

# BRIEF HISTORY OF ROTARY

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The world's first service club, the Rotary Club of Chicago, was formed on 23 February 1905 by Paul P. Harris, an attorney who wished to capture in a professional club the same friendly spirit he had felt in the small towns of his youth. The name Rotary came from the initial meetings being held in rotation at each member's place of business.



*The first four Rotarians were: (from left) Gustavus Loehr a mining engineer, Silvester Schiele a coal merchant, Hiram Shorey a tailor, and attorney Paul Harris.*

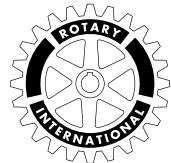
Rotary's popularity spread with clubs chartered from San Francisco to New York to Winnipeg, Canada within a decade. By 1921 Rotary clubs were established on six continents and the organisation adopted the Rotary International name a year later.

As Rotary grew, its mission expanded beyond serving club members' professional and social interests. Rotarians began pooling their resources and contributing their talents to serve communities in need. The organisation's dedication to this ideal is best expressed in its motto: **Service Above Self**. Rotarians in Australia continue to recognise this motto through the awarding of a Paul Harris Fellowship recognition.

Today Rotary International is a worldwide organisation of *service clubs* with a membership of 1.2 million Rotarians in around 33,000 clubs in over 200 countries. Rotary encourages diversity in membership that includes a mix of vocations, ethnic backgrounds, age and genders within Club members.

## Rotary's Wheel Emblem

A wheel has been the symbol of Rotary since the earliest days. All Rotary clubs have this design as the exclusive emblem of Rotarians. In 1923, the "Rotary International Association" adopted a mechanically correct gear wheel with 24 cogs and six spokes as the emblem. The keyway was added to symbolise a working cog. The Rotary wheel was approved as the official R I emblem in January 1924.



The Rotary emblem in official colours of royal blue and gold is one of the most recognisable symbols in the world. To Rotarians past and present, the Rotary wheel emblem evokes the image of a well-oiled, efficient machine, working for the service of mankind.