

BRIEF HISTORY
OF
LIONISM



IN DISTRICT 18
STATE OF GEORGIA
OF LIONS INTERNATIONAL
1917 - 1948

FOREWORD

The State Council of Multiple District 18 of Lions International, recognizing the value of tradition, at a meeting on January 12, 1948, authorized the preparation of this brief history of Lionism in Georgia.

May it help preserve the accomplishments of our early Lions and also serve as an incentive to us to carry on the work they have done so well.

Percy Plant, State Historian
Multiple District 18, Georgia,
Lions International

Georgia State Council 1947 - 1948

Joe B. Davis, District Governor 18A

J. T. Baxley, District Governor 18B

G. W. Register, District Governor 18C

W. J. Andrews, District Governor 18D

THE FOUNDING

Originally luncheon clubs and other organizations of business men were founded and operated chiefly for the purpose of assisting the members to help one another in a business way. Memberships were limited to a certain number of people in each business or profession with an understanding that members would receive benefits through business reciprocity.

As early as 1914 Melvin Jones, the present Secretary-General of Lions International, conceived the original idea of changing this and of uniting unaffiliated business men's clubs on a basis of UNSELFISH SERVICE. It was not until 1917, however, that approximately fifty independent clubs assembled in Chicago, Illinois, and founded The International Association of Lions Clubs. Later in the year, on October 9-11, the first convention, attended by about twenty-five clubs, was held at Dallas, Texas.

This convention adopted a constitution which included two important concepts:

1. "That no club shall hold out as one of its objects financial benefits to its members."
2. "To create and foster a spirit of 'generous consideration' among the peoples of the world."

The founders, with remarkable vision, realized that if the new association was to be an outstanding success, it must think beyond the prosperity of its individual members and render a real service to others, to the country, and to the world.

With this original conception, Lions International rightfully claims the distinction of being the "FIRST SERVICE CLUB."



MELVIN JONES

"Phenomenal growth of Lionism can be attributed in considerable measure to a leonine individual who is still roaring. His name is Melvin Jones.

"A heavy white-haired man of impressive dignity, benign yet aloof — truly the king of the wilderness — Mr. Jones, as Secretary-General of Lions International, is still headman of the organization he conceived."

Clubs Are Trumps.

Colliers, January 10, 1948

THE PIONEER OF THE SOUTHEAST



The Atlanta Lions Club was the first Lions Club in the Southeast. On December 17, 1920, just a little over three years after the founding of Lionism, the Atlanta club held its first meeting.

In order to have Founder Melvin Jones as a guest, the charter night was delayed until March 1, 1921. This was indeed a gala affair! Practically all of the 117 charter members were present and Thomas W. Hardwick, Governor of Georgia, was on the program. The meeting was climaxed by the presentation of the charter by Secretary-General Melvin Jones, a man of ideals and vision.

From that day the Atlanta club has carried on the ideal of service of those early Lions. It has shown, in addition to numerous other activities, a special interest in providing milk for needy families and in helping under-privileged children. Several thousands of dollars have been raised for these purposes by lectures and shows featuring noted commentators and entertainers.

District 18 is greatly indebted to the Atlanta club for blazing the trail and for setting an example of constructive Lionism.

EARLY LIONISM

When the Atlanta club was chartered in 1921, Georgia was in the old Fifth District, embracing eastern Texas, Louisiana, and at times Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Florida. Because of the rapid growth of Lionism, the country was redistricted at the Oakland, California, convention in 1921 — Alabama, Florida and Georgia being placed in the 18th District.

At that time there were only three clubs in Georgia—the Atlanta club, the Macon club and the Americus club. These three clubs met at Macon in December 1921 for the purpose of establishing a governing body. Lion H. E. Allen, of Americus, was elected “Acting Governor of the Georgia Division.” While not appointed by the International president, he was recognized as the de facto District Governor and was earnest and vigorous in organizing new clubs. In

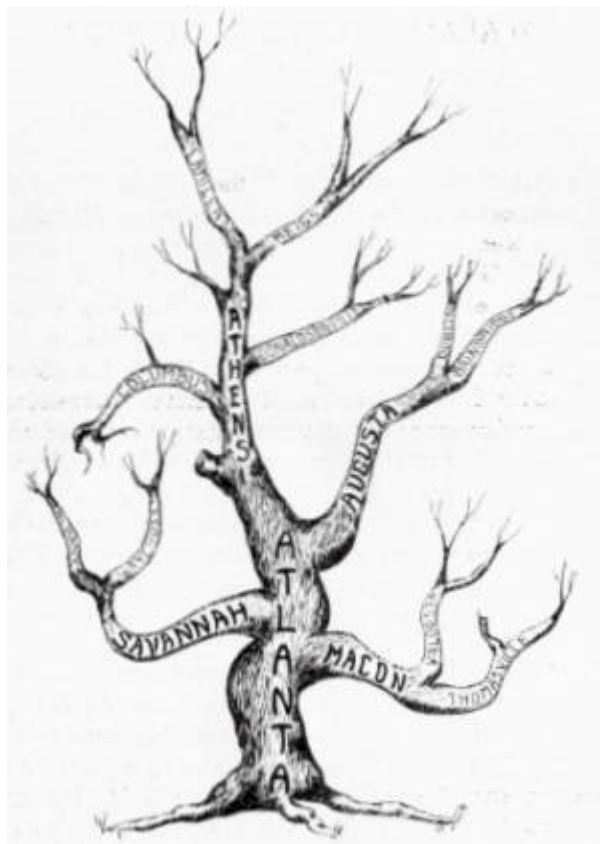
the meantime, Alabama had organized a club at Montgomery, and Florida had organized one at Orlando.

DISTRICT 18 ALABAMA, FLORIDA, GEORGIA

The first district convention of the 18th District of Lionism, composed of the States of Alabama, Florida and Georgia, was held at Macon, Georgia, on October 12, 1922, with Governor Allen presiding. M. J. Witman, of Macon, was elected District Governor, but was forced to resign immediately after the convention because of removal of his residence to New York. Under the constitution, Deputy E. W. Rosenthal, of Savannah, succeeded to the District Governorship and immediately assumed office.

The second annual convention was held at Savannah on May 25-26, 1923. Lionism was growing rapidly and Georgia itself now had fourteen clubs with a membership of 635. Richard C. Jordan, of Macon, was elected District Governor.

On May 21-24, 1924, the third convention of the three states was held at Montgomery, Alabama. At this convention a motion was passed allowing Alabama to withdraw from District 18. International shortly confirmed this separation and Alabama became District 34. The delegates from Florida and Georgia, after the withdrawal of Alabama, held an election and chose William C. Parker, of Waycross, as District Governor. A few months after the convention International allowed Florida to withdraw also, leaving the State of Georgia as District 18 of Lionism.



ORIGINAL CLUBS OF DISTRICT 18
THE STATE OF GEORGIA

DISTRICT 18 -- THE STATE OF GEORGIA

In May 1925, District 18, the State of Georgia, held its convention at Augusta. Fifty delegates from nine of the fifteen clubs elected as District Governor, George H. Conklin, of Augusta.



JACQUES O. PARTAIN

The fifth annual convention met at Macon on May 21-22, 1926, with ten clubs represented by accredited delegates. W. A. Mann, of Macon, was elected District Governor. None realized that the health of the new District Governor had broken—he passed away after only a few months in office. His term of office was finished by Jacques O. Partain, of Atlanta.

The 1927 convention was held at Albany. Jacques O. Partain, of Atlanta, was elected to serve as District Governor for 1927-1928.

The seventh annual convention of Georgia Lions was held at Athens on May 17-18, 1928. The convention voted unanimously to provide three years' support of the Juvenile Braille Magazine for the blind children of the state. Records in the International Office show that Lionism in Georgia during this period showed an increase of nearly ninety percent in clubs and over fifty percent in membership. Joseph W. Popper, of Macon, was elected District Governor.

Valdosta entertained the eighth annual convention on May 2-3, 1929. Thomas A. Curry, of Dublin was elected District Governor.



CHANNING COPE

The 1930 convention at Griffin transacted much business of an important nature. A petition was made to the State Legislature to create a State Blind Commission to survey the number and condition of the blind people of the state. Channing Cope, of Atlanta, was elected District Governor.

