

# DONOR STORIES

## CHARLOTTE & WILLIAM HINSON “Charlotte and William Hinson Family Endowment Fund”

Charlotte Anne Burton Hinson was born December 12, 1914, in Waterloo, Iowa, daughter of W.A. and Madonna Burton. Charlotte’s father, W.A., was an engineer and a bridge builder. He began his career as a teacher and then went back to Iowa State to become an engineer. Charlotte attended school in Waterloo, Iowa, and graduated from West High School in 1933. Charlotte was very active in music and became an accomplished cello player. It was through music that Charlotte eventually would meet her husband, William H. (Bill) Hinson.



CHARLOTTE & WILLIAM HINSON

Bill was born September 16, 1915, in Cincinnati, Ohio, the son of Clyde and Bertha Hinson. In 1917, Bill’s father took a job with Powers Manufacturing and moved to Waterloo, Iowa. In 1923, Clyde left Powers Manufacturing, along with approximately twenty other Powers’ employees, and started Hinson Manufacturing Company. His products at that time were transmission linings and brake linings for Model-T Fords as well as side curtains, tire covers and seat covers. This was one of many directions that the company took over the years. Bill was raised in the Highland Park area and attended East High School where he also became an accomplished musician and oboist.

It was in May, 1931, that an event took place that would mark the beginning of a major change in the life of Bill and Charlotte. For it was in 1931 that they both journeyed, unbeknownst to the other, to Iowa City for the state music contest. When they left the scene that Saturday night, Charlotte had honored West High by winning first place in the state contest with the cello and Bill, from East High, had won first place for oboe. Their courtship began after a banquet honoring the two students, and Bill often to joked that he had been carrying Charlotte’s cello around ever since.

*“Bill and Charlotte shared many loves - their love for each other, the love for their family, a love of music, and a love for their community.”*

Bill earned money to date Charlotte by playing in bands and orchestras, most of which was with the Karl King Band. Karl King was a big band composer from Fort Dodge, and Bill would drive after school to Fort Dodge twice a week to practice or play in the concerts. At times Charlotte would accompany him.

In 1933, Bill graduated from East High School and Charlotte graduated from West High School. In September of that year, both enrolled in Iowa State Teachers College (now the University of Northern Iowa). After two years Bill transferred to the University of Iowa, where he earned a B.S. degree. In 1937 Charlotte and Bill were married in First United Methodist Church in Waterloo.

Shortly thereafter they moved to Massachusetts where Bill earned his MBA at Harvard. Following his Harvard graduation in 1939, Bill was hired by the General Electric Company, in Appliance and Merchandise Division, as a statistician and marketing manager in Bridgeport, Connecticut. After

about two years, Bill and Charlotte's families were very eager to have them back home in Waterloo, and Charlotte was getting a little homesick. The lure of being closer to home and the opportunity for Bill to run a local business brought the couple back to Waterloo.

Bill joined his brother, James, and his father in the family business, Hinson Manufacturing Company. Eventually Bill became president of the company and James became chairman of the board. Bill's responsibilities were mainly in the finance area, overseeing personnel, and negotiating with the union. His expertise continued in that area until the company was sold to Royal Industries of California in 1967.

After the purchase of Hinson Manufacturing by Royal Industries, Bill continued working for Royal until his retirement from active management in 1968. Bill, however, continued to be involved with Royal Industries for several more years through the family corporation, Hinson Realty Company, which owned the buildings in which Royal operated. In addition, Hinson Realty Company also owned a small manufacturing plant at Alhambra, California, and other real estate in California. These properties were eventually sold to Royal or were otherwise disposed.

While Bill was busy with the family business, Charlotte devoted her time to raising their two children—Carol, born May 18, 1944, and Richard, born December 19, 1948.

Bill and Charlotte were very active in their community—Charlotte mainly through her interest in music and Bill both through his interest in music and in finance. Charlotte and Bill played in the first symphony orchestra on February 6, 1930, and played together for the symphony for 44 years. Over the years Bill and Charlotte entertained many well-known musicians in their home.

Bill and Charlotte demonstrated a firm commitment to and a love for their community. Charlotte once shared, "We love Waterloo and want to see it continue to do well." That is why they established a fund within the Community Foundation and have supported other organizations in many ways throughout the years.

In 1965, the Hinson family made a memorial contribution to the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, which was ultimately granted to the Recreation Center to build the Bertha Hinson Memorial Library Lounge in honor of Bill's mother. Bill served as president of many boards in Waterloo, including the Community Foundation (then called the Waterloo Civic Foundation), Waterloo Symphony Orchestra (as it was called in 1947), the Waterloo Rotary Club, the Symposium Club, and the Spokesmen's Club as well as many others. He served on the board of many other organizations and was a long time board member of the Waterloo Savings Bank and a trustee of the Grout Museum of History and Science to name a few. Bill was very instrumental in the building of the Community Services Building to house what was then called the Community Chest.

Bill and Charlotte shared many loves—love for each other, love for their family, love of music and love for their community. Community members can experience their love, passion and dedication now and in perpetuity with the help of the Charlotte and William Hinson Family Fund.