



Rotary Global History Fellowship
**"We must find a handful of Rotarians
who will dedicate their lives to history,
so that thousands more might
dedicate their lives to Rotary"**



ROTARY GLOBAL HISTORY FELLOWSHIP

**Helene Bo Morse, Rotary Club of Concord, CA., USA, D5160
RGHF VP of Zones**



Women and Rotary - www.jeanharris.org

Women and Rotary, why bring it up? It's always been this way, hasn't it? The answer is no. Women have been included as members of Rotary since 1987. Go back in time to 1983 or 84 and there might have been women walking into the House of Friendship, but you would know she wasn't a Rotarian. She might be a Rotary Ann or a spouse of a Rotarian. Today, approximately 16% of Rotarians are women.

Jack M. B. Selway, founder of RGHF, asked me a simple question: "Why is the study of Women and Rotary relevant today?" Why was Jean Thomson Harris included in the section about Women and Rotary? She had never been a Rotarian! What value is her information to RGHF today? 2012 will be the 25th anniversary of the Supreme Court's ruling that culminated in changes to the Rotary International Constitution allowing women to join as of 1 July 1989.

Having been a newspaper reporter, for ten years, I was disappointed to find that there was history, but in the form of time-lines and fact sheets. Not many documents written by, or about all those remarkable pioneer women that set the world on fire nearly 25 years ago existed. There are, however, many articles about women who were involved in Rotary, going back to the very beginning.

The search left me a little like the proverbial cup of tea, half-full. I longed for the full cup of tea. I not only wanted to know more about the First Lady of Rotary, Jean Thomson Harris, but I also wanted to read the stories of all the other trailblazers like Sylvia Whitlock, the first woman president of a Rotary Club, whose story is told in this section. I also wanted to read the stories of the first eight women district governors who were installed all in one day and I found them here at jeanharris.org.

What did they learn from their new roles? What could we learn from them if we were a district governor? Past District Governor Mimi Altman District 6440, who served from 1995-1996 in the very district her father had served as District Governor 80 years prior, said, "Women have proven their capabilities as Rotarians, as club presidents and district governors. Their leadership qualities have been demonstrated at the club and district levels, the future will see them rise to the greatest heights of Rotary," and her story and even a video are online here.

It's true the history of Women and Rotary is still being written. Yes, there are limited statistics and names to research, but why is so much of this history still unrecorded?



"This is a changing world; we must be prepared to change with it. The story of Rotary will have to be written again and again!" Page 253 "The Rotarian Age" ~ [Paul P. Harris](#) Founder of Rotary

There are some interesting women in my own club/district/zone as well as in yours. They have and are paving the way for the future and would fall into that interesting category and surely a few are worthy of publication. We can expect to get leads by word of mouth – someone knows someone who knows someone – with a story to tell. So come, let us travel through the history of Women and Rotary. We will all grow and evolve from the experience. Help RGHF make a lasting difference. We will begin at the very beginning of the journey by gathering even more information about the first lady of Rotary, Jean Harris, and conclude with your story as President of Rotary International!



You can contribute to this work by joining RGHF at www.joinrghf.org and when you contribute a story for our website, you can request an additional year's dues, free. Meantime, RGHF continues to preserve the unique history of Women and Rotary on these pages.

Sincerely, **Sandra Myers**, VP of Women and Rotary. 28 June 2011

In his 1935 book, a text on Rotary, "This Rotarian Age," Harris devoted two pages to the subject of women in business as well women and Rotary and their attempt to form women's clubs. It was in the Chapter "The Challenge," which is also covered in three issues of "What Paul Harris Said" for September 22, 29 and October 6 2002 that Harris wrote the following.

"It is heartening also to know that the wives, daughters and mothers of Rotarians in many cities, impressed with the value of Rotary have organized clubs of their own and are doing effective service in charitable enterprises. The women's movement has gained greatest momentum in Great Britain where their clubs, nearly one hundred in number, have already established a national unit which is doing extension work in British dominions."

