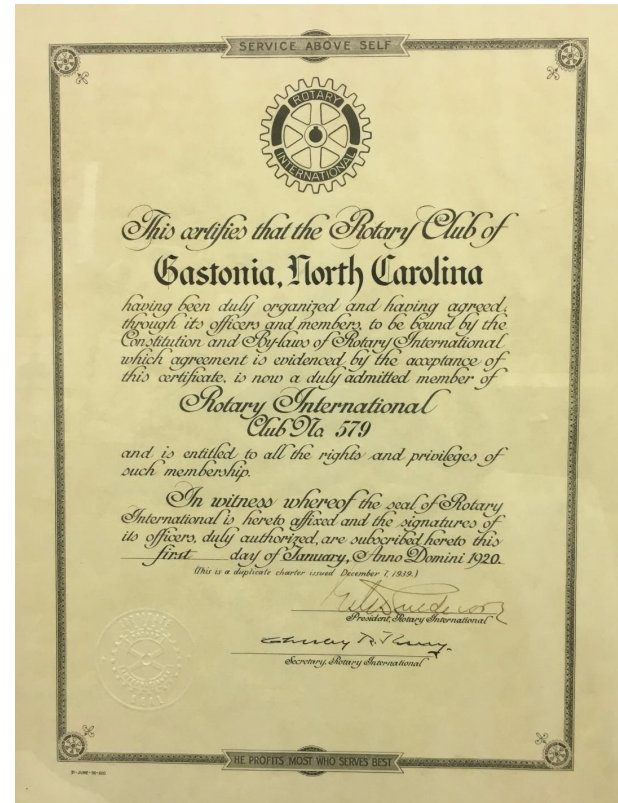


# The Rotary Club of Gastonia

*Service Above Self*

## Origins



On October 19, 1919, 14 Gastonia businessmen met at the Armington Hotel to launch Gastonia's first Rotary Club. The Rotary Club of Charlotte was the Club's sponsor. Three days later, with 25 charter members, the new Club voted to affiliate with Rotary International.

### ORIGINAL MEMBERS

William D. Anderson, Gastonia Mill Supply  
Fred M. Allen, Gastonia Chamber of Commerce  
Andrew A. Armstrong, Armstrong Cotton Mill  
James W. Atkins, Gastonia Gazette  
William L. Balthis, Balthis Cotton Brokers  
Robert B. Babington, Babington Insurance  
J. Flay Bess, J. Flay Bess & Co. Feed and Seed  
Joseph P. Bivens, Michael & Bivens Electricians  
William J. Clifford, Duke Power Company  
George B. Cocker, Cocker Machine and Foundry  
John W. Culp, Standard Hardware  
Charles Ford, Mortician  
Peter Woods Garland, Attorney  
William P. Grier, Gastonia City Schools  
James H. Henderlite, First Presbyterian Church  
James H. Kennedy, Kennedy Drug Store  
Chris P. Leventis, P. P. Leventis & Co. Wholesale Grocers  
W. Tom Love, Spencer Mountain Mill  
Albert G. Myers, The Citizens National Bank of Gastonia and Textiles, Inc.  
Ed J. Rankin, Rankin-Armstrong Furniture Company  
John R. Rankin, Real Estate Appraiser  
Harry Rutter, City of Gastonia  
Samuel A. Robinson, Gulf Oil Company  
Joseph H. Separk, Gray Mills (retired)  
W. Hugh Wray, Car Dealer, Hudson and Oldsmobile Automobiles

### OFFICERS

Albert G. Myers, President  
Joseph H. Separk, Vice President  
James W. Atkins, Secretary/  
Treasurer  
Fred M. Allen, Sergeant-at-Arms

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# First Decade, 1920-1929



***Above: Club Founder  
Albert G. Myers, Sr.***



VIEW OF NORTH CAROLINA ORTHOPEDIC HOSPITAL, GASTONIA, NC

***Right: Gastonia  
Country Club,  
1920's***



As our club came into being, the 1920's were a time of outstanding growth and activity. Club members were instrumental in supporting other new organizations and enterprises in the city, such as supporting a new Public Library building, Y.M.C.A., and the N.C. Orthopedic Hospital, an effort led by charter member R. B. Babington. The Club began to get involved in the 7th Rotary District and members traveled to District and International Rotary Conferences. The club also partnered with the fledgling Kiwanis and Civitan Clubs on many civic projects. Another major project was the establishment of Rotary Park near Crowder's Mountain, for the use of the Boy Scouts as well as other boys and girls in the County.

### ***1920's FAST FACTS!***

- ♦ ***In 1923, dues were \$1.00 per week or \$52/year.***
- ♦ ***First President was A. G. Myers, known as "Ab."***
- ♦ ***Club members helped to organize the Belmont Rotary Club in 1925 and the Shelby club in 1927.***
- ♦ ***Meeting places included the Armington Hotel, the Loray Mill Cafeteria, and the new Gastonia Country Club (pictured above)***