

**HONORING OUR PAST:
The Presidents of the
Rotary Club of China Lake**

The History of the Rotary Club of China Lake

How I See It

The inspiration for this project comes from the minutes and writings of our club's past Secretaries and Spoke Editors. They were truly gifted in penmanship, technique, wittiness, and probably most importantly, they all seemed to me, to be a little bit crazy...you'll have to read it to believe it! I have not made anything up. Everything you find between the covers is in their own words.

Every club President should make this required reading. I say this because our club has started some great traditions that have gone by the way side. And many times there is no indication why they have disappeared from one President and their Board of Directors to another. I think it's sad when a tradition is lost for no apparent reason, because as I see it, they were in simple terms, wonderful!

Darrell

Preface

In the summer of 1996, at the very beginning of my year as District Governor, a long time friend and member of our club, Past District Governor Everett A. Long passed away. In the simplest of terms, everyone I ever met thought Ev was just the best! Wherever I traveled in the District, to Rotary Zone events or District Conferences, someone would ask me, “How’s Ev doing?” He was truly loved in Rotary circles.

At the club level, Ev was very active. He was our Treasurer for ten years, Secretary for nineteen years, and club President during Rotary year 1969 – 1970. As Club Secretary from 1979 through 1994 he was in charge of our club historical information (Spokes, minutes, Rotary forms, Semi-annual reports, etc.). Ev’s Rotary office and garage on South Downs Street were both packed with Rotary files, trinkets, folders, books, and just plain “good stuff”.

Ev’s son Corky (Ev Jr.) not knowing who else to call, contacted me and asked if I would come over and help him get rid of what Corky said was junk. I’ve been to Ev’s many times, so knew first hand that what Corky thought was junk was really a precious treasure chest. He and the Club Secretaries that came before him had been serious about keeping our Club’s records and memorabilia. Over the years these guys had been able to fill up two standing metal wall lockers, a couple of file cabinets, plus box upon box full of everything from rotary pins to old newspaper articles about our club.

As the new overseer of this horde of information, I thought that it would be most appropriate if I could historically as possible write a book for our future and present members. Considering how much information there is to draw from, I couldn’t possibly tell the entire story. But I have given it my best try.

Enjoy!

Darrell

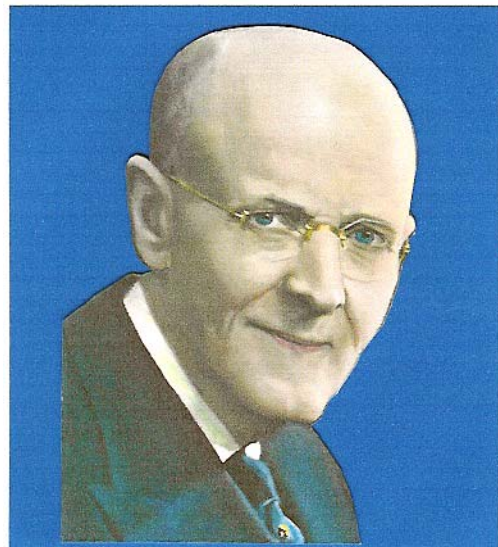
President 1990-91

District Governor 1996-97

Since the beginning of civilization, there has been a surplus of sayers of things. If there is any one particular in which I would have Rotary distinguished from other organizations, it is in the quality of character which results in the doing of things.

Paul Harris

Message to 1921 RI Convention
Edinburgh, Scotland



PAUL PERCY HARRIS
(1868-1947)

About the Founder of Rotary

Paul Percy Harris was born on 19 April 1868 in Racine, Wisconsin. At the age of three, Paul and his brother Cecil, age five, went to live with their paternal grandparents in Wallingford, Vermont. There, as he recalled in his autobiography, *My Road to Rotary*, “I was to have the benefit of a well regulated permanent home where nothing was ever either over or underdone; where the ideals were of the highest and education the supreme objective.”

That quest for an education took Paul as a young man to both the University of Vermont and Princeton University before he graduated with a law degree from the University of Iowa in 1891. Upon graduation, Paul decided he would take five years to see the world before settling into his new profession.

And see the world he did. During his “five years of folly,” as he described it, Paul traveled extensively throughout the United States and Europe. He supported himself with a wide variety of jobs, working as a newspaper reporter, teacher in a business college, fruit picker, cowboy, desk clerk, traveling salesman and deckhand on a cattle boat bound for England.

In 1896, his vagabonding done, he settled in Chicago and began to practice law. It was there that Paul developed his idea for a businessmen’s club, and on 23 February 1905, met with three friends – Silvester Schiele, Hiram Shorey, and Gustavus Loehr – to form the first Rotary club.

Paul died at Comely Bank on 27 January 1947 and was buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in nearby Blue Island, close to the grave of his longtime friend Silvester Schiele. Jean eventually returned to her native Scotland where she died in 1963.

Paul’s conception of Rotary: “Rotary was born of the spirit of tolerance, goodwill and service, all qualities which characterized New England folks of my boyhood days, and I have tried to interpret, so far as lies within me, that faith to other men.”

So How Small Was Ridgecrest?

