

ANNA H. SETTLE
1922-1924 President



Anna Hubbuch Settle was a noted attorney with a general practice in Louisville. As a member of the Louisville Altrusa Club she attended the 1st Altrusa Convention in 1918, later served as President of the Louisville club, served as the National President from 1922-1923 and was re-elected for the 1923-1924 term.

Before 1922, after a club was formed they were pretty much on their own to figure out how to implement the purposes of Altrusa. Clubs were isolated from other clubs and the national organization except through letters and the two day annual National Convention. They tended to “do their own thing and tried to figure out how not to be just a social club.”

Her first task after becoming president was to write to each president requesting input and suggestions on how the national association could help the individual clubs. The focus of her presidency implemented the 18 suggestions she received. She established a closer bond between the clubs and national organization by visiting 21 of the 26 clubs during her first year as president. After her first two-week trip visiting 10 clubs in 14 days she stated; “The club visits gave the clubs a better understanding of the purpose of Altrusa and what other clubs were doing. So impressed was I with the results of my first trip that I was willing to forego a Christmas vacation and left on Christmas Eve for a visit to six Western Clubs.”

1922-1923

Anna’s focus and priorities during her first year were 1) “to bring a closer association and communication between the clubs already in the association and between the clubs and the national organization” and 2) to implement national standards, policies, procedures, best business practices which would provide uniformity of all clubs. Her accomplishments included:

- Club Visits—became the forerunner of District Officer visits to club
- 1st Card Index —later became a National Roster of the entire membership
- 1st club charters printed
- 1st Marketing Publication marketing publication—“*Object and Value of Altrusa*” and Principles of Altrusa printed for extension work.
- 1st Classification Guide printed
- 1st National Publication the “National Altrusa Bulletin” —four page quarterly bulletin edited and published by Anna Settle
- 1st year the Association worked under a budget with a standard system of bookkeeping
- Reincorporation adopted
- Revised National Constitution and By Laws adopted—moved the organization into a more structured cohesive organization and became the model of what is used today. It laid out the policies, procedures and governance of the organization.
- Club Constitution and By Laws adopted
- Districting included in National By Laws when conditions should warrant (50 clubs) – later implemented 1930
- National Executive Committee established - comprised of officers and one representative from each club
- Recommended establishing a permanent headquarters - implemented 1931
- Recommended hiring a permanent organizer
- Corporate seal was accepted
- 12 new clubs established—14 clubs completed their charter membership

Anna’s President’s address at the 1923 Convention summarized the accomplishments of her first year; “Last June when you did me the great honor to elect me your President, there loomed before

me such a mountain, I scarcely saw how I could even attempt to lead you to the top of it. Your confidence in me spurred me on to make an attempt. Today I stand before you to relate to you the few accomplishments of the last ten months. While I do not feel that we have reached the top of the mountain I do feel that we have traveled part of the way.”

1923-1924

- Vocational Guidance adopted as the 1st National Policy of Altrusa (later changed to Service)
- 1st State Organization formed (forerunner of Districts)
- 1st Committee Work carried out—established National Committee on Education (later changed to Altrusa Information)
- New organization formed—On December 31, 1923, the old corporation was dissolved and new articles of incorporation for the National Association of Altrusa Clubs were immediately filed, under the laws of Indiana.
- 1st Code of Ethics adopted
- 12 new clubs were formed—10 club visits

1918-1925 The Durham Contract – \$3,750 Debt Loomed Over Altrusa

Dr. Alfred Duke Durham did not agree with a classification system adopted at the first convention in 1918 and shortly afterwards the Altrusa Institute eliminated Dr. Alfred Duke Durham’s connection with Altrusa through a signed contract. Dr. Durham gave up his rights to the name “Altrusa” and to its insignia and the Altrusa Institute agreed to pay him \$3,750 (\$64,702 in 2016.)

For seven years Anna and the National Board sought ways to eliminate this monstrous debt. Many meetings were held with Dr. Durham to settle the contract at a reduced amount. Finally, after her two-year presidency, Anna Settle negotiated a compromise with Dr. Durham. She wrote; “The committee appointed to select the lawyer did me the favor to recommend me to take up this matter for our association. Today I hold in my hand the signed release and the cancelled contract...it was by no means easy to achieve. Dr. Durham was firm in his convictions that he should receive the full amount of the contract...\$3,750. He spurned all proposals for a less amount. Finally wearied from illness and persistent efforts to settle he made a proposition to settle for \$1,800...I am sure the whole organization rejoiced with me in the fact that never more we have that...bear come up again at our meetings...Altrusa can move forward unhampered to the corners of the earth...I foresee for Altrusa a great future. I predict that within five years we will be an international organization. I hope I may see that prophecy accomplished.”

Unfortunately, accomplishments of Anna H. Settle’s legacy have been forgotten over the past 92 years. Through her leadership, she gave us the “new organization” with its standard financial practices, system for chartering a club, club visits, principles that govern the organization, and methods of operation. The isolation of the early clubs was replaced with a cohesive national organization with a strong committee system to carry out its work. Communication between clubs and the national organization was achieved with the “Altrusa Bulletin,” printed guides for club operations and classification, and state organizations. Anna visited 31 of the 42 clubs during her two terms as president. Her legacy is Vocational Guidance. Anna H. Settle’s National Policy of Vocational Guidance moved Altrusa to a community service organization.

Today we state; “Altrusa historically has been, and still is, a community service organization with a focus on literacy and other local needs.” Anna H. Settle provided the leadership and structural foundation for the development of today’s community service organization. We tend to think of Mamie L. Bass as the “heart and soul” of Altrusa and must remember Anna H. Settle as its “head and hands.”