

The Altrusa Tradition



CONTENTS

Preface	3
Altrusa Milestones	3
Notable Influences	25
Altrusa Hall of Fame.....	28
National Presidents	28
International Presidents	29
* Principles of Altrusa.....	32
* Aspirations of an Altrusan	33
* The Key to Altrusa.....	34
* Altrusa Ideals	35

* *Historical Altrusa material, published as “written” from the original document.*

PREFACE

No matter who we are or in what part of our world we live, each of us is directed in our thoughts and our behavior by tradition—the set of customs and actions passed down from generation to generation.

As Altrusans, we have the benefit of an added tradition, *The Altrusa Tradition*, carefully and lovingly handed down to each of us by Hazel P. Williams and Lucille E. Hecht, co-authors of this booklet, dedicated to Natalie Gabriel, a charter member of Altrusa's initial club, the Altrusa Club of Nashville, Tennessee.

Hazel P. Williams became a member of the Altrusa Club of Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1919; was elected national secretary in 1922; served as chairman of the committee which created the first Classification Guide, adopted in 1926; was elected the national association's first vice president in 1930; and became executive director in 1946—a post she brilliantly held until her retirement in 1967.

As editor of the *International Altrusan* from 1945 to 1979, Lucille Hecht brought great distinction to the organization with her keen insight into emerging trends and her sense of history; both so vividly reported in the pages of our magazine.

Because of their active roles during Altrusa's past, International President Verona Bordok (1983–1985) asked them to share the inspiration and dedication they observed throughout Altrusa's history, so: "We can build upon and carry forward the important truths of our heritage."

This booklet was first distributed at the 1985 International Convention in Boston, Massachusetts and was revised as Altrusa prepared to celebrate its 75th anniversary in April 1992. It was updated in 1995 and 2005.

It is now time for another update as Altrusa prepares to celebrate its 100th anniversary in April 2017. The Centennial Committee verified dates and information contained in earlier versions of *The Altrusa Tradition* from original minutes (1917 to 2017) of past Board of Directors' meetings, Executive Committee meetings, Convention minutes, and original letters by Mamie L. Bass.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1917–1919

The Altrusa story is a remarkable tale of how a pioneer organization started out to be the first-of-its-kind for businesswomen and became the first women's classified service club as well. Why it came to be a major force in the world today lays higher claim on the retelling.

A young, red-bearded Kiwanian, Dr. Alfred Durham, had set out on a business venture. His idea was to sponsor a national chain of clubs for business and

professional women and call it the “Altrusa Institute.” The women who would be members would meet and exchange ideas and pay dues to the organization. Dr. Durham would collect the initiation fees.

The idea was novel and the time was right. It was 1917 and women’s organizations of this type did not exist, and women were not allowed to join men’s civic clubs. The momentum for change was therefore fueled by the demands of the war abroad. For three years, Europe had been in the throes of conflict and now the United States had entered into it as well. Businesses across the country were adjusting to labor shortages caused by the military drafts by hiring women to take the absent men’s places. For many women, this was the first time they had ever been called on to serve as the primary breadwinners of their families.

Dr. Durham chose to start his venture in Nashville, Tennessee, on April 11, 1917, because he had kept in contact with a fellow classmate from Osteopathy School, Dr. Sonora Whiteside, who lived there. She introduced him to Julia Hindman in Nashville, Tennessee. Julia had grown up on a farm. When her parents died, she moved to Nashville and began studying “speed-writing.” When her money began to run out, she took a job as a clerk in an insurance office. She soon convinced her employer to let her get a license to sell insurance. It was not long before she passed the exams for a broker’s license. When the opportunity presented itself, she bought the agency.

The first Altrusa meeting was held in the vesper room of the Y.W.C.A. on April 14, 1917. Julia was the first club president. The second Altrusa Club was established in Louisville, Kentucky, organized on June 7, 1917. In Indianapolis, Dr. Durham met Mamie L. Bass who was working in the Bass & Company Architectural firm owned by her brother, Herbert L. Bass. Mamie herself was captivated by the possibilities just then afforded women by emerging career opportunities and, even more, by the great potential she saw for women in the future. The Indianapolis Club held its organizational meeting on June 22, followed by Dayton organized on July 10 and Chicago on October 31, 1917.

The name, “Altrusa,” was coined from ALTR for altruism and the USA for United States of America—possibly because of high-running World War I patriotism. Mamie was enchanted with the name for its “devotion to the interests of others” concept. Mamie infused Altrusa with its inspiring philosophy of service and personal achievement in her writings, “The Principles of Altrusa” and “Aspirations of Altrusa.”

At about this same time, Mamie was becoming familiarized with a club her brother, Herbert L. Bass, was helping to charter locally, Rotary International of Indianapolis. Deeply impressed by the organization’s aims and objectives, Mamie worked with her brother when he served as the club’s first membership chairman to find just the right man for each Rotary classification. As she said, she became a “confirmed Rotarian-by-proxy.” More important, however, Mamie began to envision a similar club for women, one that would be “an adventure in practical idealism.” The idea of an organization dedicated to the service of others seemed to her to be the

key to helping women unlock their potential and, at the same time, help others and improve their own way of life.

On August 21, 1917, Altrusa incorporated in the state of Indiana as the “Altrusa Institute,” becoming the first national organization of business and professional women, either classified or unclassified. Norma Kirch and Lizzie Keller of Louisville, Kentucky; Morna Hickman Knipe of Kokomo, Indiana; and Mamie L. Bass of Indianapolis, Indiana signed the original Articles of Incorporation.

On August 22, 1917, Mamie L. Bass of Indianapolis, Indiana, was elected first national president.

On June 22–23, 1918, the Altrusa Institute held its first convention in Indianapolis. Forty members were present representing five clubs of Nashville, Tennessee; Louisville, Kentucky; Indianapolis, Indiana; Dayton, Ohio; and Chicago, Illinois. In addition to discussing the problems confronting women in business, the first Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws were adopted. Also adopted was the active, honorary, and associate membership, based on classification.

As the first elected president of the country’s first national organization of business and professional women, Mamie challenged each convention participant: “Plunged in the midst of a world war, surrounded by industrial conditions such as the world has never dreamed of, with the face of business entirely changed in every aspect, with the position of woman such as unheard of before, we stand in this convention as sponsors of a great women’s movement which is unlike any women movement ever before put forth. It is only the shallow thinker who is not convinced that organization is the only tool worth using in these days when great need exist[s]. The individual is valuable to society only as she harnesses her energy to those of her associates who work with the same high ideals and noble purposes as she also has glimpsed and moves on without thought of self to a high goal of helping society. Alone our sphere is limited. Organized we spread over the earth.” This speech was a clear reflection of Altrusa’s early determination to help women find their rightful roles in the world of work.

Another important issue at this first convention included the adoption in principle of Mamie L. Bass’s proposal to make the Altrusa Institute a “classified” service organization. With this, Dr. Durham relinquished his connection with the Altrusa Institute. The clubs no longer bore any resemblance to his original idea and he surrendered all rights as an organizer. The original contract was for Dr. Durham to receive \$3,750. Altrusa made a final settlement with him in October 1925 in the amount of \$1,800. This enabled the organization to gain financial stability.

Over the next seven years, under the leadership of four national presidents, (a U.S. employment executive, two attorneys, and a lumber company vice president), Altrusa’s internal structure solidified and the foundation of the modern-day Altrusa was laid. In addition to issuing the original Bylaws and Constitution, the association changed its name to the National Association of Altrusa Clubs, hired a club organizer,

expanded to include 1,000 members in 40 clubs in 20 states, employed a paid secretary, and started a magazine.

This is amazing progress, considering the times in which the dedicated Altrusans were building the foundation. In an effort to create unity, the national president traveled by train and car to visit the clubs.

The impact these pioneer career women made on their communities was soon noted by the press. One Nashville newspaper wrote, "Altrusa numbers among its members many women who have made reputations for success in various constructive and executive positions. But they make no great ado over such success, taking it rather as a thing such confidence can always attain, and that without need for argument or fuss. Their attitude is one of dignity and poise. Altrusa is an organization that our people are proud to have here."