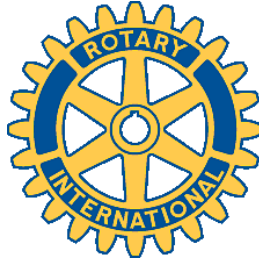


Consider the following note from an early SPOKE:

Father Bruce's lost wallet was found and delivered to him at the table by the waitress, from goodness knows where. The leg on the journey of the wallet back to its owner occasioned some unsolicited comments from members.

With the immaculate dignity and composure that characterizes his every gesture, Father Bruce rose and tossed a bit of water around the waitress and there upon a few unregenerate heads, then defended himself.

"I left my wallet on the mantle piece at home," he said. "My wife handed it to a neighbor who was on his way into town to leave it off at the meeting place for me. This neighbor, a gas saver, hitched a ride with the milkman. My wallet evidently slipped out of his pocket as he was getting out of the milk wagon and he went on without it. The milkman found my wallet and returned it to my neighbor's wife, who gave it to another neighbor's wife, who was on her way into town to return it to the first neighbor. Somehow my wallet wound up with a taxi driver who left it with a real estate agent who handed it to a trusted paperboy to deliver it to the management of the meeting place. How it ever got into the Men's Head I'll never know, but praise be to the Heavenly Hosts. I have it now and thanks further to the inherent honesty of good men. Now what is anybody going to make of that," Father Bruce demanded. (There was not a dry eye in the house).



CLUB HISTORY

There are probably a lot of ways to start writing about the history of our club. So I thought I'd take you back to pre-Rotary times as a starting point. So hang on, here we go!

- 1776 – Padre Francisco Garces crossed the Kern River.
- 1822 - Alta California belonged to Mexico.
- 1846 - Mt. Whitney was discovered to be the highest peak in the lower 48 states.
- 1850 - California became a state. Kern County was then a part of Mariposa Co.
- 1853 - Gold was discovered in Greenhorn
- 1859 - Indian Wars broke out in Owens Valley
- 1864 - William Brewer came through the Indian Wells Valley and is supposed to have said "A god- forsaken, cheerless place I have seldom seen, a spring of water and nothing else.
- 1908 - Borax and Potash discovered in Trona
- 1912 - The Crum family established a dairy where in IWV Water District Offices are now. Ridgecrest was called Crumsville.
- 1936 - The Royce family built the first "real" swamp cooler in Trona.

- 1941 - Post Office was established and Ridgecrest got its official name.
- 1951 - We were at war with Korea. Truman was in the White House.

Television was just coming to be. The first thing you need to know is that there wasn't much of it. Mostly, in the afternoons and evenings. The second thing you need to know is that it was black and white. And ladies, just think of it, No Remote Control!!!

Our view of the world around us would forever be shaped by the images on the television. For those of you too young to know, it was as revolutionary a change as the world before and after the Internet.

Silver, Trigger and Buttermilk. The horse of course. A giant wagon train rolling toward the Bonanza. The sitcom was born in the 50's. I Love Lucy made us laugh. Jackie Gleason and "The Honeymooners" made us want to take up golf. Harriett, Margaret, Donna, and June made us want to grab our pearls and clean something. I always knew what time it was - it was Howdy Doody Time. I watched Lassie and Walt Disney and dreamed of being a Mouseketeer. Dragnet, The Twilight Zone and every ones favorite superhero, Superman was dramatic. The Private Eyes were dreamy. Before Rather and Brokaw and Jennings, there was Murrow, Huntley and Brinkley in the infancy of television. Quiz Shows dominated the first half of the decade until scandal ended them.

When they talk about the Golden Age of Television, they're talking about Uncle Miltie Berle and Sid Ceasar and Red Skelton. The vaudevillians that seamlessly moved their acts into TV's Variety Shows.

The top hits of 1951 were "Unforgettable" by Nat King Cole and "Come On A My House " by Rosemary Clooney. It's no wonder a handful of men in the Indian Wells and Searles Valleys decided to start a Rotary Club.

In the spring of 1951 our small community didn't yet have its single flashing, stop and go red light at the corner of Ridgecrest Boulevard and China Lake Boulevard ("The Miracle Mile"). Most of the civilians in the area lived aboard the Naval Station (NOTS). I'd probably be stretching the truth here a little, but I'd guess there would probably have been enough

rooms in the Carriage Inn and Heritage Inn to bed all of the folks residing in Ridgecrest in 1951. On the other hand, the Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake was a young and energetic Naval Station.

SPRING of 1951

In those early years, Rotary International raised some questions about the advisability of chartering a Club in an area dominated by a single large organization, the U.S. Navy. But by showing a good spread of business and professions in Trona and on the Naval Station this objection was soon overcome.

Getting the club Chartered with 20 members was going to be a difficult job. As you may or may not know, in 1905 our founder Paul Harris rotated his meeting places. I think he would have been proud of our men's efforts, long hours and the variety of places they met to get the club off the ground. They met at Lieutenant Commander Jack Goddard's home on base, Forrest Branch's and Earl Cain's home, the Village Cafe in Ridgecrest, Board Meeting Room at American Potash and Chemical Company in Trona, Trona Restaurant, Trona Cafe, Commissioned Officers Club and the Administration Building on base, etc.

