

The Rotary Club of Peachland

In October of 1997 the Peachland Rotary Club formally joined the wider world of Rotary International and enthusiastically embraced the motto, “Service Above Self”, as the reason for its existence. The impetus for such a club came from Peachland resident, Bob Harriman, a former Rotarian and Past District Governor, who in March 1997, approached Ken Arthurs, the local District Governor, requesting that a club be considered for Peachland. Governor Arthurs happily accepted the request and a short time later reported that the Rotary Club of Summerland had expressed an interest in being the new club’s sponsor. In the meantime, recruitment activities commenced and by May 1st the required 20 prospective members had been identified and their names submitted to Rotary headquarters in Evanston, Illinois. At one of the early weekly meetings Gilbert LeRoux was acclaimed the club’s first provisional president. On June 12th 1997, Rotary International approved the creation of a new club in Peachland.

The first “Charter Night” took place at the club house of the Ponderosa Golf and Country Club in Peachland on October 25, 1997. It was indeed a gala event. Invitations, which had been sent to all 60 Rotary Clubs in District 5060 - Revelstoke to Prosser in Washington State – resulted in a strong Rotary presence especially from Summerland and the Kelowna area. The new District Governor, Hank Heffernan, from Yakima, Washington, presented President LeRoux with the club’s charter, Past District Governor Adolf Illichmann gave the keynote address and Peachland Mayor George Waldo, later himself a Rotarian, brought greetings and a warm welcome from the municipality. The Summerland club presented its protégée with an inscribed gavel and thus cemented the special bond that continues to exist between the two clubs. A golf tournament was arranged for the next day.

The club’s twenty original or “charter members” are Gilbert LeRoux, Pat Borton, Felicity Fuchs, Wendy Van der Lee, Christof Wiedner, Ted Sinclair, Margaret Sinclair, Peter Swityk, Chris Scowen, Rosemarie Baye, Walter Baye, Howard Fuchs, David Halverson, Brenda Herrin, Ron Lang, Jacqueline Lomax, Tom Pilgrim, Ken Rosser and Irene Simpson. Of these, Margaret Sinclair, Ted Sinclair and Chris Scowen have maintained their club memberships while current members Suzy Clark, Terry Tanner and Klaus Mast, who were present at the first Charter Night, are always recognized whenever charter members are identified.

While the members of the executive represent the heart of any successful Rotary Club, it is the president that is the club’s driving force throughout their one year tenure. Since 1997 the following members have occupied that position: Gilbert Leroux 1997/98; Pat Borton 98/99; Terry Tanner 99/00; Ted Sinclair 00/01; Chris Scowen 01/02; Margaret Sinclair 02/03 (the Club’s first woman president); Klaus Mast 03/04; Ken Klein 04/05; Chris Southin 05/06; Allan Hall 06/07; John Miller 07/08; Ken Clark 08/09; Midge Behnke 09/10; Ted Sinclair 10/11; John Abernethy 11/12; and Wolfgang Muhs who will become President 2012/13. There are currently 27 members.

The club experimented with various weekly meeting times - breakfast, lunch or dinner – and finally settled on a noon get-together, a time that continues to suit the majority of members. There was also a period of trial and error surrounding where the club would both meet and eat. Various town venue’s were tried including the Little School House prior to settling on the club’s current location, Gashaus On The lake.

Since its founding on February 23, 1905 by Paul F. Harris in Chicago, the Rotary concept of service and fellowship has been embraced by men and woman in 33,000 clubs around the world. Rotary members strive to positively influence activities within their local community, their country and the larger world beyond. Since 1997 the members of Peachland Rotary Club have become actively involved in promoting such local activities as the Silver Lake Camp, Peachland Food bank, the annual senior’s bus trip, Wellness Centre, Little School House, adult literacy, Peachland Boxing Club, Christmas Light-Up, interpretative trails,

Peachland Elementary School, Cops for Kids, Polar bear swim, senior housing, Peachland Ambassadors, Kelowna Cancer Lodge, the local school Bike Rodeo and numerous other youth oriented activities. On the international front great emphasis has been placed on fund raising for polio eradication, plus efforts to provide clean water in parts of Kenya and South Africa. Additionally, a number of \$1,000 Shelter Boxes have been sent to the world's disaster areas. Some of the more visible local activities involved the following:

The Rotary Centennial Pavilion presented to the Town of Peachland in 2005 to commemorate the centennial of Rotary International.



Kneeling L to R: Michael Henderson, Ted Kampa, Dorothy Cobb, Nancy Campbell, Midge Behnke, Ted Sinclair, Shayn Moritz
 First Row L to R: Klaus Mast, Joan Robinson, Margaret Sinclair, Jean Miller, Carole Chiswell, George Waldo, Bill Wolfe, Christof Weidner.
 Second Row L to R: Suzy Clark, Chris Southin, Alan Hall, Tom Montgomery, Bert Put
 Back Row L to R: Ken Clark, Terry Tanner, John Abernethy, John Miller, Ken Klein, Bill Schoof, Chris Scowen
 Missing: Marion Henselwood, Don Mayoss-Hurd, Linda Kenzle and Honorary member, Peter Behnke



The first large Rotary project –A history of Peachland in pictures.



A major partner in the Heritage Park playground



The Rotary Clock, presented to Peachland during the town's centennial year 2009.