

EARLY HISTORY OF THE TWIN FALLS ROTARY CLUB  
by Stuart Taylor as of 1-26-55

In January 1918, a committee of the Salt Lake City, Utah Rotary Club took a trip to Idaho to promote Rotary in this part of the country. At that time, the Boise club was the only Rotary Club, at least in southern Idaho.

Among the places visited by this committee was Twin Falls, where a committee of local businessmen was formed to study the Rotary situation here. This committee consisted of the following five persons:

E. A. Walters, Attorney at Law  
L. L. Breckenridge, Mgr. Twin Falls Flour Mills  
L. T. Wright, Mgr. Consolidated Wagon & Machine Co.  
G. B. Channel, Nibley Channel Lumber Co.  
W. H. Eldridge, Eldridge Clothing Co.

Of this committee, two are living at the present time; Mr. Walters and Mr. Wright.

Invitations to join the Twin Falls Rotary Club were accepted by 22 Twin Falls business men, and on February 7, 1918, in the Commercial Club rooms, the Twin Falls Rotary Club was formed with 20 members present. By-laws were adopted, the five organization committee members were named directors to the end of the Rotary year and the following officers were elected:

E. A. Walters, President  
W. H. Eldridge, Vice-president  
Stuart H. Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer

The original roster of the club was as follows:

R. B. King, Idaho Power Co., Electric Power Distribution  
A. G. Fisher, Fisher Drug Co., Drug Retail  
E. B. Williams, Perrine Hotel, Hotels  
A. Ostrander, Ostrander & Macauley, Retail Furniture  
G. R. Easley, Automobile sales, retail  
J. S. Keel, Real Estate  
C. J. Hahn, Trust Company executive  
E. A. Walters, Attorney at law  
Stuart H. Taylor, Insurance service  
W. R. Priebe, Retail jewelry  
H. E. Barber, Shoes Retail sales  
W. H. Eldridge, Clothing, Retail sales  
Larry Clos, Office supplies, retail  
R. A. Read, Newspaper publishing  
L. E. Salladay, Retail hardware  
C. B. Channel, Retail lumber  
L. T. Wright, Retail farm machinery  
A. J. Peavey, Abstracting & title service  
L. L. Breckenridge, Flour manufacturing  
J. M. Maxwell, Commercial banking  
A. L. Swim, Mortgage loans  
Sam Hart, Dry goods retail

The Twin Falls Rotary Club was the 379th. club in Rotary, their Charter being earlier than either Pocatello or Idaho Falls clubs which were formed about the same time, and by the same committee.

< The first weekly luncheon of the club was held on Wednesday, February 27, 1918 in the Rogerson Hotel dining room, with all but two members present. The club belonged to the then 5th. District in Rotary International comprising of the states of Utah, Montana and Idaho. The District Governor at that time was George O. Relf, Manager of the Hotel Utah. About this time, the annual district conference was held in Salt Lake City and the president, secretary and L. T. Wright represented the club.

*E. A. WALTERS STUART H. Taylor Reported at this meeting and the Dist*

< The club meetings were alternated between the Rogerson and Perrine Hotel dining rooms, adjourning after the lunch to a room where the business and programs were held. At that time, there were no private dining rooms in the city large enough to hold club meetings.

One of the first things discussed by the club was the condition of the roads in the vicinity. A good roads committee was appointed and from this discussion, eventually the Twin Falls Highway District was formed in August of 1918.

The club discussed matters relating to the community at their meetings as the Commercial Club during those first years did not function too well. < The club and its members worked in the various war drives, members heading up the organization of many of them. They assisted in getting beet acreage for the new sugar factory, inaugurated the movement for the building of the U. P. Railroad to Wells, Nevada, financed the first meeting of Boys and Girls Clubs in the county, installed road signs necessary and worked against the division of Twin Falls County. The club also started the Boy Scout work in this part of Idaho with several of the members taking scout troops to help out until suitable organization and leaders could be obtained. >

< One of the best projects undertaken by the club was the holding of a Crippled Children's Clinic here when over 160 children were brought for examination. In 1920 the club subscribed \$1000. and sent a crippled child to Mayo Brothers Clinic for treatment. >

< The Twin Falls Rotary Club took in its first new members on August 6, 1918. > They were Jas. McMillan, Hal G. Blue, T. C. Macauley and C. S. McMartin. Of the original charter members, only 8 are now living and only one is now a member of the club. < The first Boys Night was held on September 11, 1918 and the first Ladies Night on January 8, 1919. > The first resignation in the club was that of Bill Ostrander's father, A. R. Ostrander, in February of 1919. The club has had only two 100 percent meetings, one in April, 1939 and one in 1951. Two members of the club, E. A. Walters and the Reverend Leslie Rolls have been district governors; Mr. Walters in 1926-27 and Reverend Rolls in 1949-50.

< In 1919, the Victory Rotary International Convention was held in Salt Lake City, and 24 members of the club attended. >

< In 1920, the club became interested in Miss Hazel Lansberry of this city who had a crippling injury. Correspondence between the club and the Mayo Clinic resulted in an offer by them to take care of her if the club would pay her traveling and hospital expense. This was taken over as a club project and each member contributed \$25.00 to make up the necessary sum. The operation was helpful and on September 22, 1920, she appeared before the club to express her thanks for their help. It was found that the assessment of \$25.00 each was not quite enough to take care of all the expenses so another \$5.00 was assessed and collected from each member. >

The oldest memberships in the club at the present time are Stuart H. Taylor, a charter member; Cap Krengel who joined in October 1922 and Ralph Pink who joined in October, 1923. There are now living in Twin Falls, about thirty former members of the club of whom seven are past presidents. The club has had 39 presidents, including our present Bob, One passed away while in office and one resigned.

< In 1932, due to the depression, memberships in the club dropped to 24. Harry Benoit was president at that time. The outlook for the club was not very bright and it was even suggested that the club disband and give up its charter. Harry announced that there would be no surrender of the club charter and the club would meet every week if only the officers were present, and he knew they would be. The crisis was passed and the club continued with a growing membership. > The Club adopted as its 50th. Rotary Anniversary project, the promotion of the Harry Barry Memorial Park, in addition to the continuing project with the Cerebral Palsy School in Twin Falls.

Our present membership is 80 and during the past year we have attained our 100% participation in the Rotary Foundation Fellowship Fund.