One prospective member of our club far exceeded what was expected of him in helping charter our club. Similar to Paul Harris, if our club had a founding father, those honors should be accorded to Mr. Earl S. Cain, then Principal of the Burroughs Evening Adult School, whose dedication to Rotary went back to his father's membership.

Earl was aided in the effort by a representative group of men: LCdr. Jack Goddard, Aide to Commander NOTS; Dr. Fred Brown, Technical Director, NOTS; Dr. Emory Ellis, Head, Rockets and Explosives Department, NOTS; Mr. Forrest Branch, Assistant Manager of the American Potash and Chemical Company Plant at Trona; Cmdr. Sam Wilson, Public Works Officer, NOTS; and Leo Briggs, Chemical Research Engineer and Head of the Trona Railroad.

Most actively aiding from District 158 was Past District Governor Joe Sears of Santa Barbara who spent many hours telephoning, writing letters

and visiting China Lake. PDG Joe was the chairman of District 158's Extension Committee. In 1951 the district to the south of us was very interested in having a new club chartered in their group. For the same reason as it is today, since their District Governor has to drive through our territory to get to their clubs in Bishop and Mammoth Lakes, they felt very strongly that we should be in their district. Of course the district governors in District 158 thought just the opposite. And in the end PDG Joe Sears won out.

In 1951 our District was divided into five Zones. We were placed in Zone 5, which included the Rotary Clubs of Porterville, Delano, Taft, Wasco, Shafter, Bakersfield, and Oildale. It was Past District Governor Joe Sears' high interest, which placed us in District 158 as by far the eastern most clubs. It's interesting to note that even in 1951 there was no interest in being placed in a district with Bishop. The men seemed to think that their allegiance should be given to Bakersfield.

Finally, in June 1951, District Governor Warren E. Wilkinson of Dos Palos received a telegram from Rotary International:

**CONGRATULATIONS
CHINA LAKE – NO. 7834
ADMITTED – 27 JUNE 1951**

LCrd. J. L. Goddard received the following telegram at the NOTS Administration Building at 1:42 p.m., 27 June 1951 from Past District Governor Joe Sears of Santa Barbara, California.

CLASS OF SERVICE This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.	WESTERN INYOKERN UNION (08)=.. 1951 JUN 27 PM 3:21 W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT	SYMBOLS DL=Day Letter NL=Night Letter LT=Int'l Letter Telegram VLT=Int'l Victory Ltr.
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The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

LO46 PD=SANTABARBARA CALIF 27 142P=
 :LT COMDR L J GODDARD=
 ADMIN BLDG NOTS CHINALAKE CALIF=
 :CONGRATULATIONS CLUB ADMITTED TODAY PASS THE WORD=
 JOE SEARS=(

RECEIVED BY TELEPHONE
 3:30 PM
 J. L. Goddard 161470

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

I'm sure you can imagine the excitement that afternoon when LCdr. Goddard received and read the telegram from Joe Sears. I'm sure our future Charter President spent most of the afternoon telephoning all of the Club's prospective Charter members. I would have loved to be there to listen to the telephone call to Earl Cain.

The real work had just begun. I know from personally helping PDG Ev Long and David Fiddament with the Chartering of the Rotary Club of Inyokern that there is a lot of planning, letter writing, telephone calls, program printing, and arm-twisting to be done. Not to mention planning the dinner, festivities, and protocol of such an important Rotary event.

Although the China Lake Club was admitted on June 27, 1951, several months were to pass before the grand Charter Night event was to occur in October.

HEADLINES FROM TRONA, CALIFORNIA



Joe Sears of Santa Barbara (left) presents president Jack Goddard, Lt. Comdr., USN, NOTS, with the charter for the new China Lake Rotary Club during impressive Charter Night program, held in the Trona Recreation Center Ballroom Tuesday evening. Seated next to Commander Goddard is Mrs. Warren Wilkinson, wife of past governor of Rotary District 158.

TRONA ARGONAUT

(Friday October 5, 1951 Article)

One hundred and nine members and guests filled the spacious Community Hall ballroom in Trona to witness a most impressive ceremony, establishing the Rotary Club of China Lake under the sponsorship of the Rotary Club of Oildale. Members and ladies from the Bakersfield Clubs chartered two buses to make the trip to the desert.

The evening was highlighted by an address by Dr. G. E. Norwood, Past District Governor (from either of Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, or San Marino depending on which of the papers you read). He delivered the address of the evening in which he outlined the wide scope of Rotary International and how it can be of benefit both to the individual communities and the world as a whole. Dr. Norwood's stirring talk on the international work of Rotary Clubs emphasized the effect such organizations have in repelling the threat of Communism and furthering the democratic ways of life.

CHARTER NIGHT

October 2, 1951
(Author Unknown)

The Rotary Club of Oildale offered to be our sponsor and great plans were made for Charter Night. Even finding a hall for a large group to have dinner was not easy in 1951. The Recreation Hall at Trona was reserved, and 109 Rotarians and their ladies gathered on Tuesday, October 2, 1951 for a gala evening. Buses arrived from the Bakersfield and Oildale area and members from all the Clubs in Zone 5, plus Dos Palos and Santa Barbara were present.