Through the difficult year of 1930-1931, under Governor Cope, the district lost no clubs and showed only a slight decrease in membership. The convention was held at Atlanta on May 28-29, 1931. Resolutions were adopted to carry on the blind work, to present the Braille magazine to the blind and to see that blind boys were kept in school. The convention elected Geoffrey B. King, of Savannah, as District Governor.



GEOFFREY B. KING

The Savannah convention of 1932 was one of the most successful held by the district. Over 134 Lions were registered and many more, with guests and families, were in attendance. Marvin G. Pound, of Sparta, was elected District Governor.

On June 12-13, 1933, Waycross was host to the Lions of District 18. The convention was featured by a number of excellent speeches, a Presidents' Breakfast, a Secretaries' Breakfast and a Model Luncheon. George S. Johnson, of LaGrange, was chosen District Governor.

Again Lionism made wonderful strides during the year 1933-1934. District Governor Johnson made forty-four visits to the clubs in his district, eighteen new clubs were organized and the total membership in the district was increased by 340. The convention was held at Decatur on June 20-21, 1934. Music for the convention was supplied by the Decatur Girls' High School orchestra and the Decatur Boys' High School band—the first projects of the Decatur Lions Club. William T. Ray, of Athens, was elected District Governor.



H. A. STALLINGS

Under District Governor Ray the number of clubs increased from fifty-one to sixty-three and the membership to an all-time high of 1,555. The convention at Columbus on May 28-29, 1935, was unusually constructive—important matters were discussed, five-minute talks were given on various phases of Lionism, and a resolution was passed urging the construction of a highway through the Okefenokee Swamp. As evidence of the high esteem in which Georgia Lions held his leadership, District Governor Ray was presented with a watch and endorsed for the post of Chairman of the Board of Governors of Lions International. Subsequently he was elected to this office at the International Convention in Mexico City in July 1935. H. A. Stallings, of Waycross, was elected to succeed to the District Governorship.



EDWARD MURRAH

The 1936 convention was scheduled to be held in Gainesville, but because of the tornado in that city, was transferred to Macon. With only five weeks' notice, Macon did an excellent job — it was the general opinion that it was the finest convention ever held in the district. Lion Edward Murrah, of Columbus, was elected District Governor.

The sixteenth annual convention of District 18 was held at Albany on June 6-8, 1937. Lion William T. Ray, of Athens, presented a report in which he recommended that the state be divided into three districts—A, B and C. The adoption of this report was voted upon favorably.



Indoor Future Farmers of America Carnival and Country Store held by the Moultrie Lions Club in 1945.

The project was highly successful and netted a substantial sum.

DISTRICT GOVERNORS OF 18A

1937-1938	W. A. Abercrombie	Athens
1938-1939	Dr. H. L. Barker	Carrollton
1939-1940	Wade H. Wright	Atlanta
1940-1941	Hugh Inglis	Clarksville
1940-1941	Harry Cooper	Atlanta
1941-1942	Edd A. Burch	Dalton
1942-1943	W. Joe Scott	Northeast Atlanta
1943-1944	C. Hoke Sewell	Gainesville
1944-1945	Eugene Sanders	Decatur
1945-1946	T. Hamp McGibony	Greensboro
1946-1947	Paul Hosch	Winder



W. A. ABERCROMBIE
1937-1938



WADE H. WRIGHT
1939-1940



W. JOE SCOTT
1942-1943



C. HOKE SEWELL
1943-1944



T. HAMP MCGIBONY
1945-1946



PAUL HOSCH
1946-1947

DISTRICT GOVERNORS OF 18B

1937-1938	D. D. Jackson	Soperton
1938-1939	John H. Arnold	Ashburn
1939-1940	I. Eugene Cook	Wrightsville
1940-1941	Edward A. Dutton	Savannah
1941-1942	Ross H. Pittman	Tifton
1942-1943	Dr. Fred L. Damren	Augusta
1943-1944	Robert Cowart	Douglas
1944-1945	R. A. Perry	Soperton
1945-1946	Rufus M. Ryon	Hinesville
1946-1947	B. I. Thornton	Cordele



