



ROTARY Club of Wichita 100 YEARS



In the summer of 1911, thirty-one year old Wichitan Harry Stanley travelled to Chicago to attend an insurance convention and learned of a new kind of club for businessmen called "Rotary." Harry met the club's legendary founder, Paul Harris, and returned to Wichita eager to start such a club here.

Wichita was a prairie town full of upstart businessmen and entrepreneurs seeking legitimacy from a great metropolis like Chicago. Harry Stanley set about galvanizing support from friends and peers and in about a month's time, over seventy of them had signed on to the new club and its primary goal:

"...that the important men of all nations should know about Wichita Kansas, USA and the products we raise, mill, and manufacture."

In November 1911, the Rotary Club of Wichita was admitted into the International Association of Rotary Clubs as the 30th Club in the world. Today, our club is proud to be counted among the largest in the world.

From the start, the Wichita Rotarians were eager to become a force for community betterment. Its members have contributed their resources and talents to support improvement initiatives, such as...

Establishing the Quivira Council of the Boy Scouts of America in Wichita – Instituting the change to a council-manager form of city governance - Leading the first Community Chest campaign that later became the United Way – Boosting the image of Wichita as the Air Capitol of the World - Inaugurating a "City Beautiful" campaign – sponsoring Liberty Loan Drives during the first World War - Purchasing milk bottles to support 450 undernourished school children during the Great Depression – Winning passage of the Kansas Crippled Children Act of 1932 – Fundraising for the Community War Chest campaign during WWII - Lobbying for a bond issue to construct the Century II convention center and a new central library – Establishing the Wichita Rotary Charitable Fund in 1983 – And fighting illiteracy by inspiring children to be lifelong readers.

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Rotary Club of Wichita, this Rotary Time Tower Sculpture and Centennial Plaza is dedicated to the people of Wichita who place serving others above their own self-interests.

The Rotary Time Tower sculpture, designed by Wichita artist Todd Whipple, pays tribute to the continuing advancement of our fine community by tolling the quarter-hour from dawn to dusk.

These improvements were made possible by a unique partnership between the Wichita Rotary Charitable Fund, Sedgwick County, and the City of Wichita.