The Master of Ceremonies on Charter Night was Past District Governor Warren Wilkinson. Highlighting the program, PDG Joe Sears of Santa Barbara presented the Charter to LCdr. J. "Jack" Goddard. Gifts of Rotary Clubs needs including a U.S. flag and stand, Bell and Mallet, Podium, Secretary's kit, Badges, Object of Rotary and a fine box camera from Zone 5 Clubs.

Charter Night Program at Trona Recreation Center
CHINA LAKE ROTARY LAUNCHED
TUESDAY

(News Article – Possibly from the NOTS Rocketeer)

More than 100 Rotarians, their ladies, and friends from surrounding communities gathered in Trona Recreation Center Ballroom Tuesday evening for an impressive charter night program, which officially launched China Lake Rotary Club, No. 7834.

The meeting opened with the singing of America and then the invocation by Rev. Elmer Windisch, president of the Wasco Rotary Club. During the dinner distinguished guests were introduced.

WELCOME

Captain C. R. Criddle, U.S.N. acting commander, NOTS, offered the “Welcome of Rotary to China Lake” and the response was made by Harold Pomeroy, president of the Bakersfield Rotary Club.

Highlighting the program Joe Sears of Santa Barbara presented the new charter to LCdr. Jack Goddard, U.S.N., NOTS, of China Lake, president of the new club. In receiving the all-important document, Commander Goddard explained “We are all looking forward to having this opportunity for an adventure in service.”

“God willing,” Commander Goddard continued, “by this Rotary Club coming to this community we will make it a better place in which to live.”

RESPONSIBILITY

The Rotary charge to members of the new club was given by Warren E. Wilkinson, Past District Governor of Rotary District 158, who was master of ceremonies for the evening. Ed Meyer, President of the sponsoring Oildale Rotary, made presentation of gifts to the new club.

Dr. G. E. Norwood, past district governor of San Marino delivered the address of the evening in which he outlined the wide scope of Rotary International and how it can be of benefit both to individual communities and the world as a whole.

Forrest E. Branch, assistant Trona manager, is vice president of the new club and he and Dr. Leo Briggs of Trona are on the club board of directors. Other Charter members of the China Lake club from Trona are Dr. D. H. Bayne, J. L. Robinson and Al Warner.

Commander Goddard, when asked for a statement after the meeting, said, "I would like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to the person who started the idea of having a Rotary Club in this area, Mr. Earl Cain, principal of Burroughs Evening School."

"Now that this club has been born," the club president continued, "I hope that our future actions will give life, and meaning, to the many words about the idea and ideals of Rotary which have been spoken here tonight."

CHARTER NIGHT RESPONSE

From Harold Pomeroy, President, Rotary Club of Bakersfield

Our wives and we Rotarians are certainly pleased to take a few hours out of our busy lives to come here tonight to help welcome Rotary into a new community. Something that will bring new thoughts and new ideals, ideals to serve a community and to make it a better place to live.

A Rotary Club is not just another luncheon club. Rotary is a Service Club. Its ideals are not selfish ones. It goes far beyond the individual, the community, the State, and the Nation. Rotary is international in scope.

Rotary is well established in 83 countries around the globe, with some 350,000 individuals giving of their time, energy and finances to help in making this old world of ours a better place in which to live. "We Strive For Service" that our children and grandchildren may have some of the things that have been so precious to all of us. "We strive for a Freedom", one that will see the end of all wars and culminate in a world of peace.

Rotary is carrying on, in this international field through the Rotary Foundation. That of taking top ranking students from one country to study in another, learning the ways, modes of living, country problems, etc. These students can well be called our ambassadors of goodwill who knows but in a short time they will be taking the places of Churchill, Atlee, De Gasperi or maybe President Truman. They certainly will be a lot better qualified to sit around a table to solve world problems by having a living knowledge of that particular country and its problems. This year there are 33 students from different countries studying in 20 other countries. Since 1947, there have been awarded 284 of these fellowships. Next year Rotary expects to add 100 more.

Rotary through its Community Service, will find many avenues through which to serve. A survey of the community will determine the needs, some of which might be, Properly supervised athletics for the youngsters, Community improvements and beautification, Day Nurseries and Kindergartens, Health Clinics, sponsoring Boy Scout activities, etc. Rotary through its Vocational Service can provide better relationships in business and can aid in improving the general standards of practice in their respective vocations, promote better buyer-seller relationships.

Now just a word to these new Rotarians. Rotary's motto is "Service Above Self" or "He Profits Most Who Serves Best" You can only get out of Rotary what you are willing to put in. You, as members of the newest club in this District # 158 have a challenge before you. We who have come here tonight from other clubs give you our backing to meet this challenge and from this gathering we pray will come the determination of the Rotary Club of China Lake to do their part in making this a "Better World in which to Live."

Charter night was a superlative send off and the new Club was exceptionally grateful to all the Rotarians from over the mountain who gave real service to us.

As with most new clubs, particularly in remote areas, the first two or three years are likely to show up problems. China Lake was no exception. Due to the high turnover of civilian, military and company personnel, by

July 1953, only two years after inception, only 8 charter members remained and the active membership totaled 22.

During 1951-1952 the Club met at the only restaurant, which would serve lunch, a nightclub and card-place named "The Village." Known as sawdust joint until Sammy Lissner, the Proprietor bought a carpet as an up trend retrenchment following an abortive raid. The food was poor, the atmosphere heavy in smoke, and the booze flowed freely, but the fellowship was great! Quite frequently, approximately two or three times a week, strippers appeared to entertain the sailors and regular customers.

