



PREFACE

This website commemorates the centenary anniversary of the organization founded in March 1919 as the Confederation of Zonta Clubs – Zonta International. It describes Zonta’s work, successes and challenges as it grew to a worldwide organization committed to women’s rights and to improving the status of women through service and advocacy.

Chronology is the backbone of this history and, to set Zonta’s development in a broader historical context, the organizational story is divided into six chapters, demarcated by key world events such as World War II, bookended by a short overall introduction and a chapter which looks to the future.

Each of these core chapters begins with a brief account of the global events which affected Zonta, followed by a description of the development of the organization, its districts and clubs at that time. They also include details of a wide range of administrative and governance matters that applied in each era: Zonta’s objects, service and advocacy programs and projects, various headquarters buildings, Zonta’s cooperation with the United Nations and the Council of Europe, international leadership, committees, rules and regulations for Zonta clubs, and membership details such as categories, qualifications, recruitment, duration of membership, dues and fees.

These historical chapters are supported by 18 Appendices which provide further detail about matters of particular interest, especially membership. It has not been possible within the scope of this Centennial Anniversary project to provide details of every committee, but the various iterations of the membership committee are an important demonstration of how the organization has reacted and adapted to changing circumstances in order to survive and thrive for the past 100 years. This in no way diminishes the contribution of the work of other committees; all are important and all are driven by members’ commitment to Zonta’s ideals.

The companion collection of the histories of Zonta International’s districts reveals how members’ belief in Zonta’s objects has been expressed at the local level. It presents an overview of the international development of Zonta, organized by geographical regions. All Zonta clubs are identified by name, or name and number, and all are mentioned.

The main source materials used were the Zonta International Bylaws and Directories, *The Zontian* magazine, the archives of District 13, the district histories-in-brief forwarded to the CAC in 2016, several longer district histories, and Theresa De Langis’s 80th anniversary publication, *Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide 1919-99* (ISBN 1-56311-591-3).

Apart from the material in District 13 archives and the district histories-in-brief, all source material used is published in print or electronic form. Some material was published for Zontians only; other material was publicly available.

The collection is intended to be the history of the organization, not the history of specific Zontians, even if many are mentioned. It is a presentation of an organization based on democratic principles that aims to empower women and advance the status of women worldwide.

Eva Nielsen
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