

## History of Capital City Toastmasters Club

Capital City Toastmasters began as Brick Capital Toastmasters in Sanford, North Carolina. Shelba and William (Earl) May were instrumental in starting the original club. The club's constitution and bylaws were filed with Toastmasters International on February 17, 1979. Later that year on April 9, 1979, Toastmasters International received the Charter Membership Roster and dues for the first 20 members of Brick Capital Toastmasters. The "start date" for the group is recorded as April 9; the charter members were "official" and could meet as a recognized Toastmasters club.

### The Charter Members of Capital City Toastmasters (formerly Brick Capital Toastmasters)

William and Shelba May	Laura Belton Headen
Carolyn Marchison Hill	Lorena Chappell Keith
Sandra Clifton McFarland	Clyde Hanes Morgan
William Oliver Towson, III	Allan and Janice Scoins
Douglas Fuller Brown	Rufus Oliver Crawley
Joe Fletcher Hickman	Jerry Mundy
Janet Hackney Schronce	Gary and Peggy Tracy
Leslie Paul Hewlett	James Orren McKay
Johnsie Hill Peele	

The meetings of Brick Capital Toastmasters were held at Western Sizzlin in Sanford every Thursday at 7:00 p.m. The charter members refer to Earl and Shelba May as "the ones who made it happen!" Earl May was the first and only President of the original club. Every week about 10 members were in attendance. These members also recall fun table topics and useful evaluations in addition to the prepared speeches. The club awarded trophies at each meeting for the Best Table Topics, Best Evaluator, and Best Speaker. The winners returned each week with the esteemed trophies so the awards could be presented to the new weekly winners.

After approximately a year, the number of members gradually declined. Paul Lynch, a Toastmaster Officer for the State of North Carolina and originally a member of a Cary Toastmasters Club, contacted Brick Capital Toastmasters. Lynch's goal was to preserve the Brick Capital Toastmasters' charter. By doing so, Lynch would re-establish the club in a new location and would not need the required 20 members for a new charter. A handful of the Brick Capital members renewed their dues and maintained their active charter. On December 3, 1981, Lynch moved the club to Raleigh, and the seeds from Brick Capital Toastmasters took root. The club was renamed Capital City Toastmasters.

In 1982, Bruce McConnell became the first President of Capital City Toastmasters, and Lynch served as the first Vice President of Education. In 1983, Gram Anderson was President, and then Lynch succeeded Gram. During these early years, the Treasurer was Marty Demko.

The very first Capital City Toastmasters meetings took place at Rusty's Restaurant, a former establishment in downtown Raleigh located next to the BB&T building. A group

of 10-15 members met every Thursday morning at 7:00 a.m. Then, the club moved the meeting location to the former Holiday Inn (now Clarion Hotel) at the intersection of Dawson Street and Hillsborough Street, and the members remember parking in the hotel's circular garage. After the Holiday Inn, the club changed locations to the Days Inn off of Capital Boulevard. In 1991, the Days Inn started requiring a meeting fee, and member Roger Barnes thought his place of employment would be an ideal new location. Barnes worked at the YMCA on Hillsborough Street, and the club met here until 2006 when the YMCA needed to close the meeting room for renovations. At the time, Howard Jeffries, a member of Capital City Toastmasters, suggested his church on Glenwood Avenue, Our Savior Lutheran Church. Almost a year later, Jeffries, who is also remembered for beginning every meeting he attended with a "light bulb joke," moved to Virginia with his family. Once again, the search began for a new meeting space. Janet Tyson, a club member and employee of BB&T, suggested the meeting room on the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor of the BB&T Building on Fayetteville Street in downtown Raleigh. The first meeting at this new location was on January 11, 2007.

On April 9, 2009 the club recognized the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the club charter at its weekly Thursday meeting at 7:00 a.m. in the BB&T Building. The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Banquet was held on Saturday, April 18, 2009, at the Capital City Club in downtown Raleigh.

After 30 years, many club traditions remain. At each weekly meeting, Best Table Topics, Best Evaluator, and Best Speaker are recognized. Every December, there is a club holiday party with a white elephant gift exchange. Members from the early 1980s recall the same kind of holiday party complete with the same popular party game. And throughout the decades, one sentiment in particular is shared by former and current club members of both Brick Capital Toastmasters and Capital City Toastmasters: the friendliness and energy of the club meetings make you feel like you are instantly among friends.