

## Perry Rotary Club's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**Rotary organizes a club in Perry:** (As told by these excerpts of Frank Roberts' account of the decision to organize a Rotary Club in Perry taken from the program of the Perry Rotary Old Timers Meeting held on June 6, 1957. Frank Roberts was a local pharmacist, businessman, and historian and one of the 19 charter members and a PP of Perry Rotary.) ... *"the Perry Rotary Club was organized by the Dansville Rotary Club under the supervision of their Pres. Herb Kehew, a box manufacturer of that community. A committee from Dansville, with assistance from Perry's CM Smith of the Citizens Bank made a survey of interest in Perry for a Rotary club and 19 were invited to join with Dansville at a typical Rotary meeting and dinner to be held 10 days later.*

*During that ten-day interim, discussions occurred among the 19 as to the advisability of organizing a Rotary Club in Perry. Many thought it would disrupt the successful local Chamber of Commerce. As a result of these discussions, a meeting was held in the back room of Baker and Roberts drug store on the afternoon of the day of the evening event with Dansville. Only one of the 19 was strongly in favor of forming a new club, Charles Fausold, who was familiar with Rotary from living and working in another community with a club. We all, however, decided to attend and give a good old Perry welcome to Dansville, but politely turn down their proposition.*

*That night, December 10, 1923, we attended ... the best Rotary meeting it has ever been my privilege to attend. Jokes and fines flew fast and furiously. Many speeches were made, giving us a recital of what Rotary had accomplished in the various towns and cities represented. Speakers I recall, in addition to the Dansville boys, included ardent Rotarians from Lockport and Lancaster-Depew.*

*At the proper time, the Perry boys withdrew to another room to decide what they wanted to do without outside persuasion. Chair CM Smith suggested starting with a secret ballot "to see where we stand" and do our talking afterwards. 18 votes cast and 18 in favor of organizing—a complete reversal of the vote taken in the afternoon. CM piped up, "there is nothing to discuss—lets go back."*

*Our first independent meeting was held Dec.20 at the Village building.*

*Our charter was presented on Wednesday, April 30, 2024, also in the village building.*

*We in Perry are indeed fortunate that Dansville was our parent club. They did not organize us and then leave us to flounder along alone. For many weeks from one to four of their club members met with us, as speakers or counselors, to steer us along the proper paths. Another Rotarian, who was from Rochester and a past president of that club, met with us many times in the early days and helped in many ways. Because of his interest in our club, he became known throughout the District as the godfather of the Perry RC. He was Dr. Ben White, whose wife was a Perry girl.*

*It is to these men, Ben White, Herb Kehew, Cy Adams, John Symes and to a few others in lesser degree, who put their efforts behind the Perry Club that we owe much. With that kind of help we could not fail to click and the club has continued to click from that day on" Frank D Roberts*

\*\*\*\*\*Don't forget to mark your calendars for the **community celebration of Rotary**...Saturday, June 15, 2024 from Noon to 5 pm at the Village Park, with fun, raffle results, food, music for all. \*\*\*\*\*

Submitted by Eric Parker  
March, 2024

Rotary  
Club of Perry, NY

