

Rational for and Organization of the History and Archives

The Club's members are grateful for the efforts of Walt Wicker who captured the history from 1964 to 1978 and several others, some not known, who documented invaluable information in the early years. In addition, many of the Club's presidents maintained records on their respective tenure. One of the most valuable sources of information, which contained many Board meeting minutes, membership records, and some Shrimporee Reports, was Charles Hartman's file covering several years, which was meticulously maintained. Also many of the former presidents were still active members of the Club during the writing of this history and provided information from their perspective retrospectively. Most of the history from 1964 to 1978 was taken from a previously written history by Walt Wicker. The history was used verbatim except for obvious mistakes such as misspelled words. The newsletter, Blastoff, and the Board meeting minutes were also good sources of information.

The documents from previous Rotary years were not normally kept after the respective year except by the mercy of the respective president in her or his personal file, or by a concerned club member who did want to throw club documents away but did not know what to do with them, or in boxes somewhere by the Club's historian. Neither did the District keep any records other than some membership numbers. In general, the Board meeting minutes, committees and committee members, membership data, and club rosters were comprehensive and well preserved, although some were missing. However budget information, especially the actuals, and the newsletters were not. Information about income was reasonably good since many of the fundraiser reports had the financials for several years prior to the year of the report, which provided information for years with very little information available. This was also true for a few of the budget actuals. Most of the financial information for a particular year was found in the ensuing years' financial data as a reference.

Much effort has gone into assessing what information to archive. Initially the Historian made the decision. Once the history was in draft form, it was offered to the respective available Club's president to review. After the review and resolution of comments, the President of the Rotary year under review made the final decision on what is to be contained in the electronic archives for her or his year. For the Rotary year that the President was not available, the history was offered to members of the Club who were members during the Rotary year or years under review. The history file was then provided to the Club members for review. Comments were resolved and the final Rotary year history placed in the archives.

The basic building block for the archives is the Rotary Year history. All the historical information is either contained or referenced in these histories except for the multiyear narrative, *History of the Rotary Club of Space Center, A Topical Summary*; and *History of the Rotary Club of Space Center, A Corollary Version*. A Rotary year is from July 1 of one year to June 30 of the next year. The history for each Rotary year is a narrative compiled from previously written histories, documents in the history file, articles, photographs, the Club's newsletters, and from interviews with persons with experiential knowledge. It appears that some of the previously written histories and chronologies may have been written on a calendar year basis, at least there are discrepancies among the documents. Therefore, unless the event has a specific date, events may have been placed in the wrong year. However the events are no more than one year in error. The previously written records have been invaluable in the preparation of the Club's history and have been preserved in the archives.

Not all of the available history documentation has been archived, but rather pertinent documents; and representative documents, which reflect the flavor of the writings of the Club's officers and directors during the period in history which they served. Note: The entire history file for the year the Club was

chartered was placed in the electronic archives. To this end much of the original written histories and chronologies are quoted verbatim except for the insertion of additional information found elsewhere, and obvious errors such as spelling. In regard to representative documents, one or two documents were chosen out of several similar documents to represent the style of the writer and how the Club's business was conducted at that time in the history of the Club. Usually the number of these types of documents which was in the history file was also noted. For example, there may have been 30 similar (except for the name) thank you letters to persons who presented the weekly Club's program. In addition to providing accurate and complete information about the Rotary year, a perspective from one year to another is provided. For instance each Rotary year history contains the number of years a particular activity has been part of the Club's programs such as the tenth year of Excellence in Education Awards.

Most of the photographs and documents which were electronically archived are stored in the Rotary history storage. In addition to the electronically archived photographs and documents in the Rotary year histories, additional support material were electronically archived and reside on the history computer maintained by the Historian. This material is organized in a manner similar to that of the Rotary year histories on the history web site.

