



BHC-MSS 0031

Guide to the Records of the Rotary Club of Bridgeport, Connecticut

By Meg Rinn

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Rotary Club of Bridgeport, Connecticut

Title: Records of the Rotary Club of Bridgeport, Connecticut

Dates: 1919-1994 [bulk 1970-1990]

Quantity: 8 record cartons, 3.5 manuscript boxes, 2 index card boxes

Abstract: Founded in 1919, Bridgeport Rotary has provided public service for 100 years. As a part of Rotary International, the club's mandate to provide public good and promote business among members is well documented in the collection. In addition to providing day-to-day administrative information from the club's history, a large portion of the records focus on the 1970s to 1990s. Viewed in conjunction with other like organizations from that time - such as the records of the United Way and the YWCA - these materials offer an insight into the societal problems of Bridgeport during a time of sharp economic downturn in the city.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Administrative History

For a full and complete history of the Bridgeport Rotary club, please refer to *Bridgeport Rotary: A Century of Service...to Bridgeport and the World, 1919-2019[...]* written by Christopher Gallo. The Bridgeport History Center retains a copy, and this administrative history relies extensively on Gallo's work.

Rotary is an international organization made up of local community clubs whose emphasis is on public service within the community and internationally. It was the brain child of Paul Harris, who began the organization in Chicago, 1905. He was inspired to collect local business owners together, trade ideas, and build a support network to help improve Chicago. The name Rotary came from the fact that meeting places were in a rotation.

Bridgeport's club was founded in 1919, consisting of 28 male members and meeting at the Stratfield Hotel. The group would meet for lunch, talk business and the community, and then enjoy a lecture on a topic that might range from humanities to sciences to anything in between. The discussion of the community lead to community service projects, and a solid network of both helping hands and financial assistance in order to make projects possible. Until 1987, Rotary was a male-only organization.

The list of Bridgeport Rotary's public service projects is extensive. One of their first was the creation of Camp Pomperaug, a camp for children, in 1923 - extremely early on in Rotary's history. Providing service to Bridgeport's children is a particular hallmark of Bridgeport Rotary's history, as their works range from large scale projects such as that camp to building playgrounds, providing scholarships, and helping to fund all other manner of supportive services both focused on academic achievement and providing after school activities to engage Bridgeport's youth.

That academic emphasis has manifested in other ways too. Bridgeport Rotary was an early sponsor of the Junior College of Connecticut, which in 1947 became the University of Bridgeport.

In the 1970s, the Bridgeport Rotary Club began one of its most ambitious projects, and one that strived to meet one of Bridgeport's greatest needs. It began the construction of housing for senior citizens and low income households, all under the corporate name of Bridgeport Rotary Housing Corporation. One building expanded into two, and while these buildings have required updates over the years, they continue to stand and are used to provide housing to those who need it most.

These are only highlights of Bridgeport Rotary's many, *many* charitable works over its illustrious century. All of the works strive to reflect Rotary International's values of promotion of business among members, good fellowship, community service, and community pride.

Again, please refer to *Bridgeport Rotary: A Century of Service...to Bridgeport and the World, 1919-2019[...]* by Christopher Gallo for an extensive documentation of Rotary's history.

Scope and Content note:

The records of the Rotary Club of Bridgeport Connecticut documents the activities of the club from roughly its founding up into 2005, which was when the last material was donated to the Bridgeport History Center. Much of the material relates to administrative matters of the club, including minutes from various committees, programs, and behind-the-scenes work in order to maintain the club's dedication to service.

As the bulk of the material covers the 1970s to the 1990s, the collection is of particular interest to those looking to examine Bridgeport during its economic downturn during that time frame.

In 2021, additional material from a later donation was found in the Bridgeport History Center's collections. Mostly financial in nature, the material picks up from where the last donation of the 1990s left off. The contents did not have significant overlap that required inferfiling - instead, additional series were created. These materials primarily focus on the organization's finances from the 1990s into 2005. See arrangement note for further details.

