

idea of the University Forum began to gain wide support throughout the state. By 1935 the meetings were being held in the convention room of the Hotel Biltmore. Soon the speakers at the Forum came from all the state institutions of higher learning, and some national and international figures appeared. By 1937 more than 400 people were in regular attendance, and the meetings were sponsored by thirty-seven organizations. The first meetings were free, but by 1935 each member of the forum was charged \$1.50 to cover expenses. Most of the money was paid to the speakers, who originally had donated their time and effort. Seven years after its beginning the organization had more than met its goals. It was far bigger and more useful than the founders had originally envisioned.¹⁷

Mrs. Browne's success with the Forum was accompanied by other successes. She and her husband attended a large Rotary Club meeting at the Colosseum where the members and their guests were entertained by a four-year-old girl who had recovered from polio. The Rotarians had helped with the treatment of the girl. When Samuel McDaniel of Ardmore introduced the child, he called her Rotary Ann. The name of the girl and the effort of the organization to help crippled children moved Mrs. Browne to begin organizing the wives of the Rotary Club members; she felt they should become better acquainted, have fun, and work on worthy projects. After gaining the approval of Tom McGee, the local Rotary president, Mrs. Browne contacted the wives of other members. By October 1929, the Rotary Ann Club of Oklahoma City began functioning. Soon Rotary Ann Clubs were organized around the world.¹⁸

One month after the Rotary Ann Club began, Mrs. Browne received a letter from the executive secretary of the American Association of

University Women requesting that she serve as a delegate to the Fifth Conference on the Cause and Cure of War, which was meeting in Washington in January 1930. Mrs. Browne gladly accepted the invitation. The White House Conference called to start action against poverty and deprivation at home as well as abroad. This was a call for action on a worthy cause, and the Rotary Ann Club was looking for something to do. Mrs. Browne soon combined the two.¹⁹

In the fall of 1931, Oklahoma Governor William H. Murray called a conference of representative organizations to report on the follow-up of the Washington Conference. The Rotary Ann Club and the Oklahoma Federation of Women's Clubs were represented by their leader, Mrs. Browne. The Oklahoma City Rotary Anns had worked with the state's Blind Commission to improve conditions for the blind and the "hard to see." Five women had learned to read braille so they could work with sick people who were blind, and several books for the blind had been purchased. Glasses and other medical attention were furnished individuals who could benefit from them. Moreover, the Rotary Anns had found employment for thirty-seven blind people, a great accomplishment during the depth of the depression. While working with the Blind Commission, the Rotary Anns contacted the Department of Charities and Corrections. Through this department the women learned of a need for suitable parents to adopt children. While working with the blind, the service organization also looked for homes for children.²⁰

The Federation of Women's Clubs had two projects to report to the governor. A nursery school had been fenced to keep the children out of the street, and, to keep the children busy, they had furnished toys and playground equipment. The Women's Clubs also arranged for a fulltime

kindergarten teacher to be at the playground, and a story-telling hour which met twice a week was established. Free milk was given the children in an effort to prevent undernourishment. The second project was establishing home Bible classes for more than 200 people. Mrs. Browne saw that the classes were lectured on the Bible and on Child Welfare, Public Education, Literacy, Juvenile Protection, Public Health, and a wide variety of other subjects. Through the Bible classes which Mrs. Browne organized, she was able to marshal more support for other worthwhile projects.²¹

The evidence indicates that the Oklahoma City PTA was not directly associated with the White House Conference, but Mrs. Browne was the state vice president, and in one of her annual reports she noted that organization had undertaken the sale of pencils in the "schools to finance the Student Loan Committee" ²² The organization was concerned with providing adequate clothing, food, and school necessities to disadvantaged children. To aid them the Loan Committee had a revolving fund. The PTA also arranged to have a woman make over clothing which was secured each month in a drive held by the children. The PTA also worked hard to get the school dropouts back in school and to persuade other children to stay in school.²³

Mrs. Browne's scope of vision was not limited to the problems of children in Oklahoma City or Oklahoma. She was active in the Oklahoma League of Nations Association whose purpose was "To develop an understanding of the League of Nations, the World Court and International Affairs . . . [and] to cultivate a public opinion favoring American adherence to the World Court, world-wide disarmament and American Co-operation with the League of Nations."²⁴ The organization's head-