J. EUGENE COOK
1939-1940



DR. FRED L.
DAMREN
1942-1943



ROBERT COWART
1943-1944



R. A. PERRY
1944-1945



RUFUS M. RYON
1945-1946

B. I. THORNTON
1946-1947

DISTRICT GOVERNORS OF 18C

1937-1938	Stanley A. Elkan	Macon
1938-1939	Turner L. Smith	Albany
1939-1940	William F. Loflin	Columbus
1940-1941	Arthur S. Boyett, Jr.	Buena Vista
1941-1942	William B. Freeman	Forsyth
1942-1943	C. E. Boggs	Talbotton
1943-1944	C. G. Higgenbotham	LaGrange
1944-1945	R. Schaefer Heard	The Valley
1945-1946	J. Gorham Garrison	Ochlochnee
1946-1947	R. L. Williams	Forsyth



STANLEY A. ELKAN
1937-1938

WILLIAM F. LOFLIN
1939-1940



C. G. HIGGINBOTHAM
1943-1944



R. SCHAEFER
HEARD
1944-1945



J. GORHAM GARRISON
1945-1946



R. L. WILLIAMS
1946-1947



At the Cordele State Convention of Georgia Lions in 1944, a committee composed of Chairman Robert Cowart of 18B, Hoke Sewell of 18A, and C. G. Higgenbotham of 18C was appointed to prepare and submit plans for dividing the state into four districts. This was considered advisable, because of the growth of Lionism and the large number of clubs in each of the three districts.

The matter was delayed in 1945, as no state convention was held that year. In 1946 at the Atlanta convention, however, International Counselor W. A. Abercrombie moved that the plan

submitted by the committee, dividing the state into four districts, be given the approval of the convention. The motion was passed with the provision that the division become effective July 1, 1947.

In accordance with this decision, four district governors were elected at the Albany convention in 1947 and Georgia was divided into Districts 18A, 18B, 18C and 18D.



JOE B. DAVIS
Decatur
District 18A



J. T. BAXLEY
Augusta
District 18B



G. W. REGISTER
Norman Park
District 18C



W. J. ANDREWS
Toccoa
District 18D

CONVENTIONS

Macon (Organization Meeting.).

1. Macon
2. Savannah
3. Montgomery, Ala
4. Augusta
5. Macon

Dec. 27, 1921
 Oct. 12, 1922
 May 25-26, 1923
 May 21-24, 1924
 May, 1925
 May 21-22, 1926

6. Albany	May 5-6, 1927
7. Athens	May 17-18, 1928
8. Valdosta	May 2-3, 1929
9. Griffin	May 14-15, 1930
10. Atlanta	May 28-29, 1931
11. Savannah	May, 1932
12. Waycross	June 12-13, 1933
13. Decatur	June 20-21, 1934
14. Columbus	May 28-29, 1935
15. Macon	June 2-4, 1936
16. Albany	June 6-8, 1937
17. Savannah	June 5-7, 1938
18. Clayton	June 10-12, 1939
19. Columbus	June 10-11, 1940
20. Augusta	June 8-10, 1941
21. Gainesville	June 14-16, 1942
22. LaGrange	June 6-8, 1943
23. Cordele	June 11-13, 1944
24. 1945. Business meetings only held separately by 18A, 18B and 18C.	
25. Atlanta	June 30, July 1-2, 1946
26. Albany	June 8-9-10, 1947
27. Savannah	June 13-14-15, 1948



EUGENE SANDERS
INTERNATIONAL COUNSELOR

In order to help the war effort in 1945, the request was made by Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, that no large conventions be held during the year.

A meeting of the Georgia State Council, composed of Chairman Eugene Sanders of 18A, R. A. Perry of 18B, and Schaefer Heard of 18C was called immediately.

Although extensive preparations had been made for a state convention, a resolution was approved suspending the state convention for the duration of the war or until such time as a convention might be considered helpful to the prosecution of the war.

Because of this decision, business meetings only were held in each of the three districts during the year.

CUP AWARDS

Much of the success of Lionism in Georgia is due to the stimulus provided by competition for cups donated by various individuals and clubs.