Arrangement note:

The arrangement of the collection is slightly odd, as it seems that a portion of the collection was kept in original order, with the rest being lightly processed. As such, series I, called office files represents the original order of material, likely removed from a file cabinet. Series II, subject files, is an alphabetical file listing of material, as processed by a former archivist here at the Bridgeport History Center. Series III consists of member rosters and it shares a box with series IV. The fifth series is membership index cards/applications, followed by a clippings series (VI). Series VII consists of minimally processed photographs in a half manuscript box.

In 2021, a later donation of material was found in collections. These documents make up series VII through XII, as there was very little overlap of material between the initial donation and this accrual, which seems to have come in 2007.

Series VII, finances, is divided into two subseries: banking and subject files. The banking information represents bank statements, bills paid, and general financial information. The subject files contain financial information regarding specific topics. Newsletters consist of the district's

newsletter up until the time of donation, as do directories. Programs are minimally processed, arranged alphabetically by programs that were already set aside in folders upon donation, and then a general set of program files. Videos are arranged chronologically, and can be viewed in the Bridgeport History Center. The final series consists of small objects and ephemera, including banners and tote bags.

Some subject files and membership directories have been listed in the appropriate series elsewhere. Their status from 2007 donation is clear by the later box number they have been assigned.

Administrative information:

Provenance: Multiple accessions from Rotary Club members

Preferred Citation:

Record of the Rotary Club of Bridgeport, Connecticut (BHC-MSS 0031), Bridgeport History Center.

Names and Subject Tracings

Corporate names

Bridgeport Rotary (Bridgeport, Conn.)

Rotary International

Subject tracings

Clubs

Service clubs

Societies and clubs

Detailed box and folder listing

Series I, Office files

Box 1

1. Annual outing letters, 1872
2. Brewer-Borg Printers, division of Fabco, Inc. 1972-1973z
3. Club committees, 1970-1977
4. Community service fund, 1972
5. Club plans and objective summary, 1974
6. Board of directors meetings, 1972-1978
7. B "misc" 1971
8. Boy's work, undated (original folder empty)
9. Club president, secretary meeting places, c. 1970s
10. Charter members, 192-1931
11. Classification, 1948-1975
12. Correspondence, 1980s
13. C misc., 1972-1975
14. Directors, 1972-1975
15. District conference, 1970

16. District governor's monthly report, 1970s
17. District governor, 1970
18. Dues – delinquent and treasurer letters, 1976
19. Excuses, 1978
20. E misc., 1972-198
21. Finance report and budget, WFS, 1969
22. Financial statement, 1967
23. Forms – Termination, new members, change (original folder empty)
24. F. misc., 1932
25. G misc., undated
26. General secretary letter to district governor original folder empty)
27. Holiday exchange program, 1974
28. H misc., 1980
29. J misc., 1978
30. New members – letters, re-instatement (original folder empty)
31. Ladies Nite, 1971
32. Nutmeg Open (original folder empty)
33. Postage, envelopes, 1973-1976
34. Resignation letters to members (original folder empty)
35. Resumes, new candidates (original folder empty)
36. Revista Rotaria, 1977
37. Rotary International foundation, 1979
38. Rotary information school, 1970
39. Rotary international newsletter, 1970s
40. RI News (original folder empty)
41. Rotary International, 1971-1979
42. RI Orders, 1970-1974
43. The Rotary Foundation, 197
44. Rotary speakers, 1980-1981
45. Z misc., 1932-198
46. S.A., 1972-174
47. S. active, letters of application, 1970-1972
48. Scholarship committee, 1977
49. S. misc (original folder empty)
50. Songs, undated
51. RI correspondence, 1972-1980
52. Rotary info school, 1971-1973
53. Roster, 1978-1986
54. Members, 1970-178
55. Membership attendance report forms, 1986
56. M misc. 1970-1989
57. Members, dropped letters, 171-1980
58. McQuillian and Marsh Press, 174-1975

59. Attendance, perfect, 1970-1972
60. Absentee records- attendance record, Bill Cottle, 1970-189
61. Arthur Clifford, 1957-1980
62. Average, semi-annual, 1972-1978
63. Attendance, 1970=198
64. Membership classifications, 1992
65. Address changes (original folder empty)
66. By-Laws of the Rotary Club of Bridgeport, 1952-1964
67. Correspondence, 1982-
68. Membership list, 198-1990
69. New members inducted, 1987-1993
70. Attendance at meetings, 1986-1991