When World War I Armistice bells rang out on November 11, 1918, the then handful of Altrusa clubs had performed far in excess of their numbers. They had compared their home front service activities at the first national convention the previous June in Indianapolis, Indiana, and were fired up to go and do more. War's end opened the way to focus their combined leadership thinking on service for the drastically different post-war lifestyle to come.

With men at war, industry had been forced to take more women workers and when the men came home, the women did not want to give up their jobs. In the next several years, morals, mores, and fashions quickly changed from Victorian decorum, long skirts, high necks, high-buttoned shoes, and pompadours to the "Flapper" mode of the Roaring Twenties, with short shirts, high-heeled pumps, and bobbed hair.

Altrusans who had made their own individual ways to the top without benefit of even the right to vote (until 1920), saw that they could be mentors to the young women who now had the opportunity of going to college and could now make many more career choices. Here was a way to act on a main objective stated in the first constitution and bylaws: "Be of service to young women entering business and professional fields."

The 2nd National Convention was held in Nashville, Tennessee, on May 30-31, 1919. The delegates at this convention changed the name from National Altrusa Institute to National Association of Altrusa Clubs. They also approved "Standard Constitution and Bylaws for Local Clubs" and passed a resolution requesting Congress to pass a proposed bill conferring relative rank of U.S. Army Nurses.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1920-1929

The sound structuring of Altrusa, with its local club/district/international channel, and its vital committees and farsighted directives, are already well documented in

organizational manuals and publications. It would take many volumes to report the thousands upon thousands of service projects that clubs have sponsored for the betterment of their communities and the multi-millions of dollars raised to fund them over the years. The purpose of the commemorative volume, first written in 1985, was to reflect on Altrusa's heritage so as to appreciate anew the farsighted vision of Altrusa leaders and the way each succeeding administration creatively guided the organization through upheavals of change. Altrusa's heritage is a story of Altruism in Action.

At the 4th National Convention, held in Dayton, Ohio, in May 1921, the delegates adopted the "Principles of Altrusa," as written in 1921 by Mamie L. Bass.

At the 5th National Convention, held in Louisville, Kentucky on September 5, 1921, the first Altrusa pin was sold. It was made by Julius C. Walk & Son, an Indianapolis jeweler.

On October 1, 1921, the first full-time organizer, Mary Davis, increased the number of clubs from six to twenty. Membership increased from approximately 340 to more than 800.

As early as 1922, clubs were pioneering in service projects and ways to pay for them. They initiated programs for the handicapped, promoted better education and quality health care, and sponsored cultural events.

- The oldest recorded major project is the day nursery that the Altrusa Club of Battle Creek, Michigan, started in February 1923. As of 2016, club members continue to volunteer there and the group sponsors two Child Learning Centers. Every member of the Altrusa Club in Battle Creek, Michigan, is a member of Altrusa Day Nursery, Inc., a separate non-profit entity that manages the facilities. The Board that oversees the operation of the day care centers is elected from within the membership of Altrusa of Battle Creek.
- The first big fundraiser reported was the Altrusa Club of Topeka, Kansas's carnival mask dance. Altrusa rented the city auditorium, invited the entire town (at 75 cents a ticket), and held a street parade preceding it with cars from other civic clubs.

In August 1922 Altrusa received its first national publicity with the appearance of an article by Ellis Parker Butler in the *American Magazine*. He referred to Altrusa as an "organization of splendid type."

In September 1922 *The National Altrusa Bulletin* began being published quarterly to bring clubs into closer touch with each other. Anna H. Settle, National President of Louisville, Kentucky, served as editor.

Delegates at the 6th Convention, held in Columbus, Ohio, on April 26–28, 1923, accepted the New National Constitution and Bylaws, approved the adoption of the

“Principles of Altrusa” as a preamble to the Constitution, adopted the Constitution and Bylaws for Clubs, and approved a corporate seal.

On December 31, 1923, the old corporation was dissolved and new articles of incorporation for the National Association of Altrusa Clubs were filed in the state of Indiana.

In January 1924, committee work carried on for the first time with the establishment of a National Committee on Education (later changed to Altrusa Information). The committee, chaired by Gertrude Muller, of the Fort Wayne, Indiana Club, was charged to, “Develop and give publicity to the true meaning of Altrusa, its opportunities and the responsibilities of Altrusa Clubs and individual members.” Committee members included Mamie L. Bass, Indianapolis, Indiana; Belle M. Ryan, Omaha, Nebraska; Mary Belle Jeffrey, Roanoke, Virginia; Blanche C. Roberts, Columbus, Ohio; and Gertrude Muller, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Delegates at the 7th Convention, held in Kalamazoo, Michigan on April 24–26, 1924, adopted Vocational Guidance as Altrusa’s national policy for its clubs and the Altrusa Code of Ethics.

On May 22, 1924, Aspirations of an Altrusan, that was written by Mamie L. Bass, was published in “The Altrusan,” the weekly newsletter of the Indianapolis, Indiana, Altrusa Club.

In October 1924, *The National Altrusan*, a six-page bulletin with ten issues a year, was first published under the editorship of Mrs. Edith L. Matthews of Dayton, Ohio.

In December 1924, “The Key to Altrusa,” written by Florence Mateer of the Columbus, Ohio, Club was printed in *The National Altrusan*.

The timeless philosophy of Altrusa, expressed in its set of Twelve Principles and in its Statement of Ideals, fires the Altrusa spirit. The Altrusa Key, written in 1924 by Florence Mateer, was adopted at the 1925 Convention that was held in Omaha, Nebraska on April 25, 1925. The Altrusa Key states Altrusa’s reason for being and well could have been written in 2017.

National’s stated criterion for each Altrusa club was to find and alleviate people’s needs not served by any other group and to do it in a creative way. In responding to this directive, Altrusans found themselves caught up in a rare enthusiasm for whatever the endeavor, large or small.

While each club was busy with projects of service to its own community, a survey showed that young women and their status in the workforce was a primary concern. It seemed necessary that Altrusa club activities should be unified if a strong organization were to be formed, and the Kalamazoo, Michigan Convention Delegates in 1924 were requested to consider the establishment of a “National Policy.” It was

logical that this Policy should follow the trend of club interests and so the National Policy of Altrusa became “Vocational Guidance.”

When a national committee was assigned, clubs were ready for the pioneering challenge to serve this evolving field. Altrusa professionals in counseling helped the committee develop guidelines for the clubs. The clubs followed through with career conferences in high schools and colleges, promoted counseling services in cities, set up vocational bookshelves in libraries, offered scholarships and loan funds, opened their places of business for student visits, and held lecture series for adult workers. The Huntington, West Virginia club even started an employment service, which was featured in the April 1927 of *The National Altrusan*. Since 1924, Altrusa has been active in the vocation field by providing assistance to both young and mature women.

Bimonthly, even weekly, club program meetings featured talks by experts on vocational guidance and on other social issues of the day. The Altrusa emblem displayed at each meeting—“Patriotism, Efficiency, Service” encircling the western hemisphere—served as a subtle reminder of expected performance. In defining “Patriotism,” the founders directed each Altrusan to “be good citizens of the world.” It was a courageous stand in a time of isolationist thinking.

Speakers on world subjects often were Altrusans who had returned from travels, study, or professional conferences abroad. *The National Altrusan* published many of the key speeches, such as one on a women’s conference held at the British Empire Exhibition in 1925, at which Lady Astor, the first woman representative in the House of Commons, gave opening day greetings. Altrusan Elsie Eaves, a civil engineer who attended the conference as a delegate, shared this observation: “On the other side of the Altrusa world, women are working for the same purpose and ideals and to the same ends as are we in the U.S. They, too, know that they must depend upon organization to gain their goal and they have put their knowledge into practical achievement, the holding of the International Conference of Women in Science, Industry and Commerce at the British Empire Exhibition.”

The spirited national Altrusa conventions were clearinghouses for program and project ideas. As an early Altrusan reported, “The air fairly crackled with creativity as enthusiastic lady tycoons discussed what to do to make things better in their cities and the world.” Convention speakers focused on international as well as domestic issues and one particularly brave bit of programming was a talk on the League of Nations, when the subject was domestically considered taboo.

National Altrusa persisted in planting seeds of world mindedness with statements such as this one that appeared in the national magazine: “The world has just become conscious of itself, not as a composite of nations, but as a world. What can we as individuals do in order that internationalism may become part of the texture of our lives? First, we must work on our own thinking.”