The writer is convinced that women who can spare the time from family affairs, need contacts with other women more than men need increased opportunities to meet their fellows. Business provides men with contacts and also with a form of discipline of which women, by reason of their sheltered lives, are deprived. If women are more critical than men, it is because they have had less experience with their kind. Inexperienced men are suspicious and difficult to deal with, while women whom circumstances have compelled to enter the field of business generally become less suspicious, broader in their outlook and more understanding.

Considerable effort has been made by business and professional women to have the doors of Rotary opened to them. Lady Astor, appearing before a Rotary conference in Great Britain in their behalf, made her usual strong appeal. While the business and professional women have been unsuccessful in their efforts to gain admission to Rotary, they have not been unsuccessful in their efforts to embrace Rotary principles. They now have several strong and growing organizations of their own.

The writer hopes that the organizations of the Rotary type now in existence will increase until the time arrives when there will be clubs for all business and professional men and women and youths who are imbued with the ideal of service." Paul P. Harris, Pages 133-134 from "This Rotarian Age".

In this section, Harris also discussed the importance of the exclusive nature of our classification system; his support of multiple clubs in larger communities (still a subject of controversy,) other clubs (Kiwanis, Lions) and youth organizations. His discussion of women was a logical continuation of that line of thinking and is very supportive of their position given the time.

Duarte: The Mouse That Roared



With only eight members, including the Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard Key, the club votes to invite three women to join the club. Two school principals, Mary Lou Elliott and Donna Bogart joined the same day. Just a few months later, in the spring of 1977, psychologist Rosemary Freitag became the third woman member of Duarte. The club had nearly increased 50 percent in size with the addition of women.

The late Paul G. Bryan, from Pasadena, was the Governor of [District 530](#) (now 5300) in 1976-1977. On his advice, the club listed the women with only their initials for their first names and the data was sent to Rotary International.

On June 1, 1977, the Duarte club held its 25th Anniversary Celebration. In front of the backdrop of RI officialdom, who were present for the celebration, the three women were introduced as members. Needless to say, official

Rotary International representatives expressed alarm at the presence of women in the Duarte club. Word spread rapidly throughout Rotary International. Requests to terminate the women were rejected by the club.

Eight months later, in February of 1978, Rotary International revoked the charter of the Duarte club. The club requested a hearing with RI's Board of Directors. The Board told Duarte that it must remove women members. They refused again. Undaunted, the club members raised funds to send a club member, Luke McJimpson, to Tokyo for the next Council on Legislation. The club began fund raising in earnest, and the entire Duarte community supported the fundraisers.

On March 27, 1978, the Rotary International Board of Directors officially revoked the Charter of the Duarte club after the appeals process was concluded.

Duarte member Luke McJimpson flew to Tokyo for the Council on Legislation. His instruction from the club was that they would take no legal action before appealing to Rotary's Council on Legislation. Jack Davis, President of Rotary International wrote the COL, "The unity of Rotary International was jeopardized by a single club's unilateral move to change bylaws."

The matter is heard and discussed. The vote is 1060 to 34 against changing the constitution of Rotary International to admit women to Rotary. That vote upheld the previous decision of Rotary International's Board of Directors.

Upon McJimpson's return, the entire club met, and decided to continue to meet as a quasi-Rotary Club. An X was placed over the Rotary insignia, new pins were made, and the club was called: The Ex-Rotary Club of Duarte.

A month later, in June of 1978, the Rotary Club of Duarte, California, filed suit in Los Angeles Superior Court, helped by Sanford Smith, an attorney from a neighboring Rotary Club, and Carl Agate, a member of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Immediately upon service, Rotary International's attorney petitioned to transfer the California State Court suit to federal court, using the theory that all Rotary International board members are not Californians. If jurisdiction had been changed to Federal court, the Rotary International board would have gained the advantage of a 1976 Federal court decision, which upheld exclusionary rules for private clubs. However, the Federal court rules that the battle be fought back in state court.

