

A LITTLE PIECE OF METAL

THE LIONS EMBLEM

*Oh! The emblem on his chest,
Seems to suit his style best,
There's something about a Lion,
Something about a Lion,
That is fine, fine, fine.*

But what is this badge each Lion wears? **What does it symbolize?** How did it come about? **When was it designed?** When should it be worn? **Who wears this distinctive little badge?** What's is that little badge on your lapel? **Why do you wear it?**

These are some of the questions people ask. This will attempt to answer some of those questions, in the hope that you will learn a little more, about our little badge.

Where did it all start? Quoting from the minutes of the First Convention in Dallas Texas, on October 19th to 21st 1918: "The club emblem was adopted, being a front view of a Lion holding in his mouth a club on which the word "International" was written. This design did not have the total support of all Lion members, and at the First District Convention held at Muskogee, Oklahoma, a design by R.A. Klienschmidt was adopted.

Our present badge was in fact a compromise. One group favored a simple "L" in color, on a gold background, and the other was Rosa Bonheur's painting of a Lion's head. The final design was a compromise of the two. A gold letter "L" centered on a royal blue background between two Lion head profiles, with the words "Lions" centered on top of the badge and the words "International" centered at the bottom.

In those days " **L I O N S** " stood for:

- L** Loyalty to country, community, and home.
- I** Individual integrity in thought, word, and deed.
- O** One Flag and One Language.
- N** New ideals, new hopes, new ambitions in business and profession.
- S** Service founded on the Golden Rule. (First Lions Objects).

This design was formally approved by The International Board, and became our official new emblem on December 31st, 1921.

Today that emblem is the most widely worn symbol of service in the world. It appears on the lapels of men and women on every continent, in every Nation of this world. Men and women of all classes, colors and creeds wear this simple badge - from leaders of nations to leaders of industry, to leaders of communities. These are the men and women who proudly wear the Lions emblem. This simple badge bridges all. It knows no boundaries. All combine together under this badge to form Lions Clubs International - all who believe in the spirit of Lionism, and our Objects and Ethics. It is

our belief that it is possible for men and women of this world to combine under the one badge, to collectively do things that individually would be impossible, to forge together in friendship, and make this world a better place for mankind.

Millions of homeless, suffering, underprivileged, handicapped and impoverished people are grateful for the men and women who wear the Lions Emblem. And now Lions International has made the pledge to eradicate world preventable blindness through the "Sight First" campaign. We have set a goal, that by the year 2001 world preventable blindness will be under control, and from that date forward no person or child shall by lack of medication or sanitation be forced into a life of darkness.

Lions, wear your emblem with pride. It means that you are an honored member of a world fellowship, which has joined hands and hearts in the service of humanity. By wearing this simple badge, YOU are charged with the care of humanity, to put something into life, rather than taking something out of it.

A little story from our Administration manual:

The dead and wounded lay strewn across the battlefield - young men cut down during a bloody engagement in the recent war between El Salvador and Honduras. A lone medic, a member of the Honduran Red Cross, hurried from man to man, giving what aid he could to the wounded. The sound of gunfire still filled the air, and the all too familiar smoke of war hung over the field. The medic paid no attention to the battle raging close by, but continued to try and save the lives of the men who surrounded him. Suddenly, a young soldier of the El Salvador army bounded out of the mist, his rifle at the ready. The medic, though wearing Red Cross identification, was still a member of the Honduran forces. For a moment they stood silently face-to-face, enemies in a bitter struggle. But the soldier's expression quickly changed and he slowly lowered his rifle. His eyes were trained on the medic's lapel, which bore the pin of Lions Clubs International. The medic, Dr. Jorge Gomez Andino, was a member of the Tegucigalpa Lions Club. Instead of assaulting his "enemy", tears welled in the eyes of the young soldier. He grasped the hand of the doctor and told him that he was a member of a Lions Club in El Salvador. Silently the two embraced, and just as silently the soldier wended his way back to the El Salvador lines to rejoin his unit. The small drama had lasted less than a minute.

Dr. Gomez was president of the Honduras Red Cross National Council, and he related this experience at a meeting of the Miami (Sunshine) Florida Lions Club, where he was a guest. His voice shook with emotion, as he said how he returned to treating the casualties, and with the flash of gunfire coming from both ranks, "gave thanks for the dominant spirit of Lionism" that had just scored a victory over war.

Such is the power of a simple piece of metal, painted purple and gold that is worn by over 1.4 million men and women representing 171 countries around the world.

Lions, Please wear your badge with the pride it deserves