In 1924–1925, an Extension Committee, appointed by the National President, formed 18 new clubs, bringing the total membership to 1,415.

On June 25, 1925 the first full-time secretary-treasurer, Jennie Q. Olson, was hired. Seven new clubs were added, making a total of sixty clubs with a membership of 1,781.

The 9th National Convention was held in May 1926 at Peoria, Illinois. The delegates adopted *The Altrusa Handbook*, which included Altrusa's first classification guide, compiled by the Committee on Education and a Plan for Membership-at-Large.

The 12th National Convention was held in Denver, Colorado, in June 1929. "Into the Light," written by Gena Branscombe and dedicated to Altrusa, was adopted as the official song.

The U.S. Stock Market crash of October 29, 1929, and the depression in its wake, put heavy new demands on Altrusa's vocational work as unemployment soared. Job cutbacks dismissed older women in preference to young men. Facing the problem, Altrusa leaders saw the impact age prejudice played and were determined to do something to counteract it. Job clinics for older women workers and *The National Altrusan* articles on finding jobs in later years laid the foundation for what would later develop as a Founders Fund in the 1940s. The 1946 publication of a booklet, *Women Go to Work at Any Age*, by gerontologist Dr. George Lawton, and the 1953 establishment of Founders Fund Vocational Aid as Altrusa International's second major funding project, began to address this situation.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1930-1939

In May 1930 the First National Directory and the first Altrusa Song Book were published.

On June 24, 1930, the District Plan was adopted with ten geographical areas established as districts.

National headquarters was in the home of the president until August 1931, when a permanent office was established at the Allerton Hotel, 701 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. The national board was composed of a president, two vice presidents, an immediate past president, and one representative from each Altrusa club. By 1930, Altrusa had 104 clubs with 2,877 members. The board was so unwieldy that the association resolved to activate its carefully worked out district plan. In 1930, the board divided the organization into ten districts, with an elected governor from each district representing the clubs on the national board.

As community business and professional leaders, Altrusans were acutely aware of the dramatic technological changes taking place around them. Realizing that radio had entered households on a broad based scale, Altrusa clubs used the new medium to promote community service projects. As the automobile increasingly

urbanized society and radically altered the pattern of family life, Altrusans looked at the soaring death and accident toll (over 20,000 Americans killed by cars in the mid-1930s) and clubs embarked upon counteracting measures, most notably traffic safety campaigns.

In September 1932 *The National Altrusan* was edited and published at National Headquarters by the first full-time editor, Mary Margaret Kern Garrard.

In 1934 Altrusa initiated public education programs on mental health.

In September 1935 *The National Altrusan* changed its name to *The International Altrusan*. Also in 1935, Altrusa initiated traffic safety programs and its membership reached 3,000.

On October 29, 1935, an international dream was achieved: Altrusa became international with extension into Mexico. The addition of Mexican women leaders into the national organization enabled it to appropriately change its name in June 1935 to the International Association of Altrusa Clubs, Inc. (This name was later shortened to Altrusa International, Inc.) Altrusa held its 16th International Convention in Cuernavaca, Mexico on June 22-27, 1937.

In June 1936 the Committee on Non-Partisan Public Affairs (later known as Community Service) was created to consider Altrusa's stand on questions affecting women. Also, Vocational Guidance changed its name to the Vocational Information Committee and District Eleven was established.

By 1938, the scope of Altrusa's vocational guidance services qualified the organization for membership in the Council of Guidance and Personnel Associations. This prestigious professional body nationally acknowledged that across the United States, Altrusa was assuming a significant role in establishing vocational guidance in high schools and colleges and in initiating on-the-job training for students.

Expanding their horizons beyond vocational services, in 1936, Altrusa clubs welcomed the formation of a national committee to direct community service work. An international relations committee followed in 1937. Like the two previously established committees, Education (now Communication) and National Policy/Vocational Guidance (now Service), these new committees worked directly with the clubs and districts, until 1940, when all four-program areas were united under the program coordination plan. Members with expertise in one of the four program areas were selected as program chairmen. They, along with a program coordinator, served for two-year terms and were challenged to change the program annually under a different motivating theme each year. It was not until 1951 that program planning became biennial.

In October 1938, Altrusa Headquarters moved to 540 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

In June 1939 the International Relations Committee was established as a permanent committee to build understanding among the world's people.

In July 1939 the Vocational Guidance program broadened to include aid to the mature worker as well as to youth, a bold move in an era when age prejudice banned all workers, especially older women, from jobs.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1940-1949

In 1940 Altrusa was organized in Puerto Rico.

In April 1940, Altrusa's Founders Fund was established to finance projects for older women workers in particular, with donations invited from members to honor Altrusa founders. April was set as the drive month for the Founders Fund.

In July 1940, Altrusa adopted the Program Coordination Plan, introducing an annual program and coordinating committees. Erma B. Christy (International President 1955-1957) served as the first chair, and then continued in this role for seven years. Program Coordination consisted of four committees, Vocational Information, Non-Partisan Public Affairs, International Relations, and Education. The goal of Program Coordination was to bring to balance the work of four program committees, which until 1940 had worked independently of each other. An annual theme was adopted for the program year, which later became biannually.

In July 1941, the Emergency Defense Committee was established. Thus, when war was declared in December 1941, Altrusa was already engaged in defense activities.

On July 11, 1941, first Altrusa Awards for Distinguished Service were presented at the 19th Annual Convention held in Roanoke, Virginia. Awards were presented to Mary I. Barber, Food Consultant to the Secretary of War, and Harriet Elliott, Associate Administrator in the National Defense Commission's Office.

WAR! The December 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor catapulted the United States into World War II and caused an abrupt shift in Altrusa's service program to community wartime demands. Over the next five years, despite curtailed travel and gasoline restrictions, Altrusans made heroic contributions in time and talent to war work. Simultaneously, the planned program projected farsighted action for the peace to come. The 1943 and 1945 Altrusa conventions had to be cancelled, "freezing" the international officers in their posts for four years, until successors were elected by mail ballot in 1945. But the international board met annually, the international program coordination committee kept communication lines humming between district and clubs, and the total organization progressed. Altrusa unsinkable!

The first theme “Altrusa’s Job in Wartime” reflected the focus of the programs for 1942–1943.

Altrusa celebrated its Silver Anniversary on April 11, 1942 with 4,528 members in 186 clubs. During Altrusa’s Birthday week on April 11th, from dawn to sunset, clubs sent anniversary telegrams, each sending personal club greetings to a pre-assigned club. The telegrams began in the East and ended in the West, forming a complete circle of Altrusa friendship by day’s end.

Altrusa’s first international grants program, Grants-in-Aid, was initiated in 1944 with a fundraising campaign for money to help defray unforeseen expenses incurred by Latin American women earning graduate degrees in the United States needed for nation-building back home. The first grants of \$250–\$750 were given in 1945, along with Altrusa friendship. From this sound base, the Grants-in-Aid project was expanded later to include women graduate students from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Polynesia, and Melanesia. Primarily funded by Altrusans, over the years grants totaling nearly \$1.4 million have enabled 2,500 women to complete educational goals.

On April 1, 1945, Altrusa Headquarters was moved to 332 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

On July 25, 1946, the first Altrusa Representative to the United Nations was appointed. Also the Founders Fund’s first big investment, tuition scholarships for ten teachers to attend a summer workshop in Georgia, was awarded.

On June 16, 1947, our name changed from International Association of Altrusa Clubs, Inc. to Altrusa International, Inc.

On September 19, 1947, Altrusa was organized in Guatemala.

During the 1940s Altrusa expanded to other countries in the western hemisphere: Puerto Rico in 1940 and Canada in 1945. With the expansion into Seoul, Korea on August 5, 1947 it became apparent that the Altrusa emblem would need to be changed. International President Mamie D. Larsh designed the emblem to include countries of both hemispheres as viewed from the North Pole. The emblem was adopted at the 1949 Convention in Banff, Alberta, Canada, on June 25, 1949.

On April 2, 1948, Altrusa was organized in London, England.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1950–1959

The world around Altrusa included a burgeoning television age that opened new educational opportunities. The new National Citizens Committee on Educational TV (NCCETV) invited Altrusa to be on its advisory board, and Altrusa Clubs nationwide

helped organize community resources necessary to the establishment of public broadcasting stations. This dedicated involvement earned for Altrusa International a distinguished service citation from the NCCETV.