Box 2

1. Letters, change of classification, 1971-1999
2. Minutes of board, 1988-1993
3. Minutes of Board of directors meetings, 1 of 2, 1981-1982
4. Minutes of Board of directors meetings, 2 of 2, 1981-1982
5. Officers and board of directors, 1982-1992
6. Nutmeg and Board Minutes, 1987-1988
7. Nutmeg and Board Minutes, 1970-1989 1 of 2
8. Nutmeg and Board Minutes, 1970-1989 2 of 2
9. Postings, 198-193
10. Resignations (original folder empty)
11. Rosters, 1991-1994
12. Russel-Hampton co. (supplies, badges, etc.), 190s
13. Proposing new members, 1987-1991
14. RI Semi-annual reports, 1 of 3, 1979-1981
15. RI Semi-annual reports, 1 of 3,, 1973-1978
16. RI Semi-annual reports, 1 of 3,, 1970-1977
17. Semi-annual reports, 1981-1985 1 of 2
18. Semi-annual reports, 1981-1985 2 of 2
19. Treasurer's report, 1976

Series II, Subject files

Box 3

1. Anniversary programs
2. Attendance at meetings, 1977-1980
3. Attendance at meetings, 1980-1981
4. Attendance at meetings, 1986-1987
5. Attendance cards, 1940 and undated
6. Attendance day, 1989
7. Attendance record, 1979

8. Attendance record, 1980
9. Attendance record, 1981
10. Attendance record, undated
11. By-laws and amendments, undated
12. Brochures, 1951-1990
13. Certificates, 1963-1964 and undated
14. Club-service committee, 1971-1998
15. Committee lists cover letter, July 3, 1981
16. Community service, 1973-1988
17. Conferences, 193-1952
18. Constitution, 1956 and undated
19. Convention 1954
20. Correspondence, 1986-1990
21. Correspondence with Rotary clubs outside the US, 1936-1988
22. Directors minutes, July 1950-June 1954
23. Directors minutes, July 1954-June 1958
24. Directors minutes, July 1958-June 1963
25. Directors minutes, July 1963-July 1967
26. Directors minutes, November 1970-December 1974
27. Directors minutes, 1989
28. District 79 district governor, deputy district governor
29. Free enterprise program, 1987-1990
30. Group study exchange, 1986-1990
31. Kiwani notice, 1941-1946
32. Lansdale, H. Parker, undated
33. Membership lists and other membership information, 1927-1988
34. Membership proposal forms – blank, undated
35. Membership questionnaires, 1989
36. Misc. clippings and articles from publications, 1939-1959
37. New members welcome, undated
38. Newsletter – Billings Cogwell, 191-1957
39. Newsletter – The Buzzer (Hartford, CT), 191-1954
40. Newsletters from CT, 1939-1964
41. Newsletters from other states, 1958-199
42. Newsletters, Governor's Reports, 1935-1950
43. Newsletters, Greenwich Cog, (Greenwich CT), 1940-1943
44. Newsletters, Rotary Fellow (Brooklyn, NY), 140-1947 and undated
45. Newsletters, Your Critique (Waterbury CT), 142-197
46. Nominating committee, 1986-190
47. Norman K. Parsells Fund and luncheons, 1986-1990
48. The Nutmeg, 1940-1969
49. "Old Glory" manufacturing corp, undated
50. Paul Harris Fellows, 180-1983

51. Paul Hine Day, 1955-1962
52. Pedal and Plunge for Polio Plus, 1987-1988
53. Poetry to Paul Hine and Mo Hine from Harry Beardsley, 1949-1955
54. Proclamation, 196
55. Proclamation, 1989
56. Program budget, 1989-1990
57. Program publicity, 1935-1989 and undated
58. Programs and speakers, tributes, 1925-1990 and undated
59. Resignation letters, 1988
60. Resumes, 1989 and undated
61. Ribbons, 1949 and undated
62. Rotary housing corp, 1971-1988 and undated
63. Rotarian of the Year award, undated
64. Scholarship fund, 1986-1990 and undated
65. Service above self awards, 1987-1988
66. "Some chronicles from the past" by H. Parker Lansdale, 1983
67. Songs and poems, undated, 1956 and 1988
68. Summary of club plans and objectives, 1988
69. Telegrams, 1948-1969
70. Treasurer statement, 1947-1948 and 1967-1968

