

## The History of Lions District A3 begins with District A711

Our story begins with some of the first Lions Clubs in Canada. The International Association of Lions Clubs first came to Canada by way of the province of Ontario in 1920. The first 3 clubs were organized in Windsor (March), Toronto, (May) and Hamilton (June) all of which have continuous service since that time.

These original Canadian Lions Clubs and a few others that have been lost, appear to have been included in the original Lions District 9 of Michigan and Wisconsin until October of 1920 when District "A" was created for the Province of Ontario.

This was organized in part by our first Canadian International Officer who a few months before had been nominated and elected 2nd International Vice President and appointed to the Executive Committee of Lions Clubs International. Lion Harry Allan Newman 1889-1976 was a lifelong charter member of the Lions Club of Toronto Central who succeeded to International President in 1924. He is considered the prime mover in Lions Clubs International choosing Sight Conservation as one of our principal services through his work with the Juvenile Braille Magazine and inviting Helen Keller to seek our help.

In 1922 District "A" encompassed Ontario and Quebec with the formation of the Lions Club of Montreal and in 1924 District "A" subdivided for the first time into District "A" (Hamilton and everything East) and District "B" (Southwest Ontario) and elected respective District Governors. This arrangement only lasted one year and reverted to District "A". District "B" was later assigned to Mexico in 1927.

**On the occasion of our 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian International Convention at Toronto in 1931, District A was divided into Zones to spread out our administration. In 1938, District A was subdivided into A1, A2 and A3, all of which have covered some part of our current District boundaries.**

At our 2<sup>nd</sup> International Convention in 1942, the first District "A" office and staff were established and located in Toronto. In 1950 District A7 was created to include Metro Toronto, Barrie, and points in between. At our 3<sup>rd</sup> International Convention in 1964, District A11 was created to include Mississauga, Hamilton etc.

Both A7 and A11 were reduced with the formation on Districts A12 (1972), and A15 and A16 (1976). In 1983 the Lions Foundation of Canada was established in Oakville and in 1986 women were invited to become members.

With the merger of Districts A7 and A11 in 2002, our Lions service area identified as District A711 stretches from Blackheath Binbrook in the South to Nobleton in the North and from Lynden in the West to West Hill Highland Creek in the East.

In 2014 Toronto, District A711, MD"A" and the Lions of Canada hosted another International Convention.

*For the good of Lionism,*

*Lion Ray Charbonneau*