In April 1950, Altrusa membership approached the 10,000 mark.

On June 25, 1950, the United States was again involved in a war when we came to the aid of South Korea when it was invaded by North Korea. An Armistice was signed on July 27, 1953.

In June 1951, Altrusa Planned Program extended to two years to coincide with each biennium.

Altrusa entered the mid-century decade with a membership more than double that of 1940: 9,005 members in 277 clubs in 1950, compared to 4,424 members in 160 clubs in 1940. Altrusa International now intensified its cooperation with major national and international organizations in fields pertinent to Altrusa's program. Delegates were assigned to participate, share Altrusa's experiences, and bring back findings to update and keep viable Altrusa's service program. Among these organizations have been: White House Conference on Children and Youth; White House Conference on Aging; University of Michigan Annual Conference on Aging; National Council on Aging; Mental Health Association; World Food Congress; National Safety Council; President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped; International Cooperation Year; and the Non-Governmental Organizations Conferences at the United Nations, where Altrusa first assigned its representative in 1946. In 2016 Altrusa had five regular representatives, Audrey Braver, Carole Kennedy, Julie Harrison-Kleszczewski, Carole Lancaster, and Mary Ellen Lavine, at the United Nations, plus one youth representative, Ashleigh Bugg.

For Altrusa, the 1950s were particularly notable. Growth in the number of clubs meant redistricting appeared on the agenda of the 1955 International Convention. Where there had been ten, as of June 1, 1956, there were now twelve. Its 20-year-old vocational guidance expertise matured with the launching, in 1952, of the Founders Fund Vocational Aid (FFVA), the organization's second international funding project. Unique in that only aptitude and need determined an applicant's eligibility, with preference given to older women, the program filled an immediate void. As the FFVA word spread, women who had generally been passed over in life applied for their chance-of-a lifetime opportunity. Those motivated to train for better jobs and women for whom personal rehabilitation could open job doors applied as well. The \$50-\$250 awards were enhanced by personal encouragements of Altrusa clubs assigning the initial screening of applicants in their respective cities. During the duration of the fund, the International FFVA Committee has awarded nearly \$1.3 million to 5,500 deserving women.

In 1954 the Grants-in-Aid Project earned an honor award from the Freedom Foundation.

In 1955 Altrusa International became a founding member of the Women's Conference of the National Safety Council.

On October 1, 1955, redistricting increased the number of districts to twelve.

In 1959, Altrusa was organized in Ireland.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1960-1969

The 1960s was a decade of extremes with flower children and assassins, idealism, rebellion, and riots. As the decade wore on, government exploded under the Great Society of President Lyndon Johnson, which bought about a social revolution of federal activism. The Vietnam War led to widespread disillusionment and cynicism about the government and the military. By the end of the decade, television had gone from a novelty to the dominant medium of the age and one of the most profound communications tools ever.

Attuned to the rapidly changing environment, Altrusa clubs swiftly shifted service gears for space exploration, communication satellites, and the nuclear 1960s. Its international service world extended to Asia, Europe, and Oceania, as clubs were organized in India in 1962; the Philippines, England, and Ireland in 1959; Scotland in 1964; and Northern Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand in 1966. The growth of clubs in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Northern Ireland led to the formation of District Thirteen in 1965.

In 1962 Altrusa became a charter member of the Women's Committee, President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, which gave new guidance to Altrusa Club vocational programs for the handicapped.

On July 25, 1962, to better administer its two international funding projects—Grants-in-Aid and Founders Fund Vocational Aid—Altrusa International, Inc., created the Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. This 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation was chartered to receive funds contributed by clubs within Altrusa International, Inc, individual Altrusans, businesses, and interested members of the general public and to administer those funds for the exclusive support of educational, scientific, literary, and charitable projects and programs. It was a farsighted decision, with potential and benefits still to be discovered.

In July 1963 the Mamie L. Bass Community Service Award (name shortened to Mamie L. Bass Service Award in July 1975.) was initiated to recognize the best in Altrusa club service projects. The first award was given at the 29th Convention held in Dallas, Texas. The first recipient was the Altrusa Club of Gadsden, Alabama.

In 1963 Altrusa achieved the following:

1. Organized in the Philippines.

2. The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped awarded Altrusa International a citation, "in grateful appreciation for service in behalf of our handicapped fellow citizens."
3. Altrusa International was invited to cooperate in the President's Commission on the Status of Women Action Program, which added new impetus to the vocational program.
4. Vocational Guidance Committee changed its name to Vocational Services to better portray the expanded scope of activities.

ASTRA Clubs were introduced in 1966—a new Altrusa service project to help girls between the ages of 12 and 21 (later changed to 25 on July 22, 1990) become active, involved, fulfilled members of society. ASTRA, an acronym for Ability, Service, Training, Responsibility, and Achievement, with Altrusans as sponsors and role models, provides service projects in schools and communities as its members embrace the Altrusa philosophy of serving and growing. Through the years, ASTRA members have later become Altrusans, the most notable of which is Corinne (Chee Chee) Israel, 1985–1987 International ASTRA Chairman!

On April 11, 1967, the brightest star in the Altrusa galaxy of around-the-world cities simultaneously celebrating the Golden Anniversary was Nashville, Tennessee, Altrusa's birthplace. Hosted by Nashville Altrusans, the day-long event began with Charter Member Natalie Gabriel's unveiling of a bronze plaque in the lobby of the First American National Bank building, where Altrusa was founded, and ended with the Golden Anniversary Banquet for 325 Altrusa leaders, local dignitaries, and heads of other major service organizations at the Hillwood Country Club. Minnie Pearl, of country music fame, underscored Altrusa's Nashville beginnings as the evening's featured entertainer.

This same celebration spirit permeated the 50th Golden Anniversary Convention at Miami Beach, Florida, the following July, and caused Altrusans to discuss forces creating great change in the decades which lay ahead. Aviation, with soon-to-come jumbo jets that could fly 500 people at a time, and the new marvels of communication were viewed as exciting vehicles for bringing people into closer relationship. The early goal to "build understanding among people of all nations" seemed all the more attainable in 1967.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1970–1979

On October 7, 1974, the Executive Committee was authorized to handle Association business between annual board meetings.

The 1970s brought a search for a new, major international emphasis. As other organizations were known for their work for the deaf, the blind, and the disabled, clubs wanted Altrusa to be identified with a cause. Accordingly, nutrition was explored in the 1973–1975 biennium and the strengthening of family life became

the focus for 1975–1977. When “Action for Literacy” was introduced in 1977, Altrusa knew it had found its ongoing crusade. Conquering illiteracy, one of the world’s most debilitating “ills,” through a unified international program, was decided to be the direction Altrusa should take. The program was voted upon at the Brighton, England 35th Convention that was held on July 26, 1977, and “Action for Literacy” took its place next to Grants-in-Aid and Founders Fund Vocational Aid as the third funding project of the Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. in 1980. Active (Retired) membership classification was added at this convention.

As Altrusa was growing in its service emphasis, the number of clubs in the international network was growing too. Altrusa’s growth in Puerto Rico was particularly significant and resulted in the inauguration of District Fourteen on July 30, 1976. While initially created for the Puerto Rican clubs, District Fourteen also included the Caribbean Islands and the Dominican Republic that was organized in November 1978. Central America’s El Salvador became Altrusa’s 16th country with the organization of the San Salvador club in 1979.

In 1977 the Long Range Planning Committee was established.

On May 5, 1978, Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council was granted to Altrusa International, Inc.

In 1979 territorial boundaries were eliminated for local clubs.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1980–1989

In July 1980, the Board of Directors of the Altrusa Foundation voted to include Action for Literacy as one of its service projects.

The high tech 1980s brought about a computerized, instant, information society. Altrusa, well experienced in adapting to change, was ready once again to deal with these new challenges. The women’s movement of the previous decade had helped to open doors to executive and managerial opportunities, and clubs had within their ranks, young women who thrived on the rewards of volunteer service and the fellowship offered by professional women who paved the way.

In July 1982 a resolution for International, Inc. to assume a leadership role against violence toward women and the devastating effect upon men, women, and children was approved.