This history would not be complete without listing each of these cups and the conditions of its award.

1. M. M. Monroe Cup. Club, meeting weekly, having best percentage of attendance of active members at all club meetings from July 1st through May 31st of the current year. Missed meetings may be made up in accordance with Lions International Contest rules.
2. West Point Cup. Club, meeting twice a month or every other week, having best percentage of active members at all club meetings from July 1st through May 31st of the current year. Missed meetings may be made up in accordance with Lions International Contest rules.
3. Gainesville Cup. Club having largest percentage of members winning button awards in the Lions International Attendance Contest of the current year, based upon the number of active members shown on the secretary's report of September 1st to Lions International.
4. Columbus Cup. Club having the best quartet, composed of Lions from their own club, at the state convention.
5. Murrah Cup. Club (excluding the host club) having the largest number of registered delegates at the state convention.
6. Ledford Cup. Club having the best club publicity from the beginning of the previous state convention up to the current year's state convention. A Publicity Book of material and clippings is to be submitted.
7. Soperton Cup. Club having the best attendance of officers and directors, as specified by Lions International, at Directors Meetings from July through May of the current year, at least one Directors' Meeting, separate from the regular club meeting, to be held each month.
8. Savannah Cup. Club having the largest net gain in membership from July through May of the current year.
9. Albany Cup. The best safety program throughout the year.
10. Elkan Cup. Club whose various completed activities from July 1st through May 31st of the current year are judged most worthwhile.
11. Cartersville Cup. Club (excluding the host club) having the best report of the state convention of the previous year in local newspapers.
12. Hamilton Cup. Club having the largest number of members visiting other clubs from July 1st up to the state convention. A letter or card confirming each visit, signed by an official of the club visited, to be submitted.

13. Canton Cup. Club entertaining the most visiting Lions at their regular meetings from July 1st up to the state convention. Satisfactory evidence, such as a guest register, is to be submitted.

14. Decatur Cup. Club with the most worthwhile single activity in keeping with the program of Lionism of the current year.

15. District Governor's Cup. The best all-round club in the state, showing well, especially in 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, whether winning contests or not.

GEORGIA LIONS WHO HAVE SERVED ON THE GOVERNING BODIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

1924-30—Thos. H. Halliburton	Macon	Director
1929-30—Joseph W. Popper	Macon	Executive Council Board of Governors
1933-34—Marvin G. Pound	Sparta	Executive Council Board of Governors
1934-35—George S. Johnson	LaGrange	Executive Council Board of Governors
1935-36—William T. Ray	Athens	Chairman Board of Governors
1939-40—Dr. H. L. Barker	Carrollton	Vice-Chairman Board of Governors
1940-42—George S. Johnson	LaGrange	Director



MARVIN G. POUND

GEORGE S. JOHNSON



WILLIAM T. RAY



DR. H. L. BARKER



Seated, Governor Ellis Arnall. Standing, left to right :
C. J. Smiley, Liberty County Representative; John S. Calloway,
Greene County Representative; Jones T. Bond, Cabinet Secretary
of 18A; Rufus M. Ryon, District Governor of 18B

In 1946 the Lions of District 18 sponsored an effort to secure an increase in school teachers' pay.

The idea, originated by District Governor Rufus M. Ryon of 18B, received the hearty approval of District Governor Hamp McGibony of 18A and District Governor J. Gorham Garrison of 18C. Petitions were sent to the various clubs in the state, signatures secured, and an impressive group of petitions signed by approximately five thousand Georgia Lions was presented to Governor Ellis Arnall.

Following the presentation of the petitions, District Governor J. Gorham Garrison of 18C and Lion N. A. Rogers of the Heard County Lions Club before a crowded House of

Representatives in Atlanta, made stirring addresses calling attention to the poor pay of the teachers and the alarming effects. All three District Governors and their Cabinet Secretaries put in much time and effort in promoting the matter.

As a consequence the poor pay of the teachers was brought forcibly to the attention of the public and a fifty percent increase secured. The educators agreed that the additional money could not have been secured without the impetus given the matter by the Lions of Georgia.

