



« *Let us export athletes and...
the cause of peace will have received
a new and powerful support.* »

PIERRE DE COUBERTIN

FROM THE IOC TO ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Pierre de Coubertin and Paul Harris

TWO PIONEERS, ONE SAME IDEAL

At the end of the 19th century, the revival of the Olympic Games was in the air. Several initiatives failed before Pierre de Coubertin took up the challenge.

A decade later, amidst numerous associations, Paul Harris founded the Rotary.

Great endeavors are never born from nothing. They rely on intuitions, experiences, and dreams. Neither Pierre de Coubertin nor Paul Harris started from a blank page, but both succeeded in transforming an intuition into a lasting legacy.

Pierre de Coubertin traveled across Europe and the United States. Paul Harris, through America and Europe. Both observed, met people, and sought to understand what elevates mankind and what divides it. Before being founders, Pierre and Paul were travelers. And both realized that behind the differences, there lies a shared humanity.

Faced with this evidence, after two journeys, two different paths, two intuitions - for one, "Sport can bring peoples together", and for the other, "Friendship and service can bring men together" - each built their response towards a single destination: the same ideal. Nurturing the human being. Creating bridges. Building peace...

The Olympic Games of Antiquity lasted for over a thousand years. The International Olympic Committee and Rotary International have barely crossed the century mark. On the scale of History, they are mere young adolescents. Pierre and Paul passed on much more than an organization, they gave us a responsibility: How can we bring people closer together in the world of tomorrow? More than a century later, we are still asking ourselves the same question: how can we bring peoples together and allow young people to experience this path for themselves?

OSE - Olympic Student Exchange - was born from this question.

THE INTIMATE MEETS THE UNIVERSAL

OSE aims to be the first arch of this bridge for peace. Bridges are built first between human beings, and then between institutions. OSE is not just any other exchange. Young people set off to live and share a sport. From day one, even before speaking the local language, they are not strangers. They speak rugby... judo... handball... swimming... They belong to the same sporting tribe.

Young people leave their country with something intimate: their passion, their dreams, their doubts, their story. Then they discover that on the other side of the world, other young people share the exact same passion, with its share of joys, fears, efforts, and hopes. And they realize that what they thought was personal is actually universal. They see that behind the visible differences lies a profound human community.

Pierre and Paul traveled to understand the world.

Young OSE members travel to discover that they are already a part of it.



Pierre de Coubertin
Founder of the IOC



Paul Harris
Founder of Rotary