In 1982, Altrusa’s ongoing fight for literacy was carried beyond local clubs when the International Foundation agreed to fund classes in ten village literacy schools in Kerala, India.

In May 1983 Altrusa was reorganized in Korea. It was chartered during an International Convention—a first.

In 1983 Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. was restructured.

In July 1985 at the 39th International Convention that was held in Boston, Massachusetts, the following was accomplished:

1. Emeritus Membership was established
2. Affiliate Membership was established
3. *The Altrusa Tradition*, a brief history of Altrusa International, Inc., was first distributed
4. The Eleanor Roosevelt Humanitarian Award was established. It is the only award given to an individual member by Altrusa International. It is designed to recognize an Altrusan beyond Altrusa International, Inc., as a volunteer directly responsible for improving the quality of life within the community. Hazel Williams, former Executive Director, was the first recipient.

In April 1986 the first issue of *Altrusa Accent*, an eight-page tabloid newspaper replaced the *International Service Bulletin*. The *Accent* had a focus of member retention—to interpret the biennium theme into workable projects that would also include “how-to” information from International Committee Chairmen, from clubs and districts with success stories to share, and a “Highpoints” column.

In 1987 the Foundation made literacy its major focus and established the ABC Literacy Grants Program to:

1. Provide financial assistance to Altrusa Clubs introducing literacy projects into their communities
2. Enhance existing local literacy programs
3. Provide money to replicate literacy projects undertaken by other clubs, and
4. Help individuals complete their education in literacy fields.

A significant change in Altrusa came at the July 1987 International Convention in Palm Desert, California, when the delegate body amended the bylaws to admit men into membership. In the mid-1980s the major “men’s” organizations were changing their bylaws inviting women to join their ranks, and by the close of the decade, the service club movement had eliminated membership requirements based upon gender. It was at the 1987 Convention that the Foundation presented its first “Lamplighter” awards, a program designed to recognize Altrusans who contribute \$500 or more annually.

Dublin, Ireland was the site of the organization’s 41st Convention held on July 18, 1989. There, delegates adopted a resolution calling upon all clubs and members to take an active part in environmental issues.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 1990–1999

In 1990, the “Recycling Achievement Award” was instituted through which International recognized businesses, agencies, and individuals for achievement in this area. Chile was organized in 1990. An Annual Anniversary Gift Campaign was created by Foundation to honor the founding of Altrusa.

Growth, both in membership and in new clubs, is a constant challenge to Altrusa and all service organizations. To assist clubs in their recruitment efforts, a color video program, “This is Altrusa International,” was produced in 1990.

As Altrusa was changing, global developments were impacting lives everywhere. In 1989, the Berlin Wall came down, and Germany moved toward unification. Marxist governments in Eastern Europe fell and were replaced by democracy and the will of the people. With “glasnost” and “perestroika” in the Soviet Union, the Cold War came to an end, followed by the astonishing collapse of communism in the USSR in 1991.

Chicago, Illinois was host to the 1991 42nd International Convention and at the opening session, Chile was welcomed into the Altrusa family of nations. Delegates in Chicago amended the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws to add the words, “Altrusa International of” to the name of each Altrusa Club to better illustrate the worldwide scope of the organization. The Altrusa Foundation announced its new initiative, Club 21, to provide assistance to children with HIV and AIDS. The Chicago Convention launched the observance of Altrusa’s 75th Anniversary that was marked by a weekend celebration on April 11 and 12, 1992 in Nashville, Tennessee, where Altrusa was founded on April 11, 1917. During the 1991 Convention, the Foundation initiated its Endowment Fund to honor Altrusa’s “Diamond Jubilee,” and to raise funds to ensure the Foundation’s ability to fund club service projects in the future.

On April 11–12, 1992, Altrusa celebrated its 75th Anniversary in Nashville, Tennessee. Three hundred Altrusans and guests participated in a weekend of festivities that included the presentation of Altrusa’s gift of seventy-five flowering dogwood trees to the people of Nashville and the State of Tennessee.

In 1992 Altrusa was organized in Russia and Ecuador.

The 75th Anniversary celebration concluded when Altrusans gathered in Nashville, Tennessee for the 43rd Convention in July 1993, which was the largest Convention held in many years.

In 1993 the Letha H. Brown Literacy Award was established to recognize outstanding club achievement in literacy projects to their community.

In 1994 Altrusa was organized in Ukraine.

In July 1995, Altrusa again displayed its “international” scope by holding the 44th Convention in Christchurch, New Zealand, with the installation of International President Margaret Inch our first International President from that country. The following was accomplished at this convention:

1. Delegates voted to decrease the number of club committees from 12 to 5 which included: 1) Service; 2) Membership Development; 3) Communication; 4) Finance and 5) Nominating, effective June 1, 1996.
2. The Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. presented the first annual Community Leadership Award to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to their communities as volunteer leaders. The first Community Service Award was presented to Kathleen Leos, Dallas, Texas.
3. First Letha H. Brown Literacy Award presented to Altrusa International of Hastings, New Zealand. The Letha H. Brown Literacy Award was established by the 1992 Board of Directors to recognize outstanding club achievement in literacy projects to their community.

On October 25, 1997, Altrusa initiated participation in “Make a Difference Day” sponsored by *USA Today Magazine*.

In 1999, the development of a Strategic Plan (later changed to Long Range/Strategic Plan) was adopted by the membership at the International Convention in Seattle, Washington. Each district chose a member to be trained as the Strategic Planner Trainer with the purpose of helping each club develop its own plan. Each District was also charged with developing its own plan. While evaluating the Long Range Plan of Altrusa International, the size of the International Board of Directors came under discussion.

On January 17, 1991, our military became involved in the conflict known as Operation Desert Storm. Our involvement ended on February 28, 1991. The Middle East erupted into war when Iraq invaded Kuwait, but with the concerted efforts of the United Nations and its members, Kuwait was liberated in the spring of 1991. With communist domination of Europe ending and serious discussions being held between Israel and its Arab neighbors, the citizens of the world began to hope that peace among nations could become a reality in the next century. Extension across the Atlantic occurred during 1992 and 1993 when clubs were established in Novorossiysk and Kransnador, Russia. Then clubs were established in Uzhgovod and Zolotarevo, Ukraine in 1994.

As we moved into the 21st century, the communication age became a reality. We not only had our “desk-tops” at the office, but we carried our “lap-tops” with us. Cell phones, smart phones, tablets, texting, instant messaging, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and other technological advances became a necessity for every person instead of only being used by the professional people “on call.” Information could be sent around the world with the speed of light, which enabled

Altrusans to instantly connect with other clubs, districts, and international events. In launching websites for Altrusa International (established about 1998), Districts and Clubs became linked, thus closing the communication gap. Newsletters, membership information, forms for awards, and much more are just a click away.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 2000–2009

On September 11, 2001, terrorists struck the United States by flying commercial airliners loaded with people into the Twin Towers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Another airplane was also hijacked, but it crashed in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Not since December 7, 1941, had America been so shocked or our lives changed so much. Altrusans joined together to help the country and each other.

In response to the attacks on September 11, 2001, we became involved in the Iraq War on March 20, 2003. On December 30, 2006, our troops were able to capture and kill Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Our troops remained in Iraq until December 18, 2011.

On October 7, 2001, we sent troops to Afghanistan to fight in the war there. They remained there until December 28, 2014.

Both the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have given rise to two terrorist groups, the Taliban and Isis, which are attacking many cities across the globe today.

During the International Convention held in Dallas, Texas, on July 6–10, 2001, members voted on the following:

1. Restructuring the International Board of Directors. An International Director, a new International position, was added. Eight Directors for the biennium starting with odd-numbered International Conventions, elected by the odd-numbered districts and 7 International Directors for the biennium starting with even-numbered conventions, elected by the even-numbered districts. This restriction was implemented with the 48th International Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 2003.
2. Literacy was adopted as the International Focus, to be promoted throughout the organization.
3. Each classification category limited to 20% of the total club membership was eliminated. Active members will be classified in accordance with their business and profession, with no restrictions on the numbers allowed for any classification.
4. The Active Retired membership category was eliminated.

On January 20, 2002, The Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. celebrated its 40th anniversary. The Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award was established to encourage and stimulate international relations; create an

awareness of other cultures and people of the world; and recognize outstanding club achievement in international relations.