The case finally goes to trial in 1983. California State Judge Max Deutz refused to reinstate the club. The Duarte club immediately appealed the decision. In 1986, the State Appeals Court reversed Judge Deutz, stating that Rotary Clubs are

business establishments subject to regulation under the state's Unruh Act, which bans discrimination based on race, gender, religion or ethnic origin.

Rotary International immediately appealed the case to the California Supreme Court. That court then refused to hear the case, meaning that they agreed with the State Appeals Court ruling reversing Deutz.

Rotary International then appealed the decision to the U. S. Supreme Court. The RI attorney argued "...threatens to force us to take in everyone, like a motel."

Unbeknownst to the Duarte club, the Seattle-International District club, on July 31, 1986, had unanimously voted to admit women. Because it was believed that admitting only one or two women would create pressure on those individuals, the Seattle-ID club decided to admit several women, and ultimately 15 were proposed and admitted.

In order to prevent their charter being revoked by RI like that of Duarte, the Seattle-ID club kept silent about its admission of women until it was ready to seek an injunction in Federal court, to prevent expulsion. In September 1986, the Club hired Margaret McKeown of the Perkins Coie law firm as counsel, filed its suit, and announced its admission of the women. Subsequently, Seattle-ID joined Duarte in the Supreme Court case.

[The United States Supreme Court](#), on May 4, 1987, affirmed the 1986 ruling of the Court of Appeals of California in a 7 - 0 opinion. There was widespread media publicity worldwide. However, there was no communication from Rotary International until the 1987-1988 Rotary year, when the Duarte club received an invoice/recap sheet to list existing members as of June 30, 1987, and pay international dues based on the membership as of that date. To this day, that invoice remains the only communication from the Rotary International Board of Directors or the Secretariat regarding the end of the Duarte charter revocation and its reinstatement in Rotary International.

However, by the time that the Duarte case went to the U. S. Supreme Court, things had changed in District 530 regarding the Duarte club. Of the three original women, only Mary Lou Elliott remained. Rosemary Freitag had moved out of California, and Donna Bogart had moved to Fresno to take over a school there. The club had continued to welcome women as members, and its membership included Marabelle Taylor, Elaine Benthuis, Donna Georgino and Sylvia Whitlock, along with Elliott. In fact Whitlock, who joined in 1982, was the club's president-elect in 1986-87.

In late fall of 1986, District 530 [Governor Tim Keen Siu](#) sent to the Duarte Club and incoming president [Sylvia Whitlock](#) an invitation to attend California PETs and a notice of the district dues schedule.

California PETs took place in February 1987, prior to the United States Supreme Court decision. However, it was incumbent on all California clubs to obey the ruling of the State Court of Appeals. At PETs, the attendance included 310 men and one woman, Sylvia Whitlock, and all were requested to bring a coat and tie for pictures to be taken. [District 530 Governor Siu](#), in the district session, told of the Duarte Club's actions, the court ruling, and the decision of Rotary International to appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. His comment was, in direct reference to the club's small number, "This is a case of the mouse that roared."

THE CLUB, IN DEFERENCE TO THEIR PRIDE IN THE "ROAR,"

CHOSE THAT PHRASE TO APPEAR ON THE CLUB'S NEW BANNER.



Sylvia Whitlock served as president of Duarte for the 1987-1988 Rotary year, although she was unable to attend the International Convention in Munich, coming just one month after the Supreme Court decision.

She had extremely positive things to say about her District Governor, Tim Keen Siu, and he, and the rest of the district leadership, made her feel welcome. She was the first woman club president in the world, although RI did not officially change its constitution and bylaws admitting women until January of 1989, and they did not take effect until July 1, 1989.