In the very beginning we would not have been able to charter our club without the Naval Officers aboard the Naval Ordnance Test Station:

Captain C. R. Criddle, NOTS CO
Captain Warren L. Wolf, Station Chaplain
Cdr. Sam Wilson, NOTS Public Works Officer
Cdr. Arthur Jacobson, Executive Officer, Naval Air Facility
LCdr L. J. "Jack" Goddard, Administrative Aid to the Commander

Over the past 50 years, Military Members of our Club have included: a Rear Admiral (Rowland Freeman III), 16 Captains, 2 Colonels, a Lieutenant Colonel, 6 Commanders (Herb Brickson was President and later a District Governor in Louisiana), 4 Lieutenant Colonels, 5 Lieutenant Commanders, 3 Lieutenants, 3 Lieutenant JG's and a Squadron Leader from England. Club Presidents that have come from this group, except for active duty Navy Commander Herb Brickson and Lieutenant Commander Jack Goddard have all been retired military. By 2004 a retired Lieutenant Colonel, a Colonel, two retired Navy Captains: Ed Jayne and Ken Kelley, and three retired Navy Commanders: Steve Goad, Larry Smith and Bud Biery had become Club President.

Before we go too much further, I think it's appropriate to mention a very important person in the making of the club's history, Ms. Vivian Blountinghouse. Vivian typically attended every Rotary Luncheon at the Hideaway Restaurant. Without her dedication as a writer/employee of the Daily Independent, many of the articles and photos in our archives would

not be possible, for she was instrumental in unknowingly writing much of our club's history.

The major topics during the first ten years according to the Club Minutes appear to be: Ladies Night; figuring out how to repair Helmers Swimming Pool; should we or should we not buy the Desert Empire Fair Parade Trophies; sponsoring Boy Scout Troops and helping the boys at the Blue Jeans Ranch; sponsoring Little League, Minor League and Major League Baseball Teams; deciding what we should do about all the re-districting letters from our governors; finding a decent place for lunch meetings; worry about the growth of Ridgecrest, finding the best ways for communications between NOTS and Ridgecrest to prosper; investigating proposed members; trying to find suitable Classifications for members. (Ninety percent of our members classifications started with the words "Government Defense" and then their Occupation); forming committees for committee stake; improving attendance - Seems like only the Presidents wanted to improve attendance, because the members sure didn't; and starting new Rotary Clubs within 120 miles of us so we would have a place to make up.

For the next 35 years, especially the first 10 or so years, the most important agenda item and Board decision reads like a newspaper article: who, what, where, why, when. You guessed it, Ladies Night! This is probably the only time, once a year that the female gender is ever mentioned until the great Supreme Court ruling of 7 to 0 in 1986 when an article from the Washington Associated Press announced, "Rotary may be forced to admit women."

The very first "Ladies Night" was held, where else, the Trona Recreation Hall. Dinner cost \$1.50 per plate, the ladies all got a corsage, the Edward's Air Force Base Como provided the dancing music and as requested by President Jack there were no addresses, speeches or place cards permitted. (By the way, in the early days, every member was charged whether or not they attended a club function. Of course if you were a bachelor, you got off a little cheaper.

Rotary Club of China Lake

CHARTER MEMBERS

LCdr. L. J. (Jack) GODDARD

President

Classification: Public Defense – Sea
Administrative Aide to the Commander
NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. F. E. (Forrest) BRANCH

Charter Member

Vice President

Classification: Potash Producing
Assistant Manager
American Potash and Chemical Co.
Trona, California

Dr. E. L. (Emory) ELLIS

Charter Member

Secretary-Treasure

Classification: Rocket Manufacturing
Head, Rocket Ordnance
NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. E. S. (Earl) CAIN

Charter Member

Director

Classification: Principal Adult Education
Kern County Union High School District
Ridgecrest, California

Dr. F. W. (Fred) BROWN

Charter Member

Director

Classification: Government Research
Associate Director Research and Development
NOTS China Lake, California

Dr. L. W. (Leo) BRIGGS

Charter Member

Director

Classification: Chemical Research Engineer

American Potash and Chemical Co.

Trona, California

Chaplain W. L. (Warren) WOLF

Charter Member

Honorary Member

Classification: Christianity, Protestantism

NOTS Chaplain

NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. K. H. (Ken) ROBINSON

Charter Member

Classification: Rocket Manufacturing (Additional Active)

Associate Head Ordnance Processing

NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. J. O. (John) RICHMOND

Charter Member

Classification: Municipal Government Administration

Community Manager

NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. H. R. (Rich) RICHARSON

Charter Member

Classification: Ordnance Consulting Engineer

Design and Consultant Production

NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. J. L. (Jeffery) ROBINSON

Charter Member

Classification: Railroad Transportation

President, Trona Railroad

Trona, California

Mr. A. (Al) WARNER

Charter Member

Classification: Railroad Transportation (Additional Active)