In July 2002, a group of Altrusans in District Six found our beloved Mamie L. Bass buried in an unmarked grave in Crown Hill Cemetery. That changed, however, in 2003 when Altrusans from around the world decided to raise funds to honor their First National President. Subsequently, the Mamie L. Bass Memorial was dedicated at Crown Hill Cemetery on November 4, 2006.

At the International Convention held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, held on July 17, 2003, bylaws to reduce the number of International Directors to four were adopted. Also adopted was a Governor's Council to maintain a strong relationship between International, Governors, and Districts.

In January 2005, a Vision in the Future Committee was established to study 1) Structure; 2) Membership; 3) International Office; 4) Marketing; and 5) Personnel of Altrusa International.

On July 15–18, 2005 the 49th Convention was held in Puerto Rico and Zaida Perez-Mendez was elected President-Elect. The first recipient of the Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award was given to Altrusa International, Inc. of Montrose, Colorado.

In 2005 the Lucente Lamplighter Award was established for recognition of individuals who have made ten Lamplighter contributions. An individual who is honored, or makes a total of ten \$500 contributions receives the unique Lucente Lamplighter pin. This award was named for Josie Lucente who served for 20 years as the Altrusa International Foundation's Executive Director.

ALTRUSA HERITAGE 2010–PRESENT

In January 2010 the International Foundation changed criteria for the Community Leadership Award, which was awarded biannually at the International Convention beginning in 2011.

On February 22, 2011, Christchurch, New Zealand, was struck by a 6.3 earthquake—the nation's second deadliest disaster. In July 1995 the 44th International Convention had been held in Christchurch, New Zealand. So, Altrusans joined together to assist this country and the many Altrusa Sisters that we had come to know and love after attending the 44th International Convention there.

At the 52nd Convention held in Rapid City, S.D. in July 2011, the following were adopted:

1. Eliminated membership based on classification. "Membership open to community members who are of good character and who subscribe to the

principles and purposes of Altrusa International, Inc. may be invited to become active members of an Altrusa Club.”

2. Adopted a new logo with Leading to a Better Community brand. The logo was designed by Miles Media.
3. Delegates voted to distribute monthly electronic copies of *The International Altrusan*.

On July 26, 2011, the creation of ASTRA Scholarships funded by Altrusa Foundation was approved.

In 2011 Altrusa began using social media to communicate in a timelier manner with members. These include: Facebook (June 27, 2011); Twitter (July 28, 2011) and Flickr (November 17, 2011).

On January 28, 2012, the Altrusa Vision Statement was updated to read: “Altrusa is a leader among international organizations improving communities worldwide through a network of activities by member clubs.”

In July 2012 the International Foundation, Inc. celebrated its 50th anniversary with a \$50 donation to each club to be used to purchase books for a club literacy project. The local club had to match the \$50 in books.

On July 20–22, 2012 a membership pin was adopted to recognize sponsors of new members.

On September 22, 2012, the Board of Directors adopted a Sponsor Recognition Program that provided pins to recognize sponsors of new members at certain levels.

On March 31, 2013 International Headquarters moved to One North LaSalle Street, Suite 1955, Chicago, IL 60601 and historical records were donated to Ball State University Archives and Special Collections.

In 2013 the 53rd Convention was held in Rotorua, New Zealand and Ilona Kerby was installed as President. The delegates adopted the following changes to the Bylaws:

1. The Articles of Incorporation were significantly revised to streamline them and to eliminate items that were duplicated in the Bylaws.
2. The name of clubs was changed to Altrusa International of (Name of City), Inc. (eliminated the “Inc.” from the middle of name) and to provide that “Inc.” is only used once a club is incorporated. On January 16, 2014, the historic records of Altrusa International, Inc. were sent to the Ball State University Archives and Special Collections.

On April 30, 2014, the Altrusa Resource Guide was published online and replaced the Altrusa Encyclopedia.

On September 1, 2014, the first issue of the *Altrusa Compass* was distributed electronically.

On July 11–13, 2014, a new ASTRA logo was approved by the Board of Directors.

On June 1, 2015, Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. hired its first employee, Shawna Kaiser, as Secretary/Foundation Administrator.

On July 15–16, 2015, Ashleigh Bugg was the first appointment of an Altrusa United Nations Youth Ambassador.

On January 9, 2016, the age for ASTRA members was lowered to age 11 years old.

On March 19, 2016, the Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee changed to Long Range Strategic Planning.

On May 31, 2016, Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. celebrated Altrusa's Centennial with its \$100,000 for 100 Campaign. The Altrusa International Foundation has given more than \$3,000,000 since its formation in 1962.

On July 21-24, 2017 the 55th Convention was held in Nashville, Tennessee Altrusans celebrated the 100th Anniversary of Altrusa International, Inc. The delegates adopted the following changes to the Bylaws:

1. "No more than two members of the Board of Directors shall be from the same District during any term and cannot be from the same club."
2. Emeritus Members criteria included "in good standing within the current or the previous Club year; have been members for 10 years, they are, through great service to Altrusa and devotion to its Principles, deserving of the honor; and The Board of Directors of the Club and the District board of Directors approve such change in status"
3. Charter strength of Clubs reduced to fifteen Active members.
4. Formation of virtual clubs approved.

The Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. changed the name of its annual Community Leadership Award to the Anna H. Settle Community Leadership Award.

Did they ever dream that little band of 40 members that met in 1918 would be, in 2017, a living, driving force of more than 8,300, still guided by the principles and objectives they established? Well it has happened, and as Mamie L. Bass wrote in the 39th anniversary issue of the *International Altrusan* published in April 1956:

"What we have already achieved is magnificent. But Altrusa is not static. It is dynamic. New fields shall open unto us and we will achieve new goals of helpfulness. In the past, in the present and in the future the strength of Altrusa is in the individual member—her vision, her character, her kindness and her desire for service, and always her power to add to the happiness of those about her. So it is to you, each of

you, to build for Altrusa and for your own happiness. Altrusans of the present and the future, I salute you and pledge anew my devotion and understanding.”

And, what of the future? Altrusa and Altrusans will be busy at new tasks in the interest of a better world. The Altrusa of the future will continue to attract to its ranks the leaders and the doers; those who seek more than material success; those who know that by united effort they can make a greater contribution to humanity. The Altrusa of the future will be carried through good times and bad by the vision of its leadership, by the strength of its programs, and the aims and ideals for which it stands. It will grow because splendid women and men will build upon the original groundwork and efforts, even surpassing the work of the organization’s founders. It will grow because it is a sincere expression of the ideals and aspirations of business and professional people and because it fulfills their need for service.

NOTABLE INFLUENCES

Altrusa’s classification system of selective recruitment of women leaders proved its point by attracting top echelon members.

Eleanor Roosevelt is one whose name became a household word. A charter member of the Altrusa Club of New York City since 1927, she was classified under Furniture, as owner of a factory, and maintained her active interest right on up to the White House, when she became First Lady with the election of her husband, Franklin, as President of the United States. When he was governor of New York, Eleanor helped organize the Altrusa Club of Albany by inviting prospects to dinner at the executive mansion to finalize plans with the national field representative; the documents were signed with the Governor’s pen in his private sitting room.

Anna Mary Robinson (Grandma Moses), a renowned American Artist, was presented with an honorary membership by the Altrusa Club of Troy, New York, in 1949.

Among countless early Altrusans who had risen to high places considered unusual for women are the following, selected at random from early issues of the Altrusa magazine. Notable in their careers, they were notable influencers in their Altrusa clubs as well, in developing needed service projects with scope. Behind their job titles can be appreciated the pioneering that they had to do in their 1920s time frame:

- Dr. Lillian Gilbreth, charter member, Altrusa Club of New York City; internationally known personnel management engineer, first woman professor of management engineering, Purdue University; and the mother in “Cheaper by the Dozen.”

