

September 23, 2000

Four Decades of Service Introduction

"Never write a history while the people included are still alive. No one will be happy with it. Credits will be misdirected or misconstrued, important facts will be overlooked, and you stand the possibility of offending everyone." With that advice from a friend ringing in my ears, it was with some trepidation, that I attempted to compile a history of the Florence Rotary Club's first forty years.

But it was the hope of drawing on some first-hand memories of early members that prompted me to undertake this project and I trust that they will use the opportunity to make corrections and additions that will enrich the record.

Please don't be offended by the amateur formatting and editing. I am a novice.

I have read all of the existing board minutes and bulletins researched the records in the district office, corresponded with Rotary International, and perused microfilm of old newspapers. This has helped to gather the facts. Unfortunately, there are gaps in those sources. The accuracy of any history is dependent upon adequate, reliable sources. The selection process reveals the perspective of the compiler. That is the case here.

Naturally, forty years cannot be covered in forty pages. I selected those items that seemed to me to be of special significance or human interest.

This project began as a guilt offering to the club president, Tammy England. It was in lieu of serving on a committee. Subsequently I discovered it was the fortieth anniversary of the club. I am glad that penance coincided with the club's completing four decades of service.

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The Florence Rotary Club has been a significant influence for good in the life of this community. I hope that this brief history captures some of that.