

Rotary

Club of Belmont



A Century of

Service Above Self

1925 – 2025

**Harley B. Gaston, Jr.
Ted B. Hall**

Paul P. Harris

Founder of Rotary



The founder of Rotary, Paul P. Harris, was born in Racine, Wisconsin, on April 19, 1868, and spent his early years in Wallingford, Vermont before attending the University of Vermont and graduating from the University of Iowa School of Law in 1891.

He spent the next five years traveling the world and working in a variety of jobs before settling down to practice law in Chicago in 1896.

One day in 1900, while walking with a lawyer friend, he was impressed that his friend knew so many proprietors of the shops and stores they were passing, and he realized that while he had many business friends, they weren't social friends. And he resolved to one day organize a club that would band together business and professional men in friendship and fellowship.

After years of reflection on his plan, Harris and three of his law clients held the first meeting of their new club on February 23, 1905. He called the club Rotary because they rotated their meetings among their places of business. Membership grew rapidly.

When Harris became president in the third year, he wanted to extend Rotary to other cities, and the second Rotary club was founded in San Francisco in 1908. By 1910, there were 16 clubs, and representatives met in Chicago and formed the National Association of Rotary Clubs. After clubs were formed in Canada and Great Britain, the name was changed to the International Association of Rotary Clubs in 1912, with Paul Harris as the first president. The name was shortened to Rotary International in 1923.

When Paul Harris died in 1947, he was president emeritus of Rotary International.

Today there are more than 46,000 Rotary Clubs in over 200 countries and a total membership of more than 1.4 million.

How it began...

The Belmont Rotary Club 1925-2000

The Belmont Rotary Club held its organizational meeting November 24th, 1925. This organizational meeting was prior to the actual admission of the club to membership in Rotary International and was the result of efforts of then District Governor Fred Kent of Asheville, North Carolina, the Gastonia Rotary Club, which was the Sponsor Club, and Mr. John R. Rankin, who on August 25th, 1925 had been appointed as special representative of the District Governor to organize a club in Belmont. Some time prior to this appointment Arch Lineberger, Henry Jordan and H.B. Gaston had been invited to attend a meeting of the Gastonia Rotary Club, and as a result of that meeting came home and undertook the organization of the Belmont Rotary Club.

On October 8, 1925, then Rotary International President Donald A. Adams of New Haven, Connecticut, notified H.B. Gaston of his appointment as Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Rotary Club of Belmont and granted him authority to select the members of the Organizing Committee.

Pursuant to action of Rotary International's Committee on "Election of Clubs," the Rotary Club of Belmont was elected

to membership on December 14, 1925, as Club No. 2182. The Charter for the Rotary Club of Belmont was officially presented to the club by District Governor Fred Kent and Special Representative for the organization of the club, John R. Rankin, at a dinner held on January 11, 1926 at the Baptist Tea Room in the Davis Building.

The Gastonia Gazette reported that the “largely attended gathering held in that busy little Gaston City Monday night was a happy occasion, marked throughout by true Rotary spirit, lightened by scintillating wit and with real Rotary fellowship evident throughout the evening.”

Forty-nine Rotarians from the sponsoring club, Gastonia, were present together with Rotarians from Charlotte and Hickory and there was apparently no lack of speaking on this occasion because the report informs us of District Governor Fred Kent’s “splendid presentation of Rotary in his presentation of the Charter from Rotary International,” and Mr. John R. Rankin who “did in a few cordial words, express his delight over the forming of the club by the Belmont men,” and presented the Charter.

The article further reports that:

“Frank P. Hall, Vice President of the Belmont Club, made one of the hits of the evening in his acceptance of the Charter for his club, He gave many facts about Belmont never published and that made his hearers take notice, particularly about the remarkable record of Belmont Mills paying dividends and the growth of the Belmont Bank. By the time he had finished it was felt that the most ardent Florida Booster has nothing on this loyal son of South Point Township.”

Jim Kennedy of the Gastonia Club, Jake Shufford of the Hickory Club, and Ham Jones of the Charlotte Club each made a few remarks welcoming the Belmont Club into Rotary International, and Fred Allen, Joe Separk and Ab Myers of the Gastonia Club each spoke briefly.

Several musical and entertainment features were then presented after which the “principal speaker of the evening” addressed the gathering. He was the Right Reverend E.A. Penick of Charlotte Bishop Coadjutor of the Episcopal Church, and his “...address on Rotary was a masterpiece, scholarly, interesting and witty. He brought out many phases, using old historical settings for illustrative purposes and delighted the large audience.”

The subject of classifications in the cotton industry is one problem which this club has always had, and it presented some problems in the organization of the club, necessitating the clearance of new proposed classifications with Rotary International. The necessity of approval prevented some members of the club from being named "Charter Members" in the official charter of the club.

Members of the organized group and who would be proposed as charter members of the club apparently would have consisted of A.C. Lineberger, Sr., S.P. Stowe, D.P. Stowe, H.A. Rhyne, R.L. Stowe, W.T. Hall, C.H. Sloan, A.C. Lineberger, Jr., Frank Cuddy, W.J. Pharr, G.W. Stowe, E.P. Hall, Jr., C.P. Lineberger, R.B. Suggs, E.P. Hall, Sr., Abbot Vincent Taylor, J.M. Pressley, W.R. Stowe, W.A. Dixon, Rev. S.R. Bass, Father Stanishaus, W.H. Crenshaw, H.W. Jordan, H.B. Gaston, W.B. Puett, G.G. Dixon, C.W. Fite, I.J. Ford, and J.G. Gullick. Of these, nine of the proposed classifications were of the "cotton industry" and involved S.P. Stowe, D.P. Stowe, R.L. Stowe, Henry A. Rhyne, W.T. Hall, C.H. Sloan, A.C. Lineberger, Jr., Frank Cuddy and W.J. Pharr. Chesley Perry, Secretary of Rotary International, suggested that three of the nine men be chosen and made part of the Charter membership of the club and after formation of the club, if the members wished to include other gentlemen in the cotton

industry that detailed information be submitted with the request for additional classifications. It was reported that all of these men were “good Rotary material.”

Clearing the way for the application of the club to membership in Rotary International, the club was advised by Cecil B. Harris, the Assistant Secretary in Rotary International on November 9, 1925, that it might have “three under cotton industry on the Charter list; and when the club was elected it might take in the six additional representatives of cotton industry as a special recognition” to the rules.

It does not appear how this was resolved, but four instead of three of the nine, S.P. Stowe, D.P. Stowe, R.L. Stowe, Sr., and A.C. Lineberger, Jr. are listed as charter members of the Belmont Rotary Club on Rotary’s official application.

The remaining charter members were Rev. S.R. Bass, G.G. Dixon, C.W. Fite, I.J. Ford, H.B. Gaston, J.G. Gullick, F.P. Hall, Sr., F.P. Hall, Jr., Dr. H.W. Jordan, C.P. Lineberger, W.B. Puett, Dr. J.M. Pressley, G.W. Stowe, R.B. Suggs and Abbot Vincent Taylor.

The first officers of the club were H.B. Gaston, President, F.P. Hall, Sr., Vice President, A.C. Lineberger, Jr., Secretary, G.W. Stowe, Treasurer, C.P. Lineberger, Sergeant-at-Arms.

The club immediately proceeded to get its remaining members into full membership in Rotary, and the day after the club's election to membership, W.A. Dixon, H.A. Rhyne, W.T. Hall and J.A. Gullick were proposed for membership.

It appears that most, if not all, of the men above named shortly became members of the Rotary Club. One peculiarity resulting from the classification question is that W.J. Pharr, who was the second President, was not named "Charter Member" of the Rotary Club of Belmont.

This young club launched itself with a great deal of energy and enthusiasm. One of the Charter members later spoke of the club and remembered it as a really fine and active club in those days – one that had no equal in a town the size of Belmont. Shortly after the presentation of its Charter, the club was entertained by the Rotary Club of Charlotte at its meeting and enthusiastically entered into the Rotary program as shown by its contributions to the District Conferences held in Asheville in 1926 and in Spartanburg, South Carolina in 1927.

The Spartanburg Journal for Monday, April 25, in reporting the District Rotary meeting states:

"With an attendance of between 350 and 400 Rotarians, representing clubs of 28 cities in North Carolina and

South Carolina, the 58th District of Rotary International began its conference in this city this morning at the Montgomery Theatre. The morning meeting was featured by the announcement by District Governor Zaccaheus R. Wright of Newberry, that the Belmont, North Carolina Club had the highest percentage of the attendance in the District."

It was also announced at the conference that the Belmont Club had the highest attendance percentage in the District for the previous year. It appears that D.P. Stowe, H.W. Jordan, Sam Bass, H.B. Gaston, H.A. Rhyne, F.P. Hall, Jr., W.J. Pharr, C.H. Sloan and R.B. Suggs, and perhaps others of the club attended the conference as representatives of the club.

Its activities have continued over the years. In its earlier days the club was an active sponsor of the Boy Scout program; raised funds for the high school athletic programs; and sponsored a junior baseball team. It helped secure federal aid for the building of a playground; distributed toys and candy to needy children; and sponsored a high school band. At various times it has sponsored perfect attendance certificates for school children; crippled children's work; scholarship awards for the high school; distribution of toys and candy to needy children; a student loan fund; the Girl Scout

program; tuberculosis x-ray campaigns; contributed to the public library; and sponsored the school safety program. In more recent years, the club has started and maintained a youth fund and sponsors boys basketball and baseball teams; been active in sponsoring the Red Cross Bloodmobile; sponsored high school delegates to District 767 Rotary Leadership conferences and to Wild Acres Music Camp, sponsored by Dilworth Rotary Club, Charlotte.

The club has sponsored Interact, a club at South Point High School. Interact is a world-wide program of clubs for outstanding high school students, and its purpose is to provide opportunities to young people to work together in a world fellowship dedicated to community service and international understanding; and has sponsored Rotaract at Belmont Abbey College. The purpose of Rotaract is to stimulate among its members acceptance of high ethical standards in all occupations, to develop leadership and responsible citizenship through service to the community, and to promote international understanding and peace.

In the early days of Belmont Rotary Club the meaning of Rotary was presented to the club and compared with the idea expressed by Victor Hugo to the effect that "invasion by an army may be repelled and is soon forgotten, but the invasion

of an idea is invincible,” and the founder of Rotary was attributed with putting this most important idea in a new setting. The ideas attributed to Rotary at this time were friendliness, service, honesty, and of universal brotherhood, and were portrayed as having gripped and taken root in many countries. Paul Harris, the founder of Rotary, admitted that it was primarily as a fellowship that he conceived the original club. The idea of Rotary has grown and prospered throughout the world by emphasizing these ideas of fellowship and the ethical and service consequences of fellowship in its continuing program and by building on and expanding these principles. The social concerns and emphasis on business integrity which have developed into such an important part of Rotary are benefits of the fellowship and association of men of good will and the result of their coming together in such a group as a Rotary Club.

In 1925, the Rotary Club of Belmont was organized. It is interesting to note and illustrative of the growth of Rotary at this time that the 2,000th Rotary Club was organized during 1925 at Ketchikan, Alaska; that according to the District Governor’s letter dated August 25, 1925, appointing John R. Rankin as the Special representative to organize the club that there were 2,013 Rotary Clubs throughout the world; and that

the Belmont Rotary Club was admitted as club No. 2182 on December 14th, 1925.

It is also interesting to note that during this same year Rotary Clubs were organized at Prague, Czechoslovakia; Guatemala City, Guatemala; Vienna, Austria; Budapest, Hungary; and Lisbon, Portugal; and that in July 1925, the 2,096 clubs had an approximate membership of 108,000 Rotarians. The 16th annual convention was held in 1925 at Cleveland, Ohio, with 30 countries represented and with an attendance of 10,233 Rotarians.

Today Rotary exists in over 150 countries and geographical regions and is represented by 25,000 Rotary Clubs as of 1998, with an approximate membership of 1,200,000 Rotarians, and the 2000 Convention of Rotary International, the 91st, will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

As Belmont Rotary celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2000, the themes of tradition, change and increasingly global awareness influences our commitment to "Service Above Self" and thrusts us into a new millennium.

Freida Jo Singleton became the Club's first woman member in 1989 and the first woman President in 1993.

The famed ROTATO organized in 1990 by David W. Isenhour has been prepared and sold at South Point High School football games and town festivals. This activity generated fellowship and was sometimes a successful fundraiser.

Anne Cowie represented the Club in a Group Study Exchange to India in 1998 and entertained the membership with two programs about her experiences.

Melissa Coleman Roche of Cramerton studied as an Ambassadorial Scholar in England in 1998 and visited with the Club several times.

Belmont Rotary's service projects have been many and varied. The Whale of a Sale yard sale was organized by Rebecca K. Wintsch in 1994 and benefited Holy Angels. The Club financially supported and volunteered for the Belmont Community Organization, the remodeling of the Stowe Park fountain, Salvation Army bell ringing, Belmont High School library, Operation Shoe Box, Chamber of Commerce Christmas Stars, Family Christmas Celebrations, Summer picnics, and the Bogota' Chico Rotary Club.

The Golf Marathon was directed by Steve Pressley in 1997 and 1998. Each participant played one hundred holes of

golf in one day and was supported by pledges. These fundraisers supported the Gaston Literacy Council and established an endowment fund in the Community Foundation.

In 1995, Jane M. Collins led the club on an exciting fundraiser in conjunction with the City of Belmont Centennial called "The Game of Belmont." In the spirit of Monopoly, properties around the board were named after local landmarks. Some games are still available.

Belmont Rotary has volunteered and operated the Sun Drop trailer at Special Olympics staged at Belmont Abbey College and recently in Cherryville.

In 1995, the Club helped landscape the Holy Angels South Fork River property known as Camp Hope. Members arrived by land and water and spent a Saturday on this river project.

In 1999, Belmont Rotary received the District Award for the highest per capita giving to the Rotary Foundation.

During the years since its organization, three men have served two terms as president of the Rotary Club of Belmont: H.B. Gaston, W.M Currie and Paul H. Neal; and three fathers and sons have served the club as Presidents: H.B. Gaston

and Harley B. Gaston, Jr.; C.W. Fite and C.W. Fite, Jr.; and Marshall Rhyne and Marshall Rhyne, Jr.

There have been a number of sons of Rotarians who have been or are now Rotarians, but only one three-generation family membership: R.B. Suggs, R.B. Suggs, Jr., and R.B. Suggs, III.

In the present membership of the club, there are four sons of Charter Members: S.P. Stowe, Jr., James L. Dixon, S.C. Lineberger, III, and Harley B. Gaston, Jr., and there are three grandsons of Charter Members: Lionel Bass, Jr., Thomas M. Hunter and Patrick Hunter.

The fact that we are today celebrating the 75th anniversary of this Rotary Club is evidence of the contribution that these individuals, together with others who have been members of this Club during this period have made to this community through this Club and evidence of the continuing application through their service to the principles of Rotary as stated in the Object of Rotary, which is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and in its mottoes:

“Service Above Self”
and
“He Profits Most Who Serves Best”

Let us on this occasion rededicate ourselves to fellowship and service through Rotary and to these ongoing principles of Rotary and thereby continue to participate effectively through our Rotary Club as we strive to apply these principles of Rotary in our businesses and in our community.

Harley B. Gaston, Jr.
April 20, 2000

About The Author

Belmont native and lifelong resident Harley B. Gaston, Jr. was a son of the founder and first president of the Belmont Rotary Club. He served as club president 1963-1964. A graduate of Duke University and Duke University Law School, he was an Eagle Scout, a Korean War veteran, an attorney and a judge. While practicing law from 1956-86, he worked as city attorney for Belmont and as the Gaston County attorney. He was elected to the Gaston County Board of Commissioners in 1976 and later served as vice chairman and chairman of the board. He was elected a District Court judge in 1986 and retired as chief judge in 2001. He served as president of the Belmont Chamber of Commerce, as a member of the Belmont Abbey College Board of Advisors and was named Belmont Man of the Year in 1968. He received North Carolina's highest honor, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, in 2005. He died at age 82 on December 31, 2011.



The Belmont Rotary Club 2000 - 2025

When a new millennium dawned on January 1, 2000, Thomas M. Hunter, Jr. was president of the Belmont Rotary Club. Twenty-three years later, his son, Thomas M. Hunter, III, would become president for 2023-2024, making the Hunters the first family to have three generations serve as Belmont Rotary Club presidents. Thomas Marion Hunter was president 1956-1957.

Two current members have been second-generation presidents. Samuel P. Stowe, III was president 2001-2002, and his father, S. Pinckney Stowe, Jr., was president 1950-1951. His grandfather S.P Stowe was a charter member.

Elizabeth (Beth) Bass Hollars was a second-generation president 2007-2008, following her father, Lionel Blakely Bass, Jr. (Bassy), who was president 1972-1973. Beth also is a third-generation member of the club, as her great grandfather, Rev. S.R. Bass, was a charter member in 1925.

In addition to three members prior to 2000 who served two one-year terms as president, four presidents in the past 25 years have served two terms: Mike Giang, 2014-2015 and 2019-2020; Allison Cottingham, 2017-2019; Seth Sherrin, 2020-2022; and Ken Pahon, 2024-2026.

Early in the 21st Century, Belmont began to grow from the sleepy village it had been to a thriving small city. In the late 1990s, under the leadership of Mayor Kevin Loftin, major downtown improvements were made on Main Street. Utility lines were moved underground, eliminating unsightly poles and wires, sidewalks were improved, brick planters were built and trees and flowers planted.

Then in 1999, Belmont voters approved sales of mixed drinks, beer and wine, setting the stage for growth in restaurants, sports bars and later breweries, and Belmont quickly became a popular destination in the region. Population growth followed. Belmont grew from 8,705 residents in 2000 to 10,076 in 2010, 15,010 in 2020 and an estimated 15,823 in 2025.

Belmont Rotary Club prospered, too. A recent arrival to Belmont, Allison Cottingham, who joined Rotary in 2003 and would become president of the club 14 years later, had a toddler son who enjoyed playing in Stowe Park. But she found the lack of restroom facilities in the park a major inconvenience and suggested the Rotary Club address the problem. That's how the Belmont Rotary "Potty In The Park" project originated.

The project was especially fitting for Belmont Rotary Club because in 1905, when the first Rotary Club was formed in Chicago, its first project was to increase the number of public restrooms in the city.

Belmont Rotarian Richard (Dick) Cromlish, who had served as president 1978-1979, built a wooden outhouse, which became a symbol of the “Potty In The Park” project. It was displayed at fundraisers and even paraded through town on Main Street. Wallace Aldrich (Rotary president 2000-2001) led the campaign, which raised more than \$30,000.

While not enough to build the restrooms, the Rotary project, along with the work of Keep Belmont Beautiful, helped encourage the City Council to allocate funds and apply for grants, and a brick building with restrooms and a concessions area was constructed in the park in 2007. The original building was remodeled and expanded in 2023.

Most of the Rotary “Potty In The Park” funds were raised through another project called “The Taste of Belmont,” under the leadership of Rotarian Rebecca (Wintsch) Johns (president 1995-1996). The fundraiser began in 2004 with a second objective to showcase and promote the handful of restaurants in town, some of which were new arrivals.

Restaurant owners brought their best dishes to promote their businesses and competed for the coveted Taste of Belmont Award. Hundreds purchased tickets to enjoy the food, fellowship and musical entertainment and vote for the Taste of Belmont Award winner.

After a huge success in the inaugural year, seven more annual “Taste of Belmont” galas were held. Most took place at the historic Stowe Manor, the city’s premier meeting venue, which was built in 1924 as the home of local textile executive Samuel Pickney Stowe, who was a charter member of Belmont Rotary Club in 1925.

Stowe Manor was filled for each “Taste of Belmont” and the crowds and participating restaurant food and beverage displays spilled onto the Manor’s beautiful grounds.

Beth Hollars, who served as club president 2007-2008, Tammy Thomas and Carrie Doubts were among Rotarians who coordinated a “Taste of Belmont” fundraiser. Some of the themes were: Roaring 20’s, Buccaneer Bash, Boot Scootin Boogie, Casino Night, Beach/Caribbean, and Groovey 60’s & 70’s.

In addition to funds for restrooms in Stowe Park, the eight annual “Taste of Belmont” events helped provide a

contribution of \$20,000 to the Belmont Historical Society for structural repairs of the historic Stowe family homeplace (circa 1899) that would become the Society's Museum and Cultural And Heritage Learning Center, and \$15,000 to other local causes.

From the start, Belmont Rotary Club has been committed to community service. Through member volunteer hours, member donations and a wide variety of creative fund-raising events, the club has supported countless organizations, projects and worthy causes. Just a few more examples include:

- Belmont Community Organization
- Holy Angels
- Gaston Literacy Council
- Catherine's House
- Girls on the Run
- Sponsorship of Little League baseball
- Providing scholarships to deserving students
- Sponsoring students and adults in study exchanges
- Assisting in community clean-up campaigns
- Helping with school landscaping and other projects
- Packaging medical supplies for those in need

Belmont Rotary Club and Gastonia Rotary Club co-sponsored the establishment of a Rotaract Club at Belmont Abbey College in 2018, and more than 20 students joined the club at the first meeting in September. Laurel Morris, president of Gastonia Rotary Club, and Allison Cottingham, president of Belmont Rotary Club, attended.

