

# **SECTION A**

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*(Updated Jan 2016)*

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# The Gyro Story

## Gyro History is One of Friendship

Gyro came into being, as the result of three college students, wishing to perpetuate their friendship. It was in April of 1912 that the three friends, Paul Schwan, Clarence Handerson and Edmund Kagy, meeting together as had been their custom, decided that their friendship during four years of college in Cleveland, was worthy of perpetuation. Not just for them, but to bring into this unity other friends whose joining would strengthen them against the diversified demands of business and other interest, that all too often sever old friendships.

Organized June 24 with constitution and by-laws, the name Gyro was selected in December, 1912, an adaptation from the word Gyroscope. The Gyroscope is the visible symbol of Gyro.

For two years Gyro existed solely as a Cleveland organization, growing slowly but steadily in strength and influence. Chicago was the next city to be brought within the Gyro fold. On November 3, 1914, a charter was granted to the Gyro Club of Chicago.

The distinction of the third city in gyro belongs to Buffalo, where the joint effort of Cleveland members with Buffalo friends resulted in the organization of a new club and granting of the charter in February, 1916. Cleveland and Chicago, working together, brought about the establishment of the fourth Gyro Club in Cincinnati, which was formally chartered September 20, 1916. The influence of Gyro then spread eastward again, and Philadelphia was the fifth city to be included in the Gyro roster. However, when the United States entered WW I, 15 of the members of the original Philadelphia Club joined the services, and this club then ceased to exist.

Gyro International was first organized in January, 1917, when the five existing clubs sent delegates to Cleveland. Powers were delegated to the International organization to protect existing clubs, and to provide for the admission of new Clubs into the organization. Of 249 total members, 49 attended.

Due to World War I, Club activities were curtailed temporarily and extension was dormant until after the restoration of Peace, November 11, 1918.

The spirit of Gyro was too vital and buoyant to be stifled by the war's interruption, and the genius of Gyro Friendship revived the organization which soon took on a new life and activity. A primary reason for resurgence came about because the clubs had become networking organizations wherein you get help or patronize your friends businesses, and they in turn deal with you. This networking caused an immense boost in the membership and in new clubs. By 1923, networking had run its course and Gyro returned to an organizations based on its initial ideals.

During that time, the International Boundary was swept away when the Gyro Club of Toronto, Ontario, was granted a charter in 1919. Gyro reached the west coast, when the Gyro Club of Vancouver, BC was granted their charter in 1920. Gyro became a coast to coast organization when the Gyro Club of Halifax received their charter in 1922.

In 1923 it was obvious that Gyro International required a central office as well as a paid Secretary. Founder Ed Kagy was the unanimous choice for this position and in June, at the Milwaukee Convention he accepted the mandate of his fellow members. At first, he took care of the office details and work, on a part-time basis along with his regular job. Then in 1925, it became apparent that the office required someone working full-time. He served as the International Secretary-Treasurer until his retirement in 1954, at which time he was made Emeritus Secretary, a title that would be his alone as long as our organization existed.

Today, there are 102 Clubs with 3700 members, scattered within 11 Districts throughout Canada and the United States with no border distinction. The chain of clubs reaches from Kitimat, B.C. to Fort Lauderdale in Florida, and from Long Beach, California to Halifax, Nova Scotia. An achievement built solely on friendship.

## **The Founders of Gyro**

The Founders of Gyro were unusual men. Men with a burning zeal to better the world, themselves and their fellow men through the faith of the great Creator.- Peace and Friendship – Paul Schwan, Clarence Handerson and Ed Kagy, their names will be forever enshrined in the hearts of all Gyros.

### **Paul Schwan**

Paul Schwan believed that something practical could be done about an organization devoted to friendship among men. He worked hard, to help bring together the first unit in our Fraternity, the Gyro Club of Cleveland and Clubs in four other cities. On April, 1918, Paul joined the army and was shipped to Camp Sherman, Ohio. On April 17th, Paul died, a victim of influenza. The man's burning desire to do something practical about friendship, was a great stimulus to the fraternity, even though he was a member for only six years.

### **Clarence H. (Gus) Handerson**

Gus, as he was known, was more a doer than a visionary. It was Gus, that the charter members looked to for practical leadership. His push, pep and drive, naturally make him the spark plug of the early years of Gyro. He was responsible for the first club bulletin, "The Gyroscope" and helped it to become an interclub bulletin in 1918, Ge was very successful in his business life, but in 1941 his health failed and he retired to his southern home in Stuart, Florida, where he died of a heart ailment, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1942.

### **Edmund L. (Ed) Kagy**

Ed Kagy was affectionately known to thousands of Gyros as "The Grey Eagle". He worked tirelessly and enthusiastically as a regular member of the Cleveland Club. Ed's hand and influence were involved in all phases of Gyro growth. His sincerity of purpose in what Gyro should develop into, was one of the main reasons for its rapid expansion and growth, after becoming an International organization.

Ed served eleven years in the ranks of Gyro, as the President of the Cleveland club and as the first Governor of District I. In 1923, it was evident, that a paid Secretary was required to correlate the activities and unity of purpose of all the clubs. He was selected as Secretary in 1923, and continued until retirement in 1954.

In September, 1926, Ed married and sired two children, both married with children. Ed continued to live in his Chagrin Falls home until his death in 1960.

His passing has left an irreplaceable void in the hearts of all those who had the privilege of meeting and knowing "the Grey Eagle." As the mainspring of the organization, his work was invaluable. His modesty was such the Ed, unmindful of his own efforts, was convinced that all he was and had, he owed to Gyro. Just what Gyro owed to him, can never be measured in material terms. Ed Kagy was a living example of what Gyro friendship can mean to an individual.

## **The Gyro Principle**

Gyro is a satisfying state of mind. Achieved through friendship, evidenced by a constructive, coherent fellowship, strengthened by tolerance, good will and helpfulness.

Gyro carries with it no label of race, creed, political or other club affiliation. It imposes no limitations. On the contrary, it broadens vision and extends social contacts/ Gyro stimulates personal achievement. It is the hall-mark of an understanding personality joined in agreeable voluntary relationship with other men of kindred mind and purpose.

The word Gyro defines an International Association, a local group and an individual associated with these groups. But back of this definition, is a broad comprehensive spirit of friendship in its finest and most significant manifestation.

The Gyroscope is the visible symbol of Gyro. In a Gyroscope wheel, both ends of its axis are mounted in a ring. When in rapid rotations, no matter at what angle the axis is placed, the Gyroscope will continue to point in the same direction, maintaining its poise and power. This balance is retained even though its axis is moved by some outside force while the Gyroscope is already in motion.

The Gyroscope principle is controlled power, poise and balance. From this principle comes the Gyro key words:

### **Power – Poise – Purpose**

**POWER – Symbolizing the power of friendship in our human relationships.**

**POISE – Demonstrating the steadiness of friendship in times of trial**

**PURPOSE -- Keeping the balance wheel of friendship forever  
active in the daily lives of more men.**

## **Gyro's Objectives**

The Constitution of Gyro clearly sets forth the objectives of the Fraternity.

1. To promote friendship among men of all States, Provinces and Nations.
2. To cement relationships and establish co-operation between all Gyro Clubs wherever.
3. To preserve and extend Gyro's founding principles and ideals.

The task of determining how to meet these objectives is left to the individual clubs, a practice that has proven most successful.