In order to provide trends, analysis, and cumulative values over a period of time, records are maintained on a Rotary year basis on certain activities of the Club since it was chartered in 1964. Such activities are the amount of monies given to service and international projects, the amount of monies given to The Rotary Foundation, the membership, the amount of monies received from the fundraisers, and the names and dates of the Paul Harris Fellows. Since the Rotary year history provides only a snap shot of the Club's entire history, a narrative titled *The Journey* has been written to present the Club's activities over the years including trends and cumulative values. In addition a summary version of *The Journey* titled *The Journey SV* provides for quick reading and posting to websites.

The Club had many activities that spanned several Rotary years which were difficult to adequately present in a Rotary year history and which required an inordinate amount of space in the narrative, but are worthy of detailed write ups. Such activities are the Project Free Enterprise and the Three Wishes for Christmas. These activities are listed on the Home Page under Histories of Multiyear Club Activities.

In addition to the Rotary year histories and the summary histories, *History of the Rotary Club of Space Center, A Topical Summary*; and *History of the Rotary Club of Space Center, A Corollary Version*, Club information which is similar from year to year is stored in a format which spans all of the Rotary years on a Rotary year basis. This information is linked from the respective Rotary year history and can be accessed from the Rotary year, or can be accessed directly from the Home Page. This format allows the review of similar information for all of the Rotary years without going back to the Rotary year history or Home Page. With this format, an activity can be selected on a Rotary year basis, and once in the selected year, then viewed over all the Rotary years by scrolling up and down the page from 1964 to the present. As an example, one can view all the Board meeting minutes from Rotary year 1964 to the year 2014 by clicking on Board meeting minutes on the Home Page, either selecting a specific year or select 1964 and scroll from 1964 to the desired year and then select the minutes to be reviewed. However for the newsletter, only the newsletters in a Rotary year can be viewed. To view another year, one will have to close out the year being reviewed and select another year for viewing. This information is compiled in the following broad categories:

- Officers and Board Members
- Board minutes

Committee members
Newsletters (Blastoff)
Special occasions and recognitions
Rotary International and District 5890 (589)
Membership and Club Directory
Fund raisers
District 5890 (589) Governors

In addition to the above mentioned histories, special occasions and recognitions are extracted from the Rotary year histories and placed on a web page in chronological order. This format allows the review of these events in a scroll from 1964 to the 2014. Such an event would be the Club of the Year Award.

There was either a large Blue binder or smaller bounded booklet for several of the Rotary years which contained information used for the Club Assembly review with the District Governor. These documents included such items as the Governor's evaluation of the Club, the Plans and Objectives of the Club, a membership roster, avenue of services and associated members, the Club's budget and committee budgets, and other information such as an example of the Board meeting minutes. These documents were usually well prepared and comprehensive. Unfortunately in most cases, there was no documentation describing the performance of the Club against these plans and budget. These plans and objectives were not placed in the archives unless there was documented evidence of the accomplishments or a verbal explanation by the respective Rotary year's President or other persons with experiential knowledge of the accomplishments of the activity. These insertions and the person providing the information were normally noted by the Historian.

Much of the Club's history is gathered from the Club's newsletter, Blastoff. The earliest copy of the Blastoff in the history file is dated March 2, 1967. The Club Programs and Special Events Chronology 1964-1998 is a listing of programs and activities compiled by an unknown writer, apparently in Rotary Year 1997-1998 (year in which the listing ended), taken from the available Blastoffs at that time. Many of the Blastoffs noted in the listing cannot be located. This listing covers Rotary Years 1964 -1965 to 1997-1998. The introduction to the listing states "It is the news bulletin for Space Center Rotary. The following lists are in the club archives; as you can see, many are missing. The club year is from July 1 to June 30. There have been also inserted the dates of special events, (such as on December 14, 1964 the club had its Christmas dinner -- inserted by Historian), in the history of Rotary International and Space Center Rotary Club". In order to preserve these events and the programs for Rotary Years 1964 to 1998, of which there are no Blastoffs available, the archives contains this listing as well as the available Blastoffs. Please note that some of the Blastoffs are dated a few days before the Monday meeting date. The newsletters in the listing, Newsletters (Blastoff) on the Home Page, uses the meeting date, however when a specific newsletter is referenced, the date of the news letter is used.