All Rotaract clubs are affiliated with Rotary International and are sponsored by one or more Rotary clubs. The mission of Rotaract is to provide an opportunity for young men and women to enhance the knowledge and skills that will assist them in personal development, to address the physical and social needs of their communities, and to promote better relations between all people worldwide through a framework of friendship and service.

The Belmont Abbey College Rotaract Club continues to thrive, and each fall new student leaders arrive and connect with their Rotary counterparts in the Belmont and Gastonia clubs. In a recent project, Belmont Rotarians collected food and clothing in support of a Rotaract project to help those in need in the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which struck in 2020, claimed millions of lives worldwide and severely impacted

businesses and non-profit organizations. Belmont Rotary Club was not immune to the consequences.

At the height of the crisis, businesses were ordered to close and those who could were forced to work from home. Group gatherings, such as Rotary Club meetings, could not be held. Virtual online meetings were the only alternative, and that excluded some members who lacked the computer skills and equipment to participate.

Even those members who could join online meetings missed the personal contact and relationship they always had enjoyed with their Rotary friends. Participation soon dropped and Belmont Rotary, like other clubs and organizations worldwide, struggled.

It was a great relief when pandemic conditions improved enough to permit the resumption of some gatherings when participants could be separated by what became known as “social distance.”

Belmont Rotary Club was fortunate to be meeting at the time in the grand “Stowe Manor” event venue, which offered a large, covered porch, where members could gather outdoors while maintaining the required separation and removing masks only long enough to eat.

Ironically, Stowe Manor is the beautiful home built in 1924 by Samuel Pinckney Stowe, who was a charter member of Belmont Rotary Club in 1925. Almost 75 years later, his grandson, Rotarian Samuel P. Stowe, III, owned the 10,000-square-foot mansion, and he had made it available to Belmont Rotary Club for meetings before the pandemic struck.

Having that meeting space played a large role in enabling Belmont Rotary Club to maintain membership and emerge from the pandemic poised to regain its lost momentum and continue to grow and serve the community.

An unexpected opportunity to serve came when club member Susan Mosk, who worked in sales at a local hotel, told fellow Rotarians a heartbreaking story. A mother and her children were living at the hotel after being forced from their home following the death of an abusively controlling husband and father. The mother was about to lose her job because her car had broken down and she couldn't afford the \$900 repair. Within minutes, Rotarians put more than enough cash on a table to repair the car.

That was the beginning of what became an ongoing effort by the club, and others in the community, to help the family, with Susan Mosk leading the way.

When the family was about to be forced to leave the hotel, a local church provided them with an apartment. And Rotarians in their own pick-up trucks began collecting furniture and other necessities donated by club members. And the support continued after the family was settled in their new home.

Many noted the experience was an example of what Paul Harris intended when he founded Rotary on the principle of “Service Above Self.” And Susan Mosk was unanimously awarded the Belmont Rotary Club’s Distinguished Rotarian Award.

When Whitney Norton was named president-elect in Rotary year 2021-2022, he began developing some major objectives for his year 2022-2023 and beyond. He wanted to address feeding those in need in our community and fighting the Opioid epidemic that claims many lives here, especially among students. On an international level, he wanted to help Haitian children in one of the world’s most distressed countries.

By the time he was installed as president beginning July 1, 2022, his agenda was set. He wanted to engage club members as volunteers in the local Meals On Wheels program. He wanted to begin a series of “Opioid Forums” at

Belmont Abbey College. And he wanted to support the effort to build and equip a children's unit at a small hospital in the town of Pignon, Haiti.

Whitney accomplished all three goals. Several Belmont Rotarians continue to volunteer weekly to deliver Meals On Wheels to grateful elderly and infirm residents in the community. He's planning now for the third annual community-wide Opioid Forum at Belmont Abbey College. And the children's unit in Haiti is open, fully equipped and serving patients.

The Haiti project was accomplished through supporting the work of the Belmont-based Promise For Haiti organization, led by Dr. Omer Shedd, and obtaining major grants from the Rotary International Foundation. Whitney Norton visited and gained the support of all Gaston County Rotary clubs and made presentations at dozens of other clubs in the region.

More than \$200,000 was raised, the children's unit was completed, and a celebration gala took place at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden attended by Dr. Guy Theodore, founder of the hospital in Haiti, and Hollywood actor and model Brooklyn Decker.

Ken Pahon is president of Belmont Rotary Club as it begins its second century, still holding fast to the principle upon which Paul P. Harris founded Rotary in 1905:

“Service Above Self”

Ted B. Hall

September 25, 2025

About the Author

Ted Hall began his Rotary service in 1986 as a member of the Shelby, NC, club and joined the Belmont Rotary Club in 2006. He serves as chair of the club’s Public Image Committee, and he established and maintains the club’s website and bulletin. A Rutherford County native, he graduated from Isothermal Community College and UNC-Chapel Hill, where he majored in journalism. He was a reporter and managing editor at *The News Herald* in Morganton and editor and publisher at *The Shelby Star*. He served 15 years as president of the Montcross Area Chamber of Commerce in Belmont. In recognition of his service, the governor of North Carolina awarded him the Order of the Long Leaf Pine. He now works with his wife and their children in the family’s real-estate business in Belmont.



Belmont Rotary Club Presidents

1925-2025

Harley B. Gaston, Sr.	1926 - 1927
William J. Pharr, Sr.	1927 - 1928
H.C. Sisk	1928 - 1929
Dr. Henry W. Jordon	1929 - 1930
DeLambert P. Stowe	1930 - 1931
Dr. John M. Pressley	1931 - 1932
R. Dave Hall	1932 - 1933
J. Mack Hatch	1933 - 1934
J. Harold Lineberger	1934 - 1935
Frank P. Hall, Jr.	1935 - 1936
Rev. M.W. Currie	1936 - 1937
Robert Jackson	1937 - 1938
Archibald C. Lineberger	1938 - 1939
William H. Crenshaw	1939 - 1940
William T. Hall, Sr.	1940 - 1941
S. Craighead Alexander	1941 - 1942
C. Wayne Fite, Sr.	1942 - 1943
Henry H. Rankin	1943 - 1944
Rev. M.W. Currie	1944 - 1945
Zane Ross	1945 - 1946
Paul H. Neal	1946 - 1947
Paul H. Neal	1947 - 1948
Richard S. Schoonmaker	1948 - 1949
T. Harold Thompson	1949 - 1950
S. Pinckney Stowe, Jr.	1950 - 1951

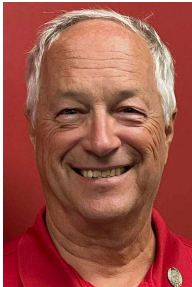
Rev. J. Walter Dickson	1951 - 1952
William O. Barrett	1952 - 1953
Rev. R.L. Berry	1953 - 1954
Willis C. Smith	1954 - 1955
Charles Wayne Fite, Jr.	1955 - 1956
T. Marion Hunter	1956 - 1957
James F. Miller	1957 - 1958
Robert G. Coppedge	1958 - 1959
William A. Dixon, Jr.	1959 - 1960
George Truett Smith	1960 - 1961
Lester R. Carpenter	1961 - 1962
Marshall Rhyne	1962 - 1963
Harley B. Gaston, Jr.	1963 - 1964
Harold Lewis	1964 - 1965
Charles T. Stowe, Jr.	1965 - 1966
Neeley F. Dixon, Jr.	1966 - 1967
George Hodges	1967 - 1968
Robert Shelby	1968 - 1969
Herman Smith	1969 - 1970
Sid Cauble	1970 - 1971
Marshall Rhyne, Jr.	1971 - 1972
Lionel Bass, Jr.	1972 - 1973
John M Harney	1973 - 1974
Nelson Hayes	1974 - 1975
John Jenkins	1975 - 1976

Carl Howie	1976 - 1977
Dr. Ramon G. Plowden	1977 - 1978
Richard S. Cromlish, Jr.	1978 - 1979
B. Wayne Coggins	1979 - 1980
Joe Maynard	1980 - 1981
Hugh W. Causey, Jr.	1981 - 1982
Robert S. Coleman	1982 - 1983
Robbie Moore	1983 - 1984
David Bradshaw	1984 - 1985
Parks H. Wilson, Jr.	1985 - 1986
Will Spence	1986 - 1987
Jim Lemons	1987 - 1988
Barry Pomeroy	1988 - 1989
Jeff Swing	1989 - 1990
W. Alex Robinson, III	1990 - 1991
David W. Isenhour	1991 - 1992
William J. McLean, III	1992 - 1993
Freida Jo Singleton*	1993 - 1994
Dr. David Demperio	1994 - 1995
Rebecca Wintsch Johns	1995 - 1996
Stephen C. Pressley	1996 - 1997
Eric L. Dixon	1997 - 1998
Stephen Crane	1998 - 1999
Thomas M. Hunter, Jr.	1999 - 2000
Wallace Aldrich	2000 - 2001

**Freida Jo Singleton became the first woman club member in 1989 and the first woman president in 1993.*

Samuel P. Stowe, III	2001 - 2002
Robert Clawson	2002 - 2003
Clay McLean	2003 - 2004
Don Hartsoe	2004 - 2005
Tammey Thomas	2005 - 2006
Elaine Sipe	2006 - 2007
Beth Bass Hollars	2007 - 2008
Brian Herre	2008 - 2009
Audrey Devine	2009 - 2010
Bill Stetzer	2010 - 2011
Kevin Wilson	2011 - 2012
Richard Churn	2012 - 2013
Ann Payseur	2013 - 2014
Mike Giang	2014 - 2015
Jennifer Grant	2015 - 2016
Dr. Brad Frazier	2016 - 2017
Allison Cottingham	2017 - 2018
Allison Cottingham	2018 - 2019
Mike Giang	2019 - 2020
Seth Sherrin	2020 - 2021
Seth Sherrin	2021 - 2022
Whitney Norton	2022 - 2023
Thomas Hunter, III	2023 - 2024
Ken Pahon	2024 - 2025
Ken Pahon	2025 - 2026

Belmont Rotary Club Members 2025



Ken Pahon
President



Brad Frazier
President-Elect



Michelle Petty
Secretary &
Membership



Kathy Gauger
Treasurer

Whitney Norton
Rotary Foundation
Chair



Ted Hall
Public Relations
Chair



Wallace Aldrich



Tyler Bruce



Tom Chester



Fred Clemmer



**Allison
Cottingham**



Dick Cromlish



Jim Davidson



David Demperio



Floyd Farmer



Mike Giang



Jennifer Grant



Don Hartsoe



Beth Hollars



Tom Hunter, Jr.



**Thomas
Hunter, III**



Madison Illges



Rebecca Johns



Gary McCord



Mike McKeever



William McLean



Seth Sherrin



Samuel P. Stowe III



Tammey Thomas



Parks Wilson



Honoring our longest serving members:

Richard (Dick) Cromlish (4th from left) has been a member of Belmont Rotary Club for 56 years. **Tom Hunter, Jr.** (3rd from left) for 52 years. **Sam P. Stowe, III** (right) for 46 years. **Mike McKeever** (2nd from left) has 45 years of Rotary membership, 12 in Belmont Rotary and 33 in the Rotary Club of Bladensburg, MD. Not shown is **Parks Wilson**, 45 years of service. Rotary District Governor Kam Chandan (left) toasted them for their service in 2022.



THE FOUR-WAY TEST

OF THE THINGS WE THINK, SAY OR DO

- 1. IS IT THE TRUTH?**
- 2. IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERN?**
- 3. WILL IT BUILD GOOD WILL
AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?**
- 4. WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO
ALL CONCERN?**

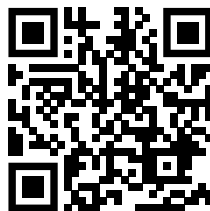
History of The Rotary Four-Way Test

In 1932, Chicago businessman Herbert J. Taylor was tasked with saving a company from looming bankruptcy. He set out to establish a list of questions employees should ask themselves when making decisions. Herb started with 100 words and then cut that down to 7 questions. Still not satisfied, he further reduced his list of questions to a total of 4, composed of 24 words. In 1942, the Rotary International Board adopted the Four-Way Test. Today, the Four-Way Test guides more than 1.4 million Rotarians and remains unchanged from the original

Every meeting of the Belmont Rotary Club begins with the Pledge of Allegiance and concludes with The Four-Way Test.

Belmont Rotary Club meets
for lunch and a program each
Wednesday, 12:30-1:30, at

Belmont First Presbyterian Church
102 S. Central Ave.
Belmont, NC 28012



BelmontRotaryClub.com



OBJECT OF ROTARY

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

FIRST:

The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

SECOND:

High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

THIRD:

The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business and community life;

FOURTH:

The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

Published September 25, 2025