Series III, Member rosters

71. Club roster, 1927-1928

Box 4

1. Club roster, 1953-1954
2. Club roster, 1962-1963
3. Club roster, 1969-1970
4. Club roster, c. 1970s
5. Roster pages, 1977?
6. Club roster, 1980-1981
7. Club roster, 1981-1982
8. Roster pages, 198
9. Club roster, 1985-1986
10. Club roster, 1987
11. Attendance book, 1932-1979
12. Rotary international stamps, 1961
13. Rotary international medallion, 1969
14. Award to Rotary Club from Bridgeport PAL, 1966

Series IV, Applications and proposals

Box 5

Membership applications and proposal cards, A-O, 1028-1976

Box 6

Membership applications and proposal cards, P-Z and blank, 1928-1976

Series V Clippings

Box 7

1. Clippings, 1920s
2. Clippings, 1930s
3. Clippings, 1940s
4. Clippings, 1 of 2, 1950s
5. Clippings, 2 of 2, 1950s
6. Clippings, 1960s
7. Clippings, 1970s
8. Clippings, 1 of 2, 1980s
9. Clippings, 2 of 2, 1980s
10. Clippings, undated
11. Rotary Club clippings scrapbook, 1963-1969
12. Programs, 1985
13. Programs, 1985

Series VI, Photographs

Box 8

1. Photographs, no identification
2. Photographs, some identification
3. Photographs, unknown events, 2005 and undated

Series VII, Finances

Subseries 1, Banking

Box 9

1. Finances, 1994-1995
2. Finances, 1994-1995
3. Finances, 1994-1995
4. Finances, 1995-1996
5. Finances, 1995-1996
6. Finances, 1995-1996
7. Finances, 1996-1997
8. Finances, 1996-1997
9. Finances, 1996-1997
10. Finances, 1996-1997
11. Finances, 1997-1998
12. Finances, 1997-1998
13. Finances, 1997-1998
14. Finances, 1998
15. Finances, 1998-1999
16. Finances, 1998-1999
17. Finances, 1999-2000
18. Finances, 1999-2000

Box 10

1. Finances, 2000-2001
2. Finances, 2000-2001
3. Finances, 2000-2001
4. Finances, 2001-2002
5. Finances, 2001-2002
6. Finances, 2001-2002
7. Finances, 2001-2002
8. Finances, 2001-2002
9. Finances, 2001-2002
10. Finances, 2001-2002
11. Bank statements, 1997-2001
12. Bank statements, 1997-2001
13. Bank statements, 1998
14. Checks written, 1989-1994
15. Fleet checking, 1997-1998
16. People's Bank checking, 1997-1998
17. People's Bank savings, 1998
18. Checking, 1998
19. Checks written, 1999-2002

Box 11

1. Bills, 1988-1989
2. Bills, 1989-1990
3. Bills, 1990-1991
4. Bills, 1991-1992
5. Bills, 1997
6. Bills, 1997-1998
7. Bills, 1998
8. Bills, 1998

Subseries 2, Subject files

9. 75th anniversary, 1992
10. Bike-a-thon, 1991
11. Bridgeport Area Foundation, 1995-1997
12. Community service fund pledges, 1987
13. District conference, 1998
14. District conference, 1998-1999
15. Dues payment, 1940s-1970s
16. Dues payment, 1940s-1970s
17. Dues payment, 1940s-1970s
18. Endowment, 1986-1992
19. Faxes, 1991-1992
20. Financial reports and board minutes, 1982-1986
21. Financial reports and board minutes, 1982-1986
22. Financial reports and board minutes, 1990-1992
23. Foundation filing, 1989-1992
24. Free enterprise, 1988, 1990