Assistant General Manager

Trona, California

Cdr. S. K. (Sam) WILSON

Charter Member

Director

Classification: Municipal Construction

Charge of Construction

NOTS China Lake, California

Dr. D. H. (Don) BAYNE, DDS

Charter Member

Classification: Oral Surgery

Dental Surgery

Trona, California

Cdr. T. J. (Tom) DOYLE

Charter Member

Sergeant-at-Arms

Classification: Public Works

Public Works Manager

NOTS China Lake, California

Dr. E. E. (Earl) KARNER, DDS

Charter Member

Classification: Dentistry

Civilian Dentist

NOTS China Lake, California

Cdr. A. B. (Art) BENNETT

Charter Member

Classification: Public Safety

Security Officer

NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. M. C. (Maurice) LIPP

Charter Member

Classification: Community Planning Engineer
Head Planning Division
NOTS China Lake, California

Mr. E. (Earl) MURRAY

Charter Member

Classification: Education, High School Superintendent
China Lake School District
NOTS China Lake, California

Dr. T. H. (Tom) DRUMMOND

Charter Member

Classification: Hospital Surgeon
Ridgecrest Hospital
Ridgecrest, California

Cdr. A. L. (Art) JACOBSON

Charter Member

Classification: Public Defense – Air
Executive Officer
Naval Air Facility
China Lake, California

Several rough drafts (by Past President Ken Robinson) of this document are found in our club files. The final version was printed and included in the club's "25th Anniversary Program."



THE FIRST QUARTER CENTURY

June 27, 1951 - 1976

Twenty-five years ago the Rotary Club of China Lake, with 20 charter members from the communities of China Lake, Ridgecrest and Trona, was accepted by Rotary International on 27 June 1951, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Oildale, District 158, of which Warren Wilkinson was then District Governor. Over 100 Rotarians and their ladies gathered in the Community Recreation Hall in Trona on October 2, 1951, for the Charter Night presentation. The 20 Charter Members included six naval officers and five civilian engineers or scientists from NOTS, three Trona Railroad officials, two China Lake school administrators, two medical doctors, one dentist and one American Potash Company manager.

Through the years the club has been active in Community Service. A heliport was designed and built near the Ridgecrest Community Hospital to care for highway, mountain, and desert accidents. Eleven concrete rest benches were provided for the Ridgecrest business area. China Lake - Ridgecrest community relations were improved. Substantial dollar support was given to the Desert Community Orchestra, the Maturango Museum, and for the Desert Fair trophies. The club sponsored several Miss Ridgecrest candidates and a Rodeo Queen.

For youth in the area, two Boy Scout Troops were sponsored: a Blue Jeans Ranch Group and a troop for retarded boys. A cabin was funded for the Huntington Lake

Scout Camp. Annual contributions have been made to the American Field Service, the Arrowbear Music Camp, and the Russ Bjorklund Swim Meets. A Mathlete and a Business Proficiency Award are made each year. Two Rotary scholarships are given annually, the Edward Kraus Memorial and a Club Scholarship.

In International Service the Club has reached the 100% level in contributions to the Rotary Foundation nearly every year. We now stand at 2000% and have three Paul Harris Fellows. Two Rotary Fellowship Awards have been made: a graduate award in physics to Nicholas Bottka, and an undergraduate award in language to Melinda Marsh. Both studied in Germany. Each year we host and tour a group of international students organized by the Rotary Club of Pasadena, California.

For Club Service the fellowship has been outstanding. SPOKE, the Club bulletin, is lively and well done. Committees are active. District conventions are well attended. Make-ups are difficult; the nearest Club is 65 miles away. Club programs have been excellent with a very wide variation of subject matter. In Vocational Service we have toured members' plants, participated in career days, furnished job opportunities, and had an intense effect on local affairs, since most Club members are leaders in a wide variety of projects, activities, elected officers, and service jobs.

In summary, the past quarter century has been one of Club development and growth with many avenues of service begun, supported, and continued. We expect that the Rotary Club of China Lake will, in the next 25 years, continue to exemplify the high principles of Rotary's motto "Service Above Self"

The following summation of the first 50 years of club history was placed in the centerfold of the 50th Anniversary Celebration Program and was written by Past President and Past District Governor Darrell R. Johnson and Past President Steve Goad for the 107 attendees to read and enjoy.



Rotary Club of China Lake
THE FIRST HALF-CENTURY
June 27, 1951 - 2001

On June 27, 1951, the Rotary Club of China Lake was chartered with 20 members. The Rotary Club of Oildale (now Bakersfield North) was our sponsor. Over 100 Rotarians and guest gathered in the Trona Community Recreation Hall on the evening of October 2, 1951 for the Charter presentation by Past District Governor Joe Sears. The Charter Members included six Naval Officers, five civilian engineers and scientists from NOTS, three Trona railroad officials, two China Lake school administrators, two medical doctors, one dentist and a manager of American Potash and Chemical Company.

Since those early beginnings, Ridgecrest's population has grown from about 300 to well over 24,000. The club's meeting places has changed three times: from the Village Cafe to the Hideaway in 1954 and to Rossi's at the Heritage in 1987. In 1965 and 1991 membership grew to over 80 members. In 1988, Carol Beck, the first of 30 women joined the club. Mary Lattig became the club's first female President in 1995. Several members played key roles on the District staff; two stepped forward and became District Governor: Everett A. Long in 1977-78 and Darrell R. Johnson in 1996-97. Another member, Steven R. Goad fulfilled two years as Assistant District Governor, 1999-2001. In the fall of 1996 Ridgecrest hosted

it's first District Conference at the Kerr-McGee Center with over 450 Rotarians and guest attending. By 2001 the club was recognized with RI President and Governor Citations, Avenues of Service, Best Club and Super Club category awards.

Club Service

In Club Service the Desert SPOKE went electronic and won District awards for best bulletin, the club had a new web page and the Rotary Club of Inyokern was sponsored by us in 1991 which cut the hour long drive to Tehachapi for make ups down to a mere ten minutes. Club members continued to be active on the chamber of commerce, school district, city government, and local organizations. The Club's Foundation was finally established with over \$53,000 set aside for future scholarships and charitable events.

Community Service

In Community Service members were active building wheelchair ramps, constructing a bus stop wind shelter and emergency helicopter pad at the hospital, constructing a large sun shelter at Beverly Manor, installing smoke detectors for seniors, providing eleven concrete benches around Ridgecrest-China Lake area, adopting and removing litter on a one mile stretch of U.S. Highway 395, supporting under privileged children shopping sprees and haircuts at the opening of school, supporting crippled children, Desert Community Orchestra, Maturango Museum, Miss Ridgecrest Rodeo Queen candidates and regularly giving funds and support to schools, libraries and numeracy programs in the Indian Wells Valley.

International Service

In International Service, by it's 50th Anniversary members had given 181 Paul Harris Fellows as compared to only three in the first 25 years. Three members had become Major Donors, and twelve were Benefactors. Club members gave over \$18,000 to Rotary's PolioPlus effort to eradicate polio by 2005. Four non-Rotarians of Ridgecrest had been chosen for District Group Study Exchange

Teams and nine for Ambassadorial Scholarships. Club funds, Matching Grants and Discovery Grants were applied for and used to support several great international projects. The Rotary Clubs of China Lake, Inyokern and Bishop provided for over \$1,000,000 in medical equipment and supplies for Honduras.

Vocational Service

Vocational Service now awards a quarterly Distinguished Service Award to a non-Rotarian. The club sponsored a Business and Ethics Conference for high school students, held a District wide 4 Way Test contest, started and later helped provide an annual Job Shadow Program and supported the Navy Bluejacket of the Year Award. Approximately 45 members completed the Potential Rotary Leadership Seminars.

Youth Service

In Youth Service an annual Community Auction fundraiser permits the club to give in excess of \$5,000 a year in scholarships. Two Interact Clubs were chartered at Burroughs High School and Immanuel Christian School. Children's Christmas parties were held, the American Field Service, Bjorklund Swim Meet, Desert Empire Fair Parade, Children's Halloween Carnival, Arrowhead Music Camp, Blue Jeans Ranch and Inyokern Boy Scout Troops, and little league baseball teams were supported and/or sponsored. In 1998 the club instituted a STRIVE Scholarship for seniors showing the best grade point average improvement, a Mathlete and Business Proficiency Award was given annually, a Boy Scout cabin was constructed at Huntington Lake and up to four high school juniors are selected annually to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Award Camp.

In all Avenues of Service and endeavors, the first fifty years have been rewarding. The club has become a truly international Rotary Club. From the moment our Rotary bell was first struck by President Jack Goddard, our members and Past Presidents have continued to show great leadership in doing to work of Rotary. By 2001, China Lake was one of the top clubs in the District. This did not happen by accident, but because of Rotarians who believe in

themselves and the good they can do worldwide. As stated in the 1976 Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebration program, we expect the Rotary Club of China Lake will continue to exemplify the high principles of Rotary's mottos "Service Above Self" and "He Profits Most Who Serves Best". We expect those who follow in our footsteps to exceed what we have accomplished during the first fifty years because our humanitarian spirits cannot be broken if we are to make our community and world a peaceful and prosperous place to live and work.

EARLY MEMORANDUM

(Author Unknown)

6 July 1951

1. The Rotary Club of China Lake has finally been approved by Rotary International.
2. It is rapidly becoming one of the finest informal, friendly, and common meeting grounds for the naval officers, the civilian scientists, and the businessmen of this area.
3. The members are listed in the enclosure.
4. The club is governed and run by an elected Board of Directors.

Dr. Fred Brown

Mr. Forrest Branch (Trona)

Dr. Emory Ellis

Dr. Leo Briggs (Trona)

Cdr. Sam Wilson

Chaplain Warren Wolf

Cdr. Tom Doyle LCdr. Jack Goddard

5. The following endeavor (as expressed by Captain Criddle) will definitely be furthered by the Rotary Club of China Lake: "The integration of all phases of residence and association between the military and scientific personnel toward the continuance of professional and social relations is considered of extreme benefit to the Navy and especially to the furtherance of the mission of the station."