FACTS ABOUT DISTRICT 18

On January 1, 1948, District 18 had the following number of clubs and members:

	Clubs	Members
18A	33	2183
18B	47	1749
18C	41	1749
18D	26	1243
	147	6924

Georgia ranks 11th in number of clubs and 12th in number of members.

International Counselor H. L. Barker, of Carrollton, has attended every International Convention since the Oakland Convention of 1938 and has missed only one state convention in the last fifteen years.

He also has an eleven years perfect attendance record and holds a Senior Master Key.

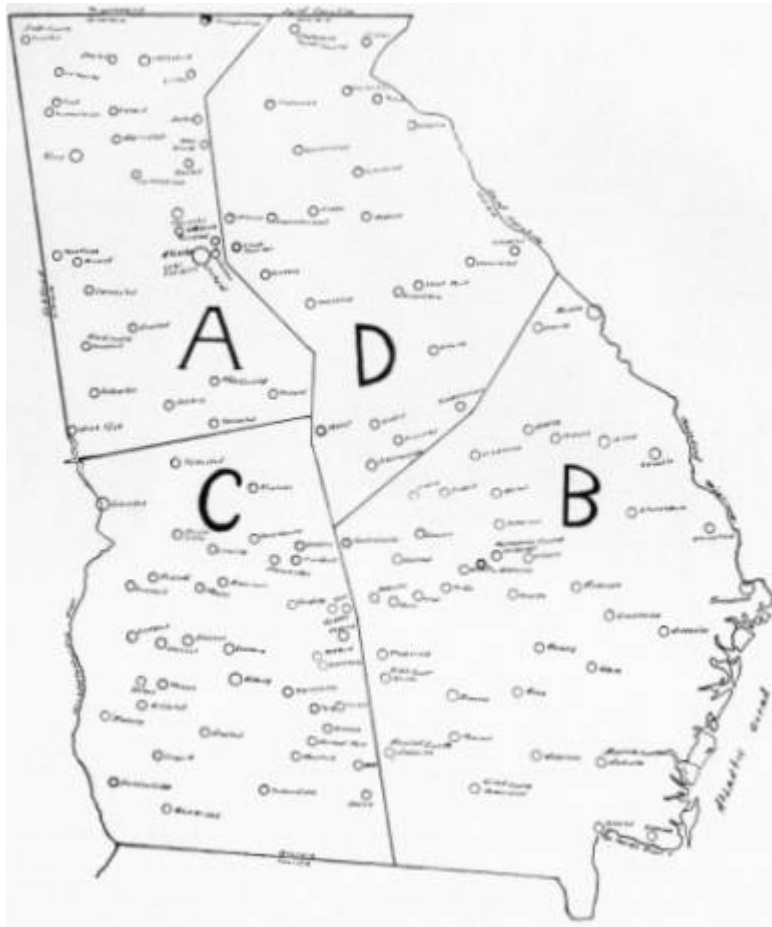
As far as can be ascertained from the records, only three districts have had a perfect year in getting all secretaries' reports to International on time:

18A—1937-38 W. A. Abercrombie, Dist. Gov., Athens

18A—1945-46 T. Hamp McGibony, Dist. Gov., Greensboro

18C—1946-47 B. L. Williams, Dist. Gov., Forsyth

Secretary-General Melvin Jones has made numerous visits to District 18. Among them were Atlanta, Cordele, Macon in 1921; Savannah, 1922; Decatur, 1932; Atlanta, Columbus, Savannah, 1935; a tour of the state in 1937 and 1938; Atlanta, 1939 and 1940.



MULTIPLE DISTRICT 18

State of Georgia

LIONS INTERNATIONAL

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

Proverbs 29:18.

With unusual vision, the founders of Lions International inserted the following in our constitution: “To create and foster a spirit of ‘generous consideration’ among the peoples of the world.” For years, Lions International has been cultivating this spirit of “generous consideration” among peoples and building friendships among nations.

Today, we suddenly understand the importance of this objective in our constitution. Alone, District Eighteen can do little to help, but united with other districts in our great organization, we can do much.

Therefore, let us in District Eighteen realize the urgent necessity of doing our utmost to support the work of Lions International in fostering world-wide friendships. Let us have vision—or we perish