



# ROTARY'S GROWTH IN AFRICA 1930-61

**When east Africa's first Rotary club, the Rotary Club of Nairobi, was chartered in Kenya on 8 September 1930, it joined District 55, which consisted of countries south of the Equator in Africa. By this time there were Rotary clubs in the Belgian Congo, Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa. Nairobi was the 13th club chartered in the district; there was one each in the Belgian Congo, Southern Rhodesia and Kenya. The other ten clubs were in the Union of South Africa. The district governor in that year was Otto Siedle of Rotary Club of Durban.**

In the 1949/50 Rotary year, the district became District 50 and the following Rotary year, it was split into two – Districts 25 and 26.

District 25 had 24 clubs in four countries with a membership of 1036. These countries were Kenya, Southern Rhodesia, Tanganyika and part of Union of South Africa. By then there were two clubs in Kenya, the Rotary Clubs of Nairobi and Mombasa (the latter was chartered on 24 May 1944), one club in Tanganyika, the Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam (chartered 25 January 1949), four clubs in Southern Rhodesia and 17 clubs in part of Union of South Africa. Also, listed in the district were Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Bechuanaland, Swaziland, Madagascar and Mozambique although there were no Rotary clubs yet chartered in those countries.

During the next decade Rotary spread to many East, Central and Southern African Countries. Ethiopia: 1955, Uganda 1957, Malawi: 1955, Zambia: 1953, Madagascar: 1958, Reunion: 1960, Swaziland: 1955, South West Africa: 1952. This expansion necessitated further redistricting beginning Rotary year 1961-62 when District 220 came into existence with 48 clubs

with a total membership of 1 644. These countries were Kenya, Madagascar, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia, Tanganyika, part of Republic of South Africa and Uganda. Other clubs in District 25 and 26 in Swaziland, South West Africa and part of Republic of South Africa as well as Angola were redistricted to form District 230 and 235. Ethiopia was not part of District 220 although Rotary Club of Addis Ababa was chartered on 01 June 1955. The Rotary Club of Saint Dennis in Reunion, which was chartered on 17 February 1961, was also not included in District 220 at that time.

The next two years saw steady growth of Rotary in Africa. There were also political problems and racial tension in the Southern part of Africa, which for all practical purposes needed regrouping of clubs. In 1963/64 there was further redistricting. Southern Rhodesia, South West Africa and Republic of South Africa were transferred to districts 225, 230 and 235. District 220 consisted of Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Tanganyika, Reunion and Uganda.

In subsequent years Rotary clubs were formed in Mauritius (1964), Comoro Islands (1965) Territories of Afars and Issa what is now called Djibouti (1967). These were incorporated in District 220 as of 01 July 1968. The Rotary Club of Victoria in Seychelles was chartered in 1969 and the Rotary Club of Gaborone in Botswana was chartered in 1972.

These new clubs were incorporated in District 220, while Rotary clubs in Malawi were transferred to District 225 with effect from 01 July 1970. Rotary Club of Zanzibar, which was formed in 1961, was also part of District 220.

**LET'S CELEBRATE AT THE CENTENNIAL  
DINNER IN JOHANNESBURG ON  
25 April 2021**

