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Dedicated to the conservation and preservation of Rotary Heritage & History

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History Fellowship's Centennial Project: *“preserving the president's house”*

worldwide million-dollar capital campaign will create a gift from Rotarians of the Centennial Year to all future Rotarians

It is “now or never” for the History Fellowship’s long-held dream of preserving our Founder’s home for use by current and future Rotarians. It will go on the market this Fall if we fail to raise enough funds to execute our exclusive Option to Buy.

We will achieve our dream if every recipient of this newsletter sends \$1000 from their personal, club, or district checking account. Having both your club and district become “Harris Home Sponsors” would cover the possibility of not getting \$1000 from 100% of our membership list.



Rotary International President Jonathan Majiyagbe (shown above with RHHIF chair Jack Mayo) and Rotary Foundation Chairman James Lacy have established a joint committee to explore non-financial ways that RI and its Foundation might be able to help the history fellowship acquire **Comely Bank**. The Joint Committee consists of Directors John F. Germ and Sakuji Tanaka, and Trustees Frank Devlyn, and Luis Giay.

Fifty-seven Rotarians organized this fellowship during the 1988 Philadelphia Convention in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors of Rotary International. As the **Paul Harris 711 Club** some of the 57 saved the room where Rotary was born in 1905; others (District 6450 Rotary Club of Blue Island Memorial Committee) maintain the grave of Rotary Founder Paul P. Harris and first club President Silvester Schiele plus a monument and walkway honoring RI Presidents.

Almost every newsletter and fellowship meeting since 1988 has included at least passing reference to the danger that

someday **Comely Bank**, as the Harris Home is known, might be modernized beyond recognition. These fears increased a couple years ago when a nearby similar home was bulldozed so a modern mansion could be built on the large wooded hilltop lots that are in such short supply.

Fellowship officers stayed in contact with current homeowners. An understanding was reached that they would notify us if ever they decided to sell the property. They did in early February. Anticipating it would come on the market sooner or later the Paul & Jean Harris Home Foundation, **PJHFF**, had been formed a couple years

ago with the approval of Rotary International. Last month **PJHFF** hired a real estate appraiser who calculated the current fair market value at \$561,687. To preempt sale to someone who might bulldoze our Founder’s home and replace it with a modern mansion on this large wooded lot with an attractive view, **PJHFF** paid a non-refundable \$1000 deposit on an option to purchase the property for \$550,000. The option gives **PJHFF** until September 1, 2004 to acquire **Comely Bank** with funds from Harris Home Foundation Sponsoring Clubs and donations from interested individual Rotarians and their Rotary Districts.