25. Housing rehabilitation corp.. 990s, 1986

Box 12

1. Invoices, 1998
2. Membership/deposits, 1991
3. The Nutmeg interfiled with financial information, 1991-1993
4. Other financial files, 1990-1991
5. Receipts, 1997-1998
6. Rotary roast, 1995
7. Scholarships, 1990
8. Scholarships, 1991
9. Semi-annual reports, 1991-1994
10. Spencer Robinson visit, 1992
11. Urban concerns conference, 1998

Series VIII, Newsletters

12. Governor's newsletter
13. District 798/7980 newsletter, 1990-1994
14. District 7980 newsletter, 1995-1997
15. District 7980 newsletter, 1997-2000
16. District 7980 newsletter, 2001-2005
17. District 7980 newsletter, 2005-2007

Series IX, Directories

18. District directory, 1964-1981
19. District directory, 1981-1994
20. District directory, 1994-2000
21. District directory, 2000-2006
22. District directory, 2000-2003

Box 13

Series X, Programs

1. Celebration books, 1996, 1999, 2001
2. Conference programs
3. Conference programs
4. Conference programs
5. Conference programs
6. Dinner programs, 1982-2004
7. District assembly, 1972-2005
8. Group study exchange, 1980-2003
9. Group study exchange, 1980-2003
10. Group study exchange, 1980-2003
11. Norman Parsells Award, 2001-2005
12. Officer instillation, 2003, 2006
13. Youth exchange program, 1970-1995
14. Youth exchange program, 1970-1995
15. Programs, 1995-2203
16. Programs, 1995-2003

Series II, Subject files, continued

17. Clippings, 2000s
18. Connecticut Post supplement, 2005
19. District manual, 1990
20. President's notebook, 1997-1998
21. President's notebook, 1997-1998
22. President's notebook, 1998-1999
23. Submission for Charles Pettengill memorial award, 1992

Box 14

1. Submission for Charles Pettengill memorial award, 1993
2. Submission for Charles Pettengill memorial award, 1993
3. West Haven Rotary notebook, 1980-1981
4. West Haven Rotary notebook, 1984-1985
5. West Haven Rotary notebook, 1990-1991

Series III, Membership rosters, continued

6. Membership, 1927
7. Membership directories, 2000-2007

Box 15

Series XI, Videos

1. Bhichai Rattakul's P.E.T.S. message to 2002-03 presidents, 2001
2. A message concerning the Polio Eradication Campaign Bhichai Rattakul, president, 2002-2003
3. Mid-year presidents meeting at the Graduate Club, January 2002
4. District conference, Albany, NY, May 2002
5. District conference, Albany, NY, May 2002
6. Summer family picnic and passing of the gavel, July 2002
7. GSE groups at US District 7980, 2003
8. Mid-year presidents meeting at the Graduate Club, January 2003
9. Mid-year presidents meeting at the Graduate Club, January 2003
10. District assembly at Trumbull Marriot, April 2003
11. District assembly at Trumbull Marriot, April 2003
12. Changing of the guard event of the New Haven Rotary Club, June 2003
13. Passing of the gavel inaugural gala honoring Gov. Paul Burns, June 2003
14. 2003 Brisbane convention promo, 2003
15. First conference [mini-tape], 1994
16. First conference [mini-tape], 1994
17. First conference [mini-tape], 1994
18. First conference [mini-tape], 1994
19. First conference [mini-tape], 1994
20. Changing of the guard, 1994

Box 16

Series XII, Objects

1. Citation banners

- a. International service, 1992-1993
 - b. Attendance at district conference, 1996-1997
 - c. Vocational service, undated
2. Theme banners
 - a. Look beyond yourself, undated
 - b. Believe in what you do, do what you believe in, undated
 - c. Build the future with action and vision, 1996-1997
 - d. Show Rotary care, 1997-1998
 - e. Create awareness, take action 299102992
 - f. Lend a hand, 2003-2004
 - g. Celebrate Rotary [100th anniversary], 2005
3. Plaque from Juan Diaz, Costa Rica, 1995
4. Wooden plaque from Rotary Club of Nicoya Costa Rica, 1995
5. Prayer rug, undated

Box 17

1. Scrapbook, 75th anniversary, 1993-1994
2. Tote bags, 1999, 2003, 2005
3. Plaques with names of past district governors, 1993
4. Pins, 1990s-2000s