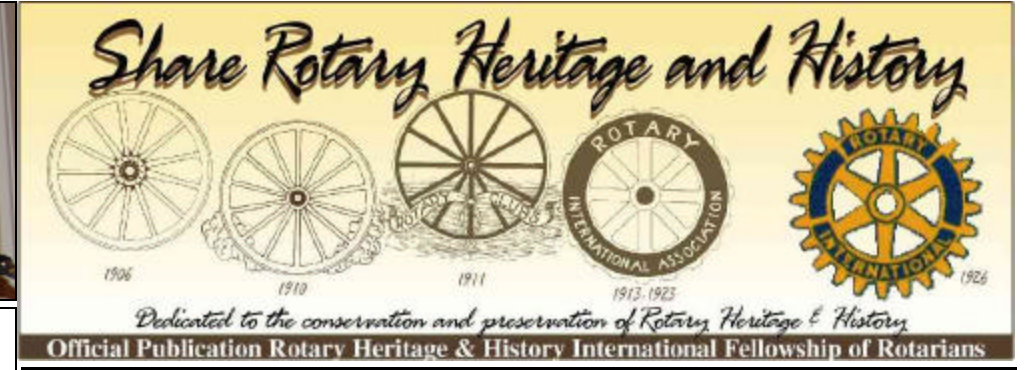




RHHIF Chair Dave Groner forged an alliance with Polio Survivors & Associates, a Rotarian Action Group.



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Saving the Smithsonian's Exhibit

RHHIF is preserving our heritage — the history of the

Global Eradication of Polio

On April 12, 2005 the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History marked the 50th anniversary of Jonas Salk's announcement of an effective polio vaccine by opening a major exhibition titled *Whatever Happened to Polio?* Most young people in the United States have no memory of polio, a devastating viral infection that shut down whole communities as families kept children home to prevent exposure to polio. Smithsonian continued to feature *Whatever Happened to Polio?* throughout Rotary's Centennