

# The 100-Year History of the Rotary Club of Bethlehem

This history is based on the club's Stardust newsletters and weekly e-Bulletins.

The Stardust newsletter of the club began on September 12, 1921 as a by-weekly newsletter and continued later as a monthly newsletter until November 2010 when it was discontinued. Most of the copies of the Stardust between 1921 and 2010 are in the club's archives.

After November 2010, the monthly Newsletter was replaced by weekly e-Bulletins distributed electronically to the members. Copies of the weekly e-Bulletins after July 2012 are currently available on DVDs in the club's archives.

## **THE FIRST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS – 1916 to 1941**

The Rotary Club of Bethlehem was organized on April 13, 1916 in the old Eagle Hotel and was chartered as the 225<sup>th</sup> Club of Rotary International on June 1 of that same year. There were 29 charter members. Robert Sayre Taylor, Sr. was the first President.

### **The Context**

In 1916, Bethlehem was three separate boroughs-North, West, and South. The three boroughs would not be combined into the City of Bethlehem until the following year with Archibald Johnson as the first Mayor. A covered bridge still spanned the Lehigh River and the Hill-to-Hill Bridge would not be built until later. The first eight miles of a demonstration highway using local-produced cement connecting Bethlehem and Easton was completed and dedicated in 1916. It was named The William Penn Highway.

In 1916, the Bethlehem Steel Directors authorized a stock dividend of thirty percent per year and Charles Schwab passed the presidency of Bethlehem Steel to Eugene Grace. In that same year, St.Lukes inaugurated a social service department allowing the hospital to care for patients after they left the hospital. In November of that year, the first St.Lukes Charity Ball was held.

On the national scene, US troops under General Pershing invaded Mexico in retaliation for raids by Poncho Villa. Jeanette Rankin became the first female member of the House of Representatives and Margaret Anger was arrested for opening the first birth control clinic in Brooklyn. Overseas, British forces attack the German line at Somme where tanks were used for the first time. North Sea storms flooded the lowlands of the Netherlands drowning over 10,000 persons.

Very few people owned a car. The most popular car was the Model T Ford that cost about \$800 in 1916. That year, the Federal Government first authorized funds for the paving of roads. There was no commercial radio and newspapers were the principal source of local news. Movie films were all silent and Charlie Chaplin was at his peak. That year the Fox Trot was wildly popular in the dance halls.

## Club Service



The Eagle Hotel

The club held its luncheon meetings at the Eagle Hotel until it was torn down in 1920 to make way for the construction of the Hotel Bethlehem. The Rotary Club then met at the Kurtz Theater and Restaurant (now the Boyd Theater) until the Hotel Bethlehem was completed. Following a club visit to view the new hotel, the club transferred its meeting site to the Hotel Bethlehem on August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1922. It continued to hold its weekly meetings there until December 1996, nearly seventy-five years.

The Stardust newsletter of the club began on September 12, 1921, first as a by-weekly newsletter and continued later as a monthly newsletter for nearly 90 years until November 2010 when it was discontinued.

By 1921, the club membership had grown to 118 members with meeting attendance averaging more than 75%. Over the next 20 years, the annual membership averaged about 110 with the average attendance at the weekly meeting nearly 80 percent. Most members habitually attended other Rotary club meetings when out of town.

During this period, the club hosted two District Conferences - District 35 Conference in 1924 and District 50 Conference in 1938. Both conferences were held in Bethlehem. One feature of The 35<sup>th</sup> District Conference was the entertainment provided by the Bethlehem Steel Male Chorus. Walter Schempel was the conference chair for the 50<sup>th</sup> District Conference in 1938.

## Community Service

During the first twenty-five years, the club's service activities focused mostly on children in the community. Several meetings each year were devoted to the Children's Home whose purpose was the care of orphans and children of single mothers. The club annually ran a Christmas party with presents for the children and a picnic for the children in July at Central Park. The club members participated actively in these events. After 1930, the annual Children's Home picnic was taken over by other service organizations, but the club continued to support the Christmas party and the financial needs of the Children's Home.



The Children's Home

The focus of the Children's Home has evolved over the years and is now known as Kids Peace.

In 1930, the club raised \$1000 to support the construction of a building for a Boys Club and the continued support became a primary goal of the club in 1931. This continued support is manifest in the selection of the Boys and Girls Club of Bethlehem as the beneficiary of the \$72,500 raised by the club's Taste & Tunes event last October.

During these early years the club established a Cripple Children's fund administered in conjunction with St.Lukes Hospital. The money collected in the club's birthday fund was used to underwrite the cost of braces and supports for children crippled by Polio.

The club was also a strong supporter of the Boys Scouts and sponsored Scout Troop 10 in Bethlehem. Several club meetings were held at Camp Minsi during these early years.

### **Vocational Service**

Club meetings were devoted to vocational and other interests of the members of the club. One special meeting held each year was to host the Lehigh Football Team. This was normally held in December after the completion of the Lehigh-Lafayette football game. In 1929, the Stardust reported that Lehigh won the Lehigh-Lafayette game for the first time in ten years!



Scholl of Nursing Graduates  
1928

A second special meeting was held each year in October to entertain and congratulate the St.Lukes Nurses Graduating Class. They always gave flowers to all the graduating nurses.

The topics presented at the weekly meetings of the Bethlehem Rotary Club during these early years reflected the national and local interests of the members as they do today. Increasingly over the course of these first 25 years, the weekly meeting topics focused less on local interest and more on national and international interests.

In 1921, the Hill-to-Hill Bridge was completed and the three boros had been incorporated into the City of Bethlehem. A new high school had been built and there was a new municipal airport. During this period, the country saw the start and end of America involvement in the First World War, the efforts to establish a League of Nations, the prosperity of the 1920s, the stock market crash of 1929 leading to the great depression, the beginning of Social Security, the rise of Nazi Germany, and the beginning of America's engagement in the Second World War.

During this same period the local community saw the emergence of the automobile for personal travel, the beginning of commercial aviation, the evolution of movie theatres, and the use of personal telephones. These were all topics of weekly meetings.

Of course there were the usual visits by the District Governor, and the Classification talks.

## Notable Meeting Speakers and Topics

December 28, 1921 – Deputy Governor Hutt of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia spoke about the intended role of the Federal Reserve Bank. Congress in 1914 had established the FRB.

July 25, 1925 – Charles Brandon Booth spoke about Salvation Army's big brother and sister movement. Charles was the grandson of General Booth, the organizer and founder of the Salvation Army. His talk eventually led to the club's support for funding of the Boys Club.

February 16, 1927 – Archibald Johnson, Mayor of City of Bethlehem spoke about, "Bethlehem Parks".

May 21, 1928 – Robert E. Lewis spoke about, "The New York Stock Exchange". The great stock market crash occurred the following year.

September 14, 1929 – Amelia Earhart spoke about her own experiences as an aviator and the prospects of commercial air travel. She had only recently been the first woman to fly across the Atlantic in June 1928. She was only the second woman to speak at the Bethlehem Rotary Club.

The ABE airport opened in 1929 and is one of the very few in the nation that serves its community from its original location.

September 18, 1936 - Mr. Harry K. Sorenson, Regional Director of the Social Security Board spoke about the relationship of the Social Security Act that was approved by Congress in 1935.



Amelia Earhart

December 30, 1936 – Jonathan Jones of Bethlehem Steel spoke about the design and construction of the Golden Gate Bridge, which did not open until five months later in May 1937.

July 8, 1937 – Airport Day – Meeting at the Allentown-Bethlehem airport with free plane rides for some of the members on the two-engine "Mainliner" and to tour the new Trans Atlantic Clipper IV with a cruising speed of 165 MPH. Scheduled airline flights began on September 16, 1935. The airport hangar served as the passenger terminal; the first terminal building at the airport was built in 1938 as a Works Projects Administration (WPA) project.

July 22, 1941 – Dr. Neil Carothers of Lehigh University spoke on "National Defense – Selective Service in Pennsylvania". Congress had passed the Selective Service Act of 1940 in September.

August 27, 1941 – Capt. Melvin V. Mundy, Chief Officer of the S.S. Robin Moor spoke about the sinking of the S.S. Robin Moor by German U-Boats in In May 1941.

## **THE SECOND TWENTY-FIVE YEARS – 1941 to 1966**

The Bethlehem Rotary Club celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding on April 16, 1941. The anniversary was celebrated at a regular weekly meeting of the club at the Hotel Bethlehem.

### **The Context**

At the time of our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the war in Europe dominated the news – with Germany's incursions into the Baltic States, and the Soviet Union. England was suffering from German bombing attacks. France, Poland, Austria and the low-countries had already been occupied by Germany and the Germans were at the gates of Moscow. On the other side of the world, Japan had conquered Korea and had made major incursions into China. In 1941, Japan invaded Indo China and captured Hong Kong.

In January 1941, Franklin Roosevelt had been sworn in as President for his third term. The country was engaged in preparing for war and assisting England and the Soviet Union in their efforts. Earlier in the year the USO had been created, the first Jeep was produced, and Lend lease had been approved by Congress. Bethlehem Steel was heavily engaged in support of the war effort in Europe and in building up our own defenses.

Almost every household had a radio and many had an automobile. The average cost of an automobile was about \$600 and gasoline was ten cents a gallon. The radio had become an important source of news and entertainment by 1941. The newspaper was no longer the sole source of daily news. The automobile had not yet replaced the trolley as a primary source of local transportation.

Movies were still a popular form of entertainment, but now they were in both sound and color. There was no TV. Benny Goodman and Glen Miller led the era of Swing and the Jitterbug was a popular dance at that time.

### **Club Service**

During these 25 years, the average attendance had increased to 120, with almost no change in the average percent attendance. For most of this period there was continued emphasis on member attendance with competitions between the Bethlehem, Allentown, Easton and Reading Clubs based on percent attendance. The Club's average percent attendance exceeded 89 percent in most of these years.

In 1941 there were 15 club service committees, 5 community service committee, two international service committees and two youth services committees. During the WWII years there was also a War Services Committee. Every club member was on at least one committee.

Our club hosted the District 743 Conference in 1947 held in Bethlehem and chaired by District Governor Walter Schrepel. The conference included tours of Bethlehem Steel and golf at Saucon Valley Country Club. The club also hosted the 73 District Conference in 1966 in Atlantic City under the direction of District Governor, Tip Mowrer, Sr..

## Community Services

During this period, the club's service activities continued to focus primarily on children in the community and youth activities. There was continued support for crippled children, but after the war support for crippled children was taken over by government programs. The Birthday Fund was no longer devoted solely on crippled children, but to other community needs as determined by a Community Projects Advisory committee.

More of the community service funds were devoted to camperships and equipment for the YMCA, the YWCA, the boy scouts and girl scouts and the boys and girls clubs. The club provided funds toward the establishment of a new Girl Scout camp in the Bingen area. One new initiative was the formation of a Rotary Leadership Camp, later to become Camp Neidig in 1962. The club sent several youths to the camp each year. The club continued to participate actively in the annual Christmas party at the Children's Home (now Wiley House) but after 1959 only funds were provided for presents.



Boy Scouts at Camp

## Vocational Service

The annual meeting with the Lehigh Football Team was discontinued during the war years and never reinstated. This was replaced in 1946 with an annual Ladies Night. However, the club's annual meeting in October with the St. Lukes Nurses Graduating Class continued throughout the entire period. In 1958 the club instituted an annual Stag Night held at the Bethlehem Club. Of course, there were the usual visits by the District Governor, and the Classification talks

Vocational meeting topics continued to reflect the interest of the members of the club. During the war years the focus was on the war effort and on managing world peace. After the war interest in international topics increased significantly with the advent of the atomic bomb and the cold war. There was a strong interest in other countries and establishing better international relations. The post war changes in the local community were also favorite topics. Examples included the new Liberty High School, the Tocks Island dam controversy, the building of the Francis E. Walter dam, and the new strong Mayor form of city government.

It was a period of general prosperity in the US due in part to the GI bill and to the economic advantages enjoyed by the US immediately following the war. It was also a period of technological advances with the invention of the transistor and the development of television and computers, the transition from propeller driven to jet airplanes and the emergence of space flight.

## International Service

During this period, the club also established an International Services Committee. Initially its activities were limited to seeking funds for the Rotary Foundation and inviting international students at Moravian and Lehigh to club meetings and other club events. In 1965, the club had its first experience with youth exchange by hosting two foreign high school students for a school year.

## **Notable Meeting Speakers and Topics**

September 30, 1942 – His Excellency Rodolfo Michels, the Chilean Ambassador to the United States spoke on “International Service”.

July 15, 1943 – Hon. Francis E. Walter, Congressman – “Bethlehem’s War Efforts”

February 21, 1945 – Major Henry M. Gross, Chief, Veterans Personnel Division, “The G.I. Bill”

June 20, 1945 – Harold Cary, Vice President, United Airlines – “Air Transport Today and Tomorrow”

May 22, 1946- Dr. Martin Whitaker, President, Lehigh University, “A Discussion of Atomic Energy”

November 6, 1946 – Arthur McCracken, “Bethlehem’s New Radio Station, WGPA and WGPAFM”

April 26, 1950 – Ralph Hutchinson, “Seminar for Golfers”

April 15, 1953 - Harold T. Davenport, “Television and the Bell System”

September 22, 1953 –Mrs. Marion Markley, Lehigh County Assemblywoman, “A Woman’s Place in Politics”

September 7, 1955 - - Conrad W. Raker, “The Good Shepherd Home”

October 24, 1956 – Anne Guthrie, US representative to the UN, “What Should the United States do in the UN?”

March 2, 1960 – Kurt Stehling, Planning Dept., NASA, “ Space Flight Plans”

March 28, 1962 – Tour of Bethlehem’s Homer Research Center

May 2, 1962 – Robert Ladner, LVIP, “Progress Report for the LVIP”

September 19.1962 – James A. Michener, “Carte Blanche”

April 11, 1965 – Rep. Fred B. Rooney, “Tocks Island Recreation Area”

September 20, 1965 - Capt. Harold Blackburn, TWA, “Our World Neighborhood in the Jet Age”

March 25-27, 1966 – DG Tip Mowrer - District Conference held in Atlantic City

## **CHAPTER 3 – THE THIRD TWENTY-FIVE YEARS – 1966 to 1991**

The Bethlehem Rotary Club celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding on April 30, 1966. A Golden Anniversary Dinner was held at the Hotel Bethlehem. The program included a history of the club's first 50 years and a projection of the next fifty years.

### **The Context.**

1966 was a year of change in culture in the U.S. LSD entered the scene that year and set the stage for popular use of other mood enhancing drugs. The war in Vietnam became increasingly unpopular during the year as casualties began to mount. It was the beginning of a transition from the beat generation to the hippie generation and its resistance to traditional cultural norms. The previous five years had also seen the rise of civil rights confrontations and the signing of the Civil Rights Act by Lyndon Johnson. Medicare and Medicaid had just been established. The first unmanned space flight to the moon was made that year.

In Bethlehem, work was underway in building the new City Center that would be completed the following year. Bethlehem Steel had built the Homer Research laboratory on South Mountain a few years before. In 1966, Historic Bethlehem took a lease on the property below the Bethlehem Hotel (formerly a junk yard) with plans to recreate the Moravian industrial quarter.

The first shopping mall in the Lehigh Valley was built that year. Almost all households owned at least one car. Buses had replaced trolleys. With the building of the Interstate Highway system, the automobile was gradually replacing intercity passenger trains. Television had now replaced the radio as the primary means of mass communication and entertainment but few programs were in color. The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson was a popular late night TV show. The Twist was the popular dance in 1966 having been introduced by Chubby Checkers on Dick Clark's American Bandstand in 1960.

### **Club Service**

The club continued to hold its luncheon meetings at the Hotel Bethlehem all during this period.

The club membership grew from 118 members to a peak of 200 members in May 1989. In August of that year several members left to form the MorningStar club. Over the 25 years, the average membership was 158, a considerable increase over the prior 50 years. While attendance was strongly emphasized during the period, the percent attendance decreased averaging only 70.5 percent over the period.

At the beginning of this period, the club held an annual picnic and clambake but it was discontinued in 1970. An annual Ladies' Night was also a popular event for the club until 1988. That year women were first accepted into club membership. Our own Stacy Scholl was among the first five women to join the Bethlehem club. Ladies Night was replaced with an annual Rotary Christmas party that year.

Gordie Mowrer was elected District Governor for the 1983-84 fiscal year.

## **Community Service**

Following the war, the club continued to support the boy scouts, the girl scouts, the YMCA, the YWCA and the Salvation Army by funding camperships. In 1962, Camp Neidig was established and the club supported the camp by sponsoring students and inviting the students to speak at one or two meetings each year. This became an annual meeting for the remainder of the period.

A Community Projects Advisory committee was formed to identify the needs of community organizations and charities. These were then funded either by the Birthday fund or as special projects. Donations included a new ambulance for the City of Bethlehem, the planting of trees around the new civic center and library, the rehabilitation of Sand Island, a library for Holy Infancy School and for youth centers at Illicks Mill and the Fire Protection House.

The club members also participated in a program to introduce high school students to various vocations. In 1967, the club sponsored its first Interact club at Liberty High School. The club was also supportive of the creation of the new Bethlehem Area Vo-Tech School.

## **Vocational Service**

The club's annual meeting with the St.Lukes Nurses Graduating Class started in 1916 continued throughout this period. They gave flowers to all the graduating nurses and the talk was usually relevant to some aspect of the medical profession.

Of course there were the usual annual visits by the District Governor, and the Classification talks by new members representing different vocations.

Meeting topics were devoted to vocational interests of the members of the club and focused on local issues, the post war economy, foreign developments and technology. During this period, the economic advantage of the US over Europe and Japan country began to wane as foreign competition increased along with the opening of diplomatic relations with China. There was a rising discontent by the public about the Vietnam War, which was finally ended in 1973. We saw the fall of the Berlin wall and the end of the cold war but also the beginning of unrest in the Middle East with the capture of the US embassy in Iran and the sectarian conflict in Lebanon. The country and community became increasingly focused on foreign relations.

In this same period, we saw the evolution of personal computers for both businesses and the home and the adoption of the Internet and popular use of the web browser for computer-to-computer communication. Space travel and exploration continued to expand and the first man moon landing was made in 1969. Russia established the first space station in 1971. We had entered the computer and space age.

## **International Service**

While the club continued to invite international students to their meetings and events, the club became more active in international activities directed to world understanding and peace. In 1968, the club first participated in the international student exchange program and continued in that program throughout the period. The following year they also first participated in the District Group Study exchange by hosting a group from India.

## **Notable Meeting Speakers and Topics**

August 23, 1967 – Joseph Ribson, “Highlights of the New Vocational-Technical School”

April 3, 1968 – Donald Voorhees, Conductor, Bell Telephone Hour, “Behind the Scenes at the Bell Telephone Hour”

July 10, 1968 – R. Wayne Kraft, “Student Unrest on College Campuses”

February 16, 1977 – Dr. Pauline Tompkins, President, Cedar Crest College, “Changing Roles - Women and Men”

August 31, 1977 – Robert Jones, Penn DOT, “Routes I-78 and 22”

February 27, 1980 – Heinz Pfeiffer, PPL, “P&L and Nuclear Power” (Note: One year after the failure of the Three Mile Island nuclear generator on March 28, 1979)

September 17, 1980 – Mercedes McCambridge, “United Way”

May 23, 1984 – Don Foellner, - Visit to Bethlehem Vocational-Technical School

October 3, 1984 – William V. Tattersall, Deputy Sec’y Gen’l of IISI, “ World Steel Perspective”

April 30, 1986 – 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner – Presentation of Ambulance to City of Bethlehem

July 18, 1986 – Dr. John C. Laurson, “The NATO Alliance”

October 1, 1986 – Gertrude Fox, “The Monocacy Watershed Association”

April 22, 1987 - Col. Thomas Schaffer, “ “Iranian Crisis”

November 4, 1987 – Gordon Mowrer, Mayor of Bethlehem, “Tourism in Bethlehem”

March 16, 1988 – Don Stabler, “Stabler Development in Saucon Valley”

May 10, 1989 – Bob Rodale, “New Ideas for Community Service”

August 9, 1989 – Dr. Jeffrey Jahre, “Aids – Magnitude of the Problem”

October 18, 1989 – Dr. Ray Wylie, “ Present China Situation”

January 31, 1990 –John Karakash, “ Education and Technology for the World Market Place”

August 15, 1990 – Don Spieth, “Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra”

February 7, 1991 – Gen’l John A. Shaud, USAF, Chief of staff, SHAPE. “NATO – Past, Present and Future”

## **CHAPTER 4 – THE FOURTH TWENTY-FIVE YEARS – 1991 to 2016**

On June 26, 1991, the Bethlehem Rotary Club celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding in 1916 with a gala dinner at the Holiday Inn. This coincided with the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the town of Bethlehem by the Moravians in 1741.

### **The Context.**

By 1991, Bethlehem had undergone considerable changes. The new Library and City Center were now active parts of the community. A second high school (Freedom) had been built. Route I-378 now passed through the community. The old bridge on New Street had been replaced with a concrete bridge named in honor of a police officer Philip J. Fahy. Officer Fahy had been killed in the line of duty. Martin Tower had been built in 1972 as the new headquarters of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. Downtown stores were mostly specialty shops as most people now did most of their shopping at the malls. A new feature of the community was Musicfest, which first began in 1984 to help counter the trend of fewer shoppers downtown.

Internationally, this was a year of political change. The previous year the Berlin Wall had come down and East and West Germany were now united. The year was also the end of the Cold War and of the break up of the Soviet Union. Nelson Mandela was released from prison and the government of South Africa formally and legally abandons apartheid. The first [Gulf War](#) began in 1991 and would mark the beginning of a constant American military presence in the Middle East. The clash between Serbia and the other Yugoslav republics would lead into the beginning of the Yugoslav Wars, which ran through the rest of the decade.

By 1991, there was no longer rail service to the Lehigh Valley. The automobile was the principle mode of local transportation and long distance travel was by air. Television sets were all analog with large bulky cathode ray tubes. The personal computer had been developed by 1991 and the Mac computer would be invented the following year. Commercial use of the Internet began in 1990 and the concept of a Worldwide Web was first demonstrated with a fully operable browser and webpage in 1991.

### **Club Service**

In 1997, the club discontinued holding its luncheon meetings at the Hotel Bethlehem. The club then met at the Bethlehem Club for 8 years before moving to Moravian Village in 2007 where it now meets. The annual meeting with the St.Lukes Graduate Nurses ended in 1994 after 75 years.

After the formation of the Morningstar club, the number of members steadily declined from 173 to 142 in 2006 when the Saucon Valley Club was formed. Since that time, the membership has declined even further to about 110 today.

In 1996 the club celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary by honoring several local community leaders. The club sponsored a Rotaract Club in 1992 for students at Lehigh, Moravian and NACC and in 1994 sponsored a second Interact club at Freedom High School.

Tip Mowrer was District Governor in 1994-95 and our club hosted the 2008 District Conference at Skytop Lodge when Gerry Long was District Governor.

## Community Service

In the last twenty-five years, the service activities of the club continued to be driven by a Projects Advisory Committee which focused on short term projects rather than a long term commitment



St.Luke's Dental Van and Clinic

to any one organization. During this period the club contributed funds for many large community projects – Burnside Plantation, the City of Bethlehem's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Holy Infancy school, Head Start, a twelve-passenger van for New Bethany Ministries and gave \$45,000 to Historic Bethlehem to establish the Founders Park next to the Hotel Bethlehem. The club also contributed funds to purchase the St.Luke's dental van and to equip the St.Luke's dental clinic.

In the last three years, through our Taste & Tunes event we have raised over \$170,000 for the benefit of the LV Hispanic Center, the Lehigh Valley Veterans Council and the Boys and Girls Club of Bethlehem. Overall, the club has raised and donated over three-quarters of a million dollars to community service projects over its 100-year life and have contributed more than \$300,000 to Rotary International in the last 40 years.

## Vocational Service

During this period one or two meetings were devoted to Camp Neidig. Each year several boys were selected from the community to attend leadership courses at Camp Neidig. The boys were later invited to the club meeting to tell of their learning experiences at the camp. More recently, students from the Bethlehem Area Vocational Technical (BAVT) School have been invited to our regular meetings to present talks about the skills they have learned and their plans for the future.

After the bombing of the World Trade Center in 2001, the country became engaged in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was a time of increasing unrest that hastened the creation of US government programs to deter the threat from terrorist organizations. Other major world events included the Ebola pandemic in East Africa and the near elimination of polio throughout the world thanks in large part due to the efforts of Rotary.

One of the most significant local events during this period was the decline and ultimate closing of the Bethlehem Plant and the bankruptcy of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. This was offset to some degree by the continuing expansion of the Lehigh Valley Industrial Park. In 2007, the Sands Casino opened on the old property of Bethlehem Plant and Steelstacks was also built as an arts and entertainment center on the property.

## International Service

Since 1968, the club has participated in the international student exchange program and in the District group study exchange and continued to do so periodically for the last 25 years. In 2008 we collaborated with another Rotary Club in Italy and one in India in obtaining a global grant for funds to establish a mother's milk clinic in India.

## **Notable Meeting Speakers and Topics**

Nov 25, 1992 – Hank Barnett, CEO, Beth Steel, “ ??”

Jan 27, 1993 – Elmer Gates, “LV 2000 a Progress Report”

Oct 13, 1993 – Dr. West, “China – A Land of Opportunity”

Mar 30, 1994 - Steven Passer, “ National Health Care Reform”

Apr 7, 1999 – Hon. Pat Toomey, U S Senator “ Federal Budget and Solvency of Social Security”

Oct 23, 2002 – George Dougherty, “Airport 2002”

Jan 12, 2005 – Elliott Sussman, CEO LV Hospital, “Issues in Health Care”

Jul 13, 2005 – Dick Brandt, Dir. Iacocca Ins., “Globalization Dream or Disaster”

Jan 9, 2008 – Robert DeSalvio, “Update on Sands Bethworks”

Jun 11, 2008 – Chris Martin IV, CEO Martin Guitar, “Martin Guitar Company”

Apr 8, 2009 - Jeff Parks, “Steelstacks Project”

Oct 7, 2009 - Hon Paul McHale, “Homeland Security, Lessons Learned and Implications for Americas Military”

Aug 18, 2010 – Kerry Wrobel, “LVIP VII – Redeveloping Bethlehem Steel Lands”

Aug 15, 2012 - Todd Linn & Mario Stuart, “The New Health Care Law”

April 17, 2013 – John Callahan, Mayor of City of Bethlehem, “State of the City”

August 28, 2013 – Hon. Charles Dent, US Representative, “Issues Facing Congress this Fall”

Sept 11, 2013 – Bill Giles, Chairman, Philadelphia Phillies, “Stories of Triumph and Miscues”

Oct 30 2013 – Bob DeSalvio, President, Sands Casino Resort, “Future Plans”

Jan 29, 2014 – Dennis Costello, “History of Historic Bethlehem Hotel”

Sept 10, 2014 – Robert Boyle –Ex-Head of NY Port Authority, “Too Close to History” - personal memories of the 9/11.

May 6, 2015 – John M. Morganelli, Northampton Cty District Attorney, “Operation of the District Attorney’s Office and the new Mental Health Court”