6. It is felt that this is the "No. 1" outstanding opportunity,

(a) For dignified effective Navy public relations,

(b) To increase trust and understanding between the military, scientific, civil service, and business people of our community,

(c) To open new and effective informal channels of communication, for instance this conversation occurred two meetings ago (Forrest Branch and Cdr. Wilson had a friendly argument about the pipe line of Trona and the Navy breaking it, etc., which was carried to a successful conclusion right on the spot),

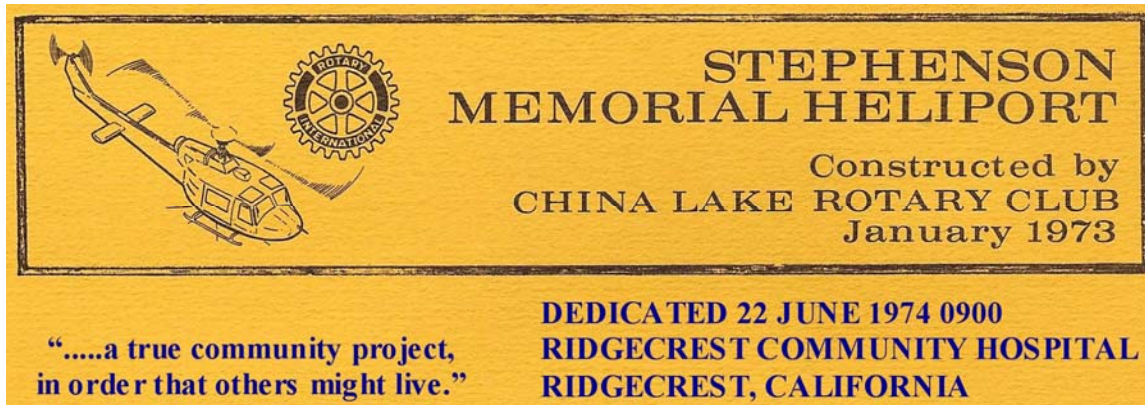
(d) To open a channel of communication which will connect us to over 7,000 other communities in the world on the friendliest basis,

(e) For the furtherance of the spirit of fellowship among the military, scientific, civil service, and business people of our community.

7. The Rotary Club here in China Lake is a great potential source of benefit to the Navy and to the mission of this particular station.

8. The expenses of Forrest Branch and Dr. Leo Briggs of the American Potash and Chemical Company being paid by the company.

9. It is strongly recommended that Navy Public Relations funds be used to send the members of the Board of Directors who are attached to the station to the Rotary Club assembly at Salinas on Thursday and Friday July 12 and 13, 1951.



STEPHENSON MEMORIAL HELIPORT

The heliport is the culmination of a community service project, which, after a good deal of discussion among the members of the Rotary Club of China Lake, was formally adopted by the Rotary Board of Directors during the year 1970-1971. The club President of the time, Les Garman and the club's Director for Community Relations, Alan Beggs, agreed to take on the task along with Rotarian Dan Butler in developing the project. During the next Rotary year, 1971 and 1972 under the Presidency of Tony Squillace and the year 1972-1973 under Rotary President Dick Lewis, Dan Butler took the lead to assure the many steps necessary to be taken in the advance planning, involvement of the community, and associated efforts leading to the construction of the heliport.

Building a heliport on Navy land, across from the Ridgecrest Community Hospital, required a tremendous amount of planning and approvals from many different departments in the Navy, FFA, and California Division of Aeronautics, City, etc.

Construction of the heliport pad was completed in March 1973. Rotary President Dick Lewis notified the Commander, NWC on 20 March 1973 that the Heliport was ready for service as a licensed (FAA) Heliport. A ceremony celebrating its completion was held on 15 March 1973 at the site.

The first use of the heliport occurred in March 1973 when Dr. Thomas D. Stephenson, a Navy Captain and former Naval Weapons Center, Dental Officer, was injured in a fall that occurred in Jawbone

Canyon area. Dr. Stephenson was rushed to the hospital by helicopter on the occasion. His injuries proved to be fatal, however, and he died two days later.

In honor of Dr. Stephenson, the Rotary Club took the lead to dedicate the heliport as the Dr. Thomas D. Stephenson Memorial Heliport. The dedication ceremony was held on 22 June 1974. Rotarian Cdr. Herb Brickson and members for the Stephenson family unveiled a memorial plaque, which was purchased by the Rotary Club.

On September 27, 1973 the agreement to be able to operate the approved Heliport was written by Cdr. Brickson (In-coming 1974-75 Rotary President) and signed by
RADM Paul E. Pugh, USN, Commander, NWC; Kenneth M. Smith, Mayor; City of Ridgecrest; Mr. Ray Van Aken, Chairman, Board of Directors, Ridgecrest Community Hospital; and Mr. Sandy Paulin, Operator of the Ridgecrest Ambulance Service.

The FFA approved the new site for Daytime use pending installation of lighting for full time use in March 1973.

DEDICATION PROGRAM

Introduction – Dan W. Butler, President, Rotary Club

Invocation – Fr. Bruce Spencer, St. Michaels Episcopal Church

Dedicatory Remarks:

RADM Paul E. Pugh, Commandeer NWC; Mr. Ray Van Aken, Chairman, Ridgecrest Hospital Board; Mr. Dan W. Butler, President, Rotary Club

Unveiling Ceremony – Cdr. Herb Brickson, NWC JAG and members of the Stephenson family

Benediction – Chaplain Aquinas Smith, All Faith Chapel

0945 – Viewing of Navy helicopter demonstration by the China Lake Mountain and Rescue Group

1030 – Navy Helicopter departs to return to NAF