- Julia Hindman, first president of the Altrusa Club of Nashville, Tennessee; insurance agency owner and dean of business women.
- Natalie Gabriel, a charter member, Altrusa Club of Nashville, Tennessee, bank executive.
- Belle Benchley, Altrusa Club of San Diego, California, only woman zoo director.
- Mary Grossman, Altrusa Club of Cleveland, Ohio, judge of the municipal court.
- Katherine Giles, Altrusa Club of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, only woman cotton statistician in the United States.
- Ida Wilcox, Altrusa Club of Salt Lake City, Utah, foremost portrait photographer in the West.
- Nellie Taylor Ross, Altrusa Club of Cheyenne, succeeded her husband as governor of Wyoming, upon his death in 1923; ten years later became the first woman director of the United States Mint.
- Edith Jarvis Alden, Altrusa Club of Chicago, Illinois, as secretary/treasurer of the Burlington Railroad was the first woman in American rail history to be given a top position with a major railroad.
- Ruth St. Denis, Altrusa Club of New York City, foremost interpreter of dances of the Orient.
- Bess Streeter Aldrich, Altrusa Club of Lincoln, Nebraska, novelist.
- Hattie Green Lockett, Altrusa Club of Phoenix, Arizona, owner-manager of an extensive sheep-raising operation; named “Sheep Queen” by the National Wool Growers’ Association.
- Elizabeth Gilmer, Altrusa Club of New Orleans, Louisiana, more famous under the column pen name of “Dorothy Dix.”
- Dr. Sara Jordan, Altrusa Club of Boston, Massachusetts, foremost woman surgeon.
- Margaret Wheeler, Altrusa Club of Boston, Massachusetts, curator of Egyptology, Boston Museum of Art.
- Margaret McGill, Altrusa Club of Boston, Massachusetts, president of the Women’s Industrial and Educational Union.

- Teresa Fitzpatrick, Altrusa Club of Boston, Massachusetts, general manager of the *Atlantic Monthly*.
- Margaret Park, Altrusa Club of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, official of the National Bank of Philadelphia.
- Mary Dam, Altrusa Club of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, curator of education, University of Philadelphia Art Museum.
- Jean Crawford, Altrusa Club of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, women's director, University of Pennsylvania.
- May Middleton, Altrusa Club of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, superintendent of Methodist Hospital.
- Dorothy Grafly, Altrusa Club of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Ledger art page editor and daughter of Sculptor Charles Grafly.
- Soester L Anthon, Altrusa Club of Yakima, Washington, managing editor, *Yakima Daily Republic*.
- Mary I. Barber, Altrusa Club of Battle Creek, Michigan, home economics director of the Kellogg Company. She became president of the American Dietetic Association.
- Alva Ellisor, Altrusa Club of Houston, Texas, consulting geologist and paleontologist, Humble Oil Company.
- Gladys Pyle, Altrusa Club of Huron, South Dakota, Secretary of State.
- Margaret Cheney, Altrusa Club of Lafayette, Indiana, only woman head of a bank in the United States.
- Katherine Fisher, Altrusa Club of New York City, *Good Housekeeping Magazine's* director of the Good Housekeeping Institute.
- Angela Morgan, Altrusa Club of New York City, poet.
- Ruth Pratt, Altrusa Club of New York City, the city's only woman alderman.
- Gertrude Lane, Altrusa Club of New York City, editor of the *Woman's Home Companion*.
- Lucille Hecht, Chicago, Illinois, an Altrusan since 1944 and was editor of the *International Altrusan* for over three decades beginning in 1977. She is a

past president of the Illinois Woman's Press Association and was their "Woman of the Year" in 1973.

- Hazel P. Williams became a member of the Altrusa Club of Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1919; was elected national secretary in 1922; served as chairman of the committee which created the first Classification Guide, adopted in 1926; was elected the national association's first vice president in 1930; and became executive director in 1946, a post she brilliantly held until her retirement in 1967.
- Joella Terrell Butler, Wichita Falls, Texas, was a wildcatter and an independent oil producer. Time Frame: 1950s–1960s
- Lena Clauve, charter member of the Altrusa Club of Albuquerque, New Mexico, composed the fight song for the University of New Mexico in 1930.
- Bonnie Cone, Ph.D., Charlotte, North Carolina, was one of the founders of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 1965.
- Ray K. Daily, M.D., Houston, Texas, an ophthalmologist who served on the Board of Directors that formed the University of Houston. She was also noted for her work with the Independent School District in Houston. Time Frame: 1940s
- Zada Haws, Ogden, Utah, was the first president of Utah Association of Adult Education and Community Continuing Education in 1989.
- Renilda Hilkemeyer, Houston, Texas, pioneer in the field of Oncology Nursing. Time Frame: 1950s.
- Carol Haberman Knight-Sheen, San Antonio, Texas, was the first female District Judge in Bexar County Texas. She was appointed by Governor Dolph Briscoe in 1977.
- Virginia Morriss, Sherman, Texas, was the first female Mayor of Sherman in 1979.
- Jacqueline Noonan, M.D., Lexington, Kentucky, was one of the founding faculty members of the University of Kentucky. She was also the first person to describe Noonan's Syndrome, a genetic multiple malformation syndrome that affects one in 1,500 infants. Time Frame: 1960s.

To this small sampling of notable influencers in Altrusa's formative years must be added the National and International presidents presented here, with the positions they held at the time of their presidencies, and whose devoted leadership has made Altrusa International, Inc. what it is today.

ALTRUSA HALL OF FAME

The past presidents, where they lived, and the positions they held at the time.

NATIONAL PRESIDENTS

- 1917–1918: *Mamie L. Bass, Indianapolis, Indiana, architectural firm business administrator
- 1918–1919: *Morna Hickham Knipe, Kokomo, Indiana, director, women's division, U.S. Employment Service
- 1919–1921: *Bessie D. Moore, Dayton, Ohio, attorney
- 1921–1922: *Mary M. Buehler, Indianapolis, Indiana, lumber company vice president
- 1922–1924: *Anna H. Settle, Louisville, Kentucky, attorney
- 1924–1925: *Dr. Gillette Hayden, Columbus, Ohio, dentist
- 1925–1927: *Amanda H. Heppner, Lincoln, Nebraska, dean of women, University of Nebraska
- 1927–1928: *Margaret Turner, Lexington, Kentucky, bank executive
- 1928–1930: *Dr. Helen Johnston, Des Moines, Iowa, physician
- 1930–1931: *Elizabeth F. Gardner, Austin, Texas, automobile agency owner
- 1931–1933: *Janette B. Briggs, Kalamazoo, Michigan, drug company co-owner

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTS

- 1933–1937: *Chase Going Woodhouse, New London, Connecticut, director, institute, women's professional relations
- 1937–1939: *Hayette Quisenberry, El Paso, Texas, department store public relations director
- 1939–1941: *Dessalee Ryan Dudley, Battle Creek, Michigan, assistant superintendent of schools
- 1941–1945: *Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun, Dallas, Texas, dermatologist

- 1945–1947: *Mamie D. Larsh, Indianapolis, Indiana, attorney
- 1947–1949: *Corinne V. Loomis, Boston, Massachusetts, executive, John Hancock Insurance Company
- 1949–1951: *Ruth Kramer, Marion, Ohio, sanatorium purchasing agent
- 1951–1953: *Lena C. Clauve, Albuquerque, dean of women, University of New Mexico
- 1953–1955: *Gretchen Vanderschmidt, St. Louis, Missouri, secretarial school owner
- 1955–1956: *Erma B. Christy, Muncie, Indiana, supervisor and vocational guidance expert, public schools
- 1956–1957: *Marjorie Lamb, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, founder-head, The Alert Service
- 1957–1959: *Edith Wood Nelson, Richmond, Virginia, real estate executive
- 1959–1961: *Dr. Viva Boothe, Columbus, Ohio, director, Bureau of Business Research, Ohio State University
- 1961–1963: *Ernestine C. Milner, Greensboro, North Carolina, head, psychology department, Guilford College
- 1963–1965: *Edith DeBusk, Dallas, Texas, attorney
- 1965–1967: *Lucile S. Alexander, Jacksonville, Florida, senior reviewer, Internal Revenue Service audit division, Jacksonville District
- 1967–1969: *Mary S. Resh, Washington, D.C., deputy assistant manpower administrator, U.S. Department of Labor
- 1969–1971: *Joella Terrill Butler, Wichita Falls, Texas, independent oil producer
- 1971–1973: *Ethel Boyle Blanco, Springfield, Illinois, assistant state purchasing agent, Department of General Services, State of Illinois
- 1973–1975: *Muriel Mawer, Seattle, Washington, attorney
- 1975–1977: *LaVora E. Conklin, Detroit, Michigan, probate court analyst

- 1977–1979: *Letha H. Brown, San Diego, California, corporate secretary, Ratner Corporation
- 1979–1981: *Jen Henson, Carlsbad, New Mexico, co-owner of a silver and turquoise jewelry manufacturing firm
- 1981–1983: *Marie Knuebel-Colantino, Ashtabula, Ohio, capital investments
- 1983–1985: *Verona M. Bordok, Barstow, California, principal, Barstow High School
- 1985–1987: *Norma Jean Najim, Springfield, Illinois, controller
- 1987–1989: *Stella T. J. Nyhan, Dublin, Ireland, executive, Irish clothing industry
- 1989–1991: Barbara Ann Hughes, Ph.D., R.D., Raleigh, North Carolina, registered dietitian
- 1991–1993: Norma Hiner, Ashland, Ohio, pharmacist
- 1993–1995: Joyce Delabar, Lexington, Kentucky, director of graduate education, University of Kentucky School of Medicine
- 1995–1997: *Margaret Inch, Wellington, New Zealand, director, Strand Natural Fibers, Ltd.
- 1997–1999: *Dr. Alexinia Y. Baldwin, Ph.D., Mansfield Center, Connecticut, education/professor
- 1999–2001: Barbara J. Chinn, Eugene, Oregon, family community leadership trainer
- 2001–2003: Phyllis J. Corman, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, banking executive
- 2003–2005: Judy Atkinson, Enterprise, Alabama, insurance executive
- 2005–2007: Linda Nichols, Austin, Texas, chief operating officer American Lung Association of Texas
- 2007–2009: Zaida Perez-Mendez, San Sebastian, Puerto Rico, pharmacist
- 2009–2011: Donna C. Johnson, Gainesville, Florida, information technology
- 2011–2013: Dona M. Garretson, Grand Junction, Colorado, accountant

2013–2015: Ilona Kerby, Longview, Washington, Executive Director, Lower Columbia Community Action Program

2015–2017: Silvia Silverman, Silver Spring, Maryland, Supervisory Contract Specialist, District of Columbia

*Deceased

PRINCIPLES of ALTRUSA

1. Altrusa is a builder of women.
2. Altrusa is an expression of the search for the best in character, in business, and in citizenship.
3. Election to Altrusa is an evidence of confidence which imposes upon the recipient the obligation to strive to be true to the highest standards of life in her personal and business relations.
4. Altrusa in the very derivation of her name is committed to the philosophy of unselfishness, of the joy of giving rather than getting, and to the search for that happiness which is based upon spiritual worthiness.
5. Altrusa is practical idealism. Its service consists, not in saying great things, but in the daily earnest practice of its principles.
6. Altrusa commends to its members an active interest in public affairs, realizing that the State is but the individual writ large.
7. Altrusa develops true leadership, concerned with accomplishment and not with recognition.
8. Membership carries with it no obligation to transact business with other members. It makes no promise of returns in any commercial specie. Its rewards are in proportion to the loyalty, the unselfishness and character of the member herself, and the coin of the realm cannot equal its value.
9. Altrusa expresses good will for all mankind. It emphasizes the good and lets the evil sink into the oblivion it merits.
10. Altrusa is democratic; it knows no class, no favorites, but is founded upon merit alone.

11. Altrusa believes that the way to progress lies not in emphasizing the faults of men and their failure to give proper recognition, at times, to women in business, but rather in arousing women to their responsibilities and their possibilities, so that their accomplishments will blaze the trail for greater things.
12. Altrusa believes it is not enough to be good; Altrusa must be good for some thing. Each member must be doing the piece of work that is hers in a way that puts her in the front ranks of accomplishment.

Mamie L. Bass

*“Historical Altrusa material, published as written”
Written 1921/Adopted at Altrusa’s fourth convention in Dayton, Ohio, in 1921*

ASPIRATIONS OF AN ALTRUSAN

Let me be always open minded, that I may recognize good for Altrusa wherever it may be. Let me be ready always to put aside my personal opinions for the greater good for the greater number. Let me see principles and not personalities, and, discerning them, let me serve them whole heartedly through every cloud of doubt and discouragement.

Let me have faith still that the voice of the majority is the voice of good, and let me lend myself to the working out sincerely of what the majority chooses. Knowing that the organization is but the individual multiplied by many and that the organization reflects not only the constructive good, but also the mistaken ideas, the short-sightedness, the failures of the individual, let me still adhere to the will of the majority, knowing that time will reveal the better way and lead our footsteps aright if we tread with purer motives and unselfish hearts.

Let me be conscious of the shortcomings, the mistakes, the failures of myself and my associates, only that I may learn to correct them, and let me rather see with uplifted face and stalwart soul the unblemished beauty, the high ideal, of the spirit of Altrusa, who lives upon the earth to uplift women to higher things, to make real in business and in our daily lives the things of the spirit.

Let me not dream and write and talk of noble things, but give me rather the strength to live them in the smallest act wherein it is mine to serve. Let me be patient in defeat and humble in success. Let me seek not for rewards, for appreciation, or even for understanding, but let me seek rather to do the work that lies before me, and to find in the right doing of the work the joy and satisfaction that passes understanding, until I too may say, “I know what pleasure is, for I have done good work.”

ALTRUSA
The key to

- AMITY More than any other one thing the woman in business and professional work needs friends. Especially does she need friends whose interests differ from those which keep her busy throughout the working day.
Altrusa offers Amity
- LOYALTY To such women, self-realization means, first of all, loyalty to one's own ideals. Next, it means loyalty to one's friends, and, through them, to all women, and, through loyalty to women, loyalty to one's country.
Altrusa stimulatesLoyalty
- TALENT Talent needs recognition. No matter how great a person's ability may be, it never reaches its most effective level unless it is understood, encouraged, and developed by contact with the talents of others.
Altrusa encourages the expression ofTalent
- RECIPROCITY Each and every one of us needs not only contacts which will aid us, but a chance to try to give corresponding benefit to others. We all need some avenue for making self unselfish.
Altrusa gives impetus toReciprocity
- UNITY When individuals form a unit which is so big in its aims that self is forgotten in the common purpose of the group, such Unity accomplishes the next step in the evolution of womankind.

Altrusa develops.....Unity
SERVICE Because of friendship, loyalty, ability, unity, and mutual giving,
Altrusa meansService
ACHIEVEMENT Through such a plan of living and contact and mutual
stimulation, Altrusa bringsAchievement

Florence Mateer
Altrusa Club of Columbus, Ohio
Printed 1924/adopted at the 1925 Convention

ALTRUSA'S IDEALS
PATRIOTISM SERVICE
EFFICIENCY

As an Altrusa I will be guided by these
Principles of Conduct

MY COUNTRY and MY FELLOW-MEN;

Our country is as great as we, its citizens,
make it. Therefore

I pledge my loyalty to its ideals and to its en-
deavors for the welfare of mankind.

I shall strive to practice true patriotism and to
fulfill my civic obligations in my own com-
munity by interested participation in its
activities.

MY VOCATION and MY FELLOW-
WORKERS;

My vocation merits my best services and
offers me real opportunities for growth and
efficiency in doing my share of the world's
work. Therefore

I shall study its aims, its methods, and its pro-
duct that I may intelligently promote its inter-
ests and improve the quality of its service to
others.

I shall cooperate with my fellow-workers, in a
spirit of cheerfulness, of readiness to share, and
of appreciation of the efforts of others.

I shall seek success by an ever-increasing sense
of true values—a realization of the highest
business ideals through honest effort, fair deal-
ing, and lofty ambition tempered by humility,
of spirit.

ALTRUSA and MYSELF;

Altrusa offers to the representative business and professional women of the community an opportunity to touch each others' lives and to be broadened by an interchange of interests, and by a sympathetic consideration of the viewpoint of others. Therefore I shall try to exemplify Altrusa's ideals of fellowship, of service to other business women, and of self-improvement.

I shall demand of myself a wholesome balance of work and play; a broad and impersonal attitude of mind in my relationship to others and a true loyalty to womanhood.

As an Altrusan I shall endeavor to develop right attitudes toward work, toward people, toward life.

Adopted 1925

(1929 The Altrusa Handbook—as originally written)