During her year, Whitlock was invited to a Rotary Foundation reception in early 1988. It was held on the Spruce Goose in Long Beach. There, the first woman president met Charles Keller, the president of Rotary International. Warm and cordial, Keller demonstrated that the war was truly over, and that women were welcomed to Rotary. Finally, in June, 1988, Sylvia Whitlock attended her first International Convention, in Philadelphia. She was the first woman President to attend an international convention.

To this day, Sylvia Whitlock still serves the Duarte club as secretary, the club celebrated its 50th Anniversary on June 1, 2002, Mary Lou Elliott has retired and moved to La Jolla, California, and women still are a critical part of the spirit of "The Mouse That Roared, the Rotary Club Of Duarte."

A BRIEF HISTORY- TIMELINE OF WOMEN AND ROTARY

June 1964 - The agenda of the Council meeting at the RI Convention in Toronto contains an enactment for the admission of women to Rotary clubs. Convention delegates vote that it be withdrawn.

January 1972 - The Rotary Club of Upper Manhattan, New York, USA, proposes an enactment, 72-48, to admit women to Rotary clubs to the Council on Legislation. After laughter and discussion, 72-48 is rejected.

January 1977 - Four enactments are proposed to the Council on Legislation that would essentially permit women members of Rotary, 77-16, 77-75, 77-70 and 77-94. Also proposed by Upper Manhattan, 77-16, which prohibited membership restrictions based on sex, was rejected. The other three were subsequently withdrawn. The Rotary Club of Fortaleza, Ceara, Brazil, in 77-35, proposed to allow women to become honorary members. It also was rejected.

June 1977 - Duarte held its 25th Anniversary Celebration and introduced the three women, Mary Lou Elliott, Donna Bogart and Rosemary Freitag, as members.

February 1978 - Rotary International first revokes the charter of the Duarte club. The club requests a hearing. The Board then tells Duarte that it must remove women members.

27 March 1978 - Rotary International Board of Directors officially revokes the Charter of the Duarte club. Duarte decides to continue to meet as a quasi-Rotary Club. An X was placed over the Rotary insignia, new pins were made, and the club was called: The Ex-Rotary Club of Duarte.

June 1978 - The Rotary Club of Duarte, California, files suit in Los Angeles Superior Court.

1983 - The Duarte case finally goes to trial in. California State Judge Max Deutz refuses to reinstate the club. The Duarte club immediately appeals the decision.

1984, Carl E. Swenson, Governor of District 5030, appoints Lloyd Hara as Governor's Special Representative to a new club in the Pioneer Square and International District area of Seattle.

18 September 1984 - The Seattle-ID club was chartered with Lloyd Hara the president.

1986 - The California State Appeals Court reverses Judge Deutz, stating that Rotary Clubs are business establishments subject to regulation under the state's Unruh Act, which bans discrimination based on race, gender, religion or ethnic origin. Rotary International immediately appeals the case to the California Supreme Court, who refuses to hear the case.

1986 - Rotary International appeals the decision to the U. S. Supreme Court.

31 July 1986 - The Seattle-International District club unanimously votes to admit women.

4 September 1986 - The Seattle-International District club admits 15 women.

15 September 1986 - the Seattle-ID club hires Margaret McKeown as counsel, files a suit and seeks an injunction against RI, and announces its admission of 15 women.

January 1987 - The Seattle-International District club files an Amicus brief in the Duarte case.

February 1987 - California PETs includes 310 men and one woman, Sylvia Whitlock.

4 May 1987 - The United States Supreme Court affirmed the 1986 ruling of the Court of Appeals of California in a 7 - 0 opinion.

1 July 1987 - Sylvia Whitlock begins term as the first woman club president of RI and Duarte, California.

1988 - The Rotary International Board recognized the right of Rotary clubs in Canada to admit women.

June 1988 - Duarte President Sylvia Whitlock and Seattle-ID President-Elect Karilyn van Soest attend the International Convention in Philadelphia.

1 July 1988 - Karilyn van Soest begins term as second woman club president of RI and president of Seattle-ID club.

January 1989 - Council on Legislation votes to change Constitution and Bylaws of Rotary to admit women.

1 July 1989 - Council on Legislation changes takes effect, and women are officially welcomed in Rotary

1 July 1995 - Eight women take office as District Governors. They include Mimi Altman, RC of Deerfield, IL, Dist. 6440; Gilda Chirafisi, RC of Riverdale, NY, Dist. 7230; Janet W. Holland, RC of Mineral Wells, TX, Dist. 5790; Reba F. Lovrien, RC of Albuquerque Del Norte, NM, Dist. 5520; Virginia B. Nordby, RC of Ann Arbor North, MI, Dist. 6380; Donna J. Rapp, RC of Midland Morning, MI, Dist. 6310; Anne Robertson, RC of Fulton, KY, Dist. 6710; and Olive P. Scott, RC of Cobleskill, NY, Dist. 7190.

1 July 1997 - PDG Gilda Chirafisi, District 7230, begins second term as woman club president of the RC of Riverdale, NY, and the first woman in RI to serve as president twice.

January 1998 - PDG Virginia B. Nordby becomes the first woman delegate to the Council on Legislation that met in New Delhi, India.

June 1998 - Rotary International presents its highest honor, the Rotary Award for World Understanding (RAWU), to Dr. Catherine Hamlin.

1 July 2001 - Sylvia Whitlock, District 5030, begins second term as woman club president of the Duarte club, the second woman in RI to serve as president twice.

1 July 2005, Carolyn E. Jones, PDG District 5010, Alaska, USA becomes the first woman trustee of The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International

1 July 2008, Catherine Noyer-Riveau, of Paris, France, Zone 11, elected to serve as the first woman on the Rotary International board.

2009 -THERE ARE 187,967 FEMALE ROTARIANS WORLDWIDE. SIXTY-THREE SERVE AS DISTRICT GOVERNORS.

A VIDEO FROM ROTARY'S PAST, ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN AND ROTARY OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO.

A **1984** Video on Women and Rotary, based on an RI slide show, produced and narrated by RGHF founder [Jack M. B. Selway](#)

This video was produced for Rotarians in Rotary District 5160 in 1984, three years prior to the admission of women. It was produced for a district conference. My late partner, Peggy Patton and I re-wrote a supplied script to show the accomplishments of women at that time. The original provided was, we felt, not as complimentary toward the role of women and Rotary.

Since that time, I have helped to create www.jeanharris.org which is a part of Rotary Global History, and which tells the "whole story" of the remarkable work of Women and Rotary. This is the website you are now visiting.

This website and the links above clearly show that things have changed and the role of women is unquestionably a remarkable **contribution**.

A HISTORY OF WOMEN IN ROTARY (YOUTUBE VIDEO 7:54)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGAXn3hXcGA&feature=player_embedded

A video from Rotary's past, one view on the role of Women and Rotary, Produced, in 1984, by Jack M. B. Selway for a district presentation. **Reflecting a different time and place** but offered as a look at history.

HISTORY OF WOMAN IN ROTARY-SEATTLE ROTARY CLUB -YOUTUBE VIDEO (TIME 7:17)

<http://www.rotaryfirst100.org/women/issues-early/seattlevideo.htm>

Eleanor Roosevelt and Rotary International



In the April 1940 issue of The Rotarian, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt wrote an article, complete with almost a dozen photographs, to increase America's consciousness about the ravages of the Great Depression, which were still affecting many Americans. Obviously, her article referred to a major "New

Deal" program, the WPA (Works Projects Administration). President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was at the end of his second term in office (he would be elected for four terms, but die in office) and the administration was still trying everything they could to end the Depression.

Rotary, and the Rotarian, were more than happy to extend to the administration and Eleanor Roosevelt all courtesies, as it was in everyone's interest to recover from the economic problems that still plagued the United States, almost nine years after the October 29 stock market crash. Rotary gave the "power of

the press” to FDR efforts, and, less than two years later, when America was dragged into World War II, Rotary was encouraged to keep meeting and get involved, and Rotary responded, primarily with War Bond sales. While she wasn’t the first woman to be closely identified with Rotary, Jean Harris and Lillian Davidson being two important examples, Eleanor Roosevelt was one of the most important. Her article appears here in its entirety.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ON:

HELPING THEM TO HELP THEMSELVES

SOME of us who have been going around America are impressed with the fact that one type of organization might possibly be a real help in carrying people through hard times without needing so much Government assistance. It requires, however, a consciousness on the part of the whole community that there are difficulties to be solved and a willingness to set its shoulders to the wheel and help to solve them. The particular activity I have in mind is the self-help cooperative. To many people that is just a name and means very little, but to some people, it means the preservation of self-respect, the development of a new skill or the practice of an old one, and a chance to start out again with a background of security.

The first self-help cooperative that I remember hearing much about was the one established in Richmond, Virginia. The principle of the self-help cooperative is that anyone, old or young, if he has need to do so, may come in and work, and that his work hours will be exchanged for scrip which can, in turn, be exchanged for commodities and services performed by others, also members of the cooperative. In 1938 in the Richmond Citizens' Service Exchange, 211,300 hours were worked by the members. For this work, scrip was issued to the workers and they exchanged it for food, clothing, shoes, bedding and fuel wood.

In some places even shelter may be provided in this way, and frequently beauty-parlor work and barbering are done. In order to do this, all these activities must be carried on in the exchange, which means, for instance, that if you have a man who is capable of being a baker, you must give him a bake oven and the material for making bread. So the community must be conscious enough of the need to furnish the bake oven and the materials for bread. The baker, in return for his hours of labor, may want to buy a suit. Some other person who gets his bread in the exchange will have spent his hours of labor in repairing, cleaning, and pressing a suit which somebody in the community has not needed and has therefore turned in to the self-help cooperative to be renovated for someone who does need it. You see you cannot start a self-help cooperative with nothing.

The more things the people who come in are able to do, the more things you have to get from the community in order to enable them to go to work. For example, if you have good laundry workers, somebody has to donate laundry machinery; if you have people who know how to make and upholster furniture, somebody has to donate the necessary machinery. But in the end these people who work in the exchange do not suffer from the stigma of being unemployed and on relief.

Of course, on the Works Projects Administration (WPA) there should be no sense of stigma, because one gives work in return for what he gets, but I am sorry to say that in many places I have found deep resentment at the attitude of those who interview WPA workers. On the other side of the picture, there is a resentment on the part of many people toward the WPA worker, which prevents him from getting a job on the outside, which he could frequently fill and would give a great deal to obtain.

IN THE self-help cooperative these feelings are not present. What is furnished by the community is usually material which would otherwise be wasted, and, except in the case of money granted by the Government or by some other source to pay for trained supervision or for certain definite expenses which cannot be eliminated, there is very little direct tax in the way of cash taken from the taxpayer.

The Richmond Citizens' Service Exchange served as a model for the establishment in Washington, D. C., of a self-help exchange, though it has developed differently to fit the needs of a different community. In 1939 this exchange gave work to between 600 and 680 people a month. In 1939, 422,554 hours of work were provided. It is interesting to see the ways in which those workers spent the scrip earned: 181,524 pieces were spent for meals and bread; 103,553 pieces for clothing and such household supplies as sheets, towels, and table linen; 27,354 for furniture and furniture repair; 15,884 for fuel; 13,023 for shoe repair; 10,547 for barbering and beauty-shop services.

In that list of scrip spent, which represents hours of labor, is the tale of the possibility of getting a new job. If you can get something to eat, even if it is not entirely adequate, if you can get new clothes and have your shoes repaired, and go to a barber or a hairdresser, you can start again on the job-hunting business in the frame of mind, which gets a job. Self-help, like WPA, is something to tide us over until the nations of this world solve their economic problems and recognize the fact that no civilization can possibly survive which does not furnish every individual who wishes to work a job at wages on which he can live decently.

I grew up in an era when I remember hearing many people say with some contempt that this or that individual felt the world owed him a living. The idea was that the individual in question was unwilling to work and that, therefore, society had no obligations toward him. I am inclined to agree with the idea, but we are up against a different problem now.

Most of the people who are out of work are ready and willing to work. You and I can pick-out, of course, individuals who like to live on other people's labor and who perhaps have to be forced to work. The great majority of people who are not ill or too old are ready and anxious to work, however, and in this curiously complicated civilization, which we have created through the centuries, there is no work for them to do. We ought to change that old saying and say that a civilization and an economic system which does not recognize its responsibility to answer this question of how work at a living wage can be furnished every individual, should be held in as great contempt as we used to hold the individual who had the attitude that he could go through life effortlessly and expect the world to look after him.

The self-help cooperative has no use for anyone who is not willing to do a good day's work, but the cooperative has this advantage- every age is served alike. In different parts of the United States self-help has been a spontaneous response of workers to prolonged unemployment. Both in Richmond and in Washington, D. C., it was initiated by people who saw that it might solve certain difficulties and wished to make a demonstration of what could be done; so that in these two instances it has not sprung up so clearly from the people themselves. I have seen it, however, with curious vitality, spring up in places where you would expect to find utter discouragement and loss of all initiative. Such things as this have happened: unemployed workers have borrowed idle tractors and asked near-by farmers if they would take their labor for unsold potatoes. It is just going back to the early days of America and using mother wit and neighborliness to keep alive.

During the last seven years, for the first time, these sporadic efforts of idle workers have been systematized and certain precise economic aims and definite techniques of operation have been worked out, and in certain of these the Government has supplied funds with which to buy necessary tools; Self-help cooperatives should be looked upon as a protection for industrial workers who are subject to the present extremes which require in many industries at times a maximum of employment and at other

times throwing great numbers of people back on their own resources. In another field, the Farm Security Administration, an effort has been made to help the small farmer provide himself with a broad base of real income by expanding his productive activities so as to supplement his cash income in good years and in bad years to make him more self-sustaining.

THE LAST Government grants to these self-help cooperatives were made in 1936, and 125 exchanges are still in existence and going strong. The essential activities are always the production of food, the cutting of fuel wood, and the making of clothing, but many other things have been done in different parts of the country, such as dairying, poultry raising, fishing, plumbing, carpentry, baking, operating cafeterias and beauty shops, and repairing automobiles, radios, and shoes.

The Barter Theater in Abingdon, Virginia, was based on much the same barter idea which furnished the springboard for nearly all self-help cooperatives, and have never forgotten a delightful story I heard told at a luncheon a year ago by Robert Porterfield. He told of looking out of the window and seeing a man and his wife and a cow standing outside the theater. Shortly the man came in and inquired how much milk would be needed for a ticket to the show. He was told and went out and brought the milk in. Mr. Porterfield asked if the farmer's wife was not to be allowed to attend also, and he answered, "Sure, but I ain't doing her milking for her."

So you see, everybody must do his own work, but the cooperative spirit, which underlies the whole movement, is valuable education for a democracy. Every day you work you realize that you cannot work for yourself alone, but all the other workers must be producing too in order that you may barter for what you wish and need. The more you help the others, the more you really gain yourself. Good doctrine to inculcate in the citizens of a great democracy!

It seems foolish to have to repeat that the cooperative does not compete with factory production, but it is necessary to say so over and over again apparently. Industry has at times been fearful lest these self-help groups might become a menace, but, after all, they need these workers at times and they need workers who have skills and who are accustomed to work with good equipment.

IN A WAY, the running of a self-help exchange is insurance for industry that its workers will not come back rusty and have to be reeducated in their work when they are needed. What they produce in the exchange is for consumption among themselves. With no income they could not buy from the outside. If they were not working in the exchange, they would be a complete charge upon the community. This would not perhaps be serious if it meant that you could take care of them through relief in the cheapest way possible for a short time and that then they would return at the call of industry to their usual jobs, but that is not what happens as a rule. If they are idle, they are underfed. Their families lack food, a decent home, and a chance for recreation, and so disintegration begins. A young criminal may develop in a family, which has never had that kind of a blot before; some of the children may develop tuberculosis. When a worker is called back. His background, his own condition, unfits him to be of any value.

This is the thing, which too few people think about, when they count the cost of giving men and women work in self-help exchanges or even on WPA or any place, which is not the usual form of employment in either urban or rural localities.

I do not see how it is possible to study the results of the self-help exchanges without being anxious to see this work supported and extended. True, there have been some failures, frequently because of lack of leadership or lack of knowledge on the part of the community or group working out their particular community problem. We need to give more study and thought to helping people to help themselves, and

that is why I hope that communities all over the United States will take an interest in self-help cooperatives.

To learn more about Eleanor Roosevelt's writing and the "New Deal" additional photos, this article and much more.

On the importance of international cooperation

"The only way to obtain peace in the world is to work cooperatively toward that end." (April 6, 1937)

In her years as an outspoken first lady and delegate to the United Nations, Eleanor Roosevelt was one of the most respected women in the world. She was a symbol of the new role women were to play in the world, and her major legacy, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, remains an ideal to which the world still strives. The niece of President Theodore Roosevelt, she married her distant cousin Franklin Roosevelt in 1905. After Franklin fell ill with polio in 1921, she became involved in Democratic politics, and her activities helped stimulate and renew her husband's political interests. In 1932, New York Governor Franklin Roosevelt was elected to the White House, and Eleanor began her 12 years as first lady.

Not one to live by convention, she was the nation's first openly political first lady, working tirelessly as a defender of equal rights and opportunities for the nation's poor and dispossessed. Beginning in 1936, she wrote a nationally syndicated column called "My Day," which addressed many of the pressing political issues of the times. She often traveled alone on behalf of her disabled husband and was a much sought-after speaker. After President Roosevelt died in 1945, his successor, President Harry Truman, appointed her as a delegate to the newly formed United Nations. From 1946 to 1951 she was chairman of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. On December 10, 1948, the U.N. General Assembly unanimously adopted her commission's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which sought to establish basic criteria of civil rights for all the people of the world. Roosevelt left the U.N. in 1952 (returning temporarily in 1961) and continued to be active in politics. She died in 1962.

The history of Women in Rotary is still evolving on a daily basis, with more female District Governors, 2 female Trustees, 4 female Directors, and yes, eventually a female President of Rotary International. The inclusion of women into Rotary has brought new perspectives to our organization globally.

I apologize for the lengthy presentation, but the history of Woman in Rotary is rich and astounding, and I feel compelled as well as proud to share it with my fellow Rotarians.

Yours in Rotary Service,
Bo

Bo's Rotary biography:



Helene Bo Morse

Rotary Club of Concord, CA., USA, D5160
RGHF VP of Zones

Raised in Lafayette-live in Pleasant Hill
BS degree from California State Hayward- Kinesiology & Physical Education
MBA-St. Marys College
Joined Rotary 1996-originally Danville Rotary
2003-2004 Club President D5160
2004-2005 Assistant Governor-San Ramon Valley, CA D5160
2005-2007 District Membership Chair D5160
2007-2009 Annual Giving Chair-Foundation D5160
2009-Rotaplast Ambassador to the present D5160
Disaster Aid USA: Ambassador, Disaster Aid Deployment Team (DART)
Board of Director-Disaster Aid USA
Advisory Board -Salvation Army
Member of Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services Team-EDS
Multiple Paul Harris Fellow
Member of Paul Harris Society
Major Donor for TRF
Bequest & Benefactor for the Rotary Foundation Level 5