs has always been a personal relationship, so is the ever-all administration of all of the clubs. In 1910 the first 16 independent Rotary Clubs met and founded an association on the basis of repre-

sentative club paid duly selected representatives to give expression to the organization, and elect with the duties of the mandates of

The board of controls the affairs of the club the convention. serve for two-years this year they c different countr

Rotarians ever semiannual payment International. Th of the funds by: the world-wide (the organization handle these tr volution 43 differ bank accounts in 40 different co evidence that R International.

After Rotary the clubs were d tricts, and today districts throuout supervising office trict is elected b within the district as the District district conventio to the Internation

Throuout all of i and inherent in tion, Rotary I grounded on the autonomy and ind participation. All maintain the san characteristics, b widely as their nu pressions they gi the object of Ro Rotary's effect strength are the

Georgia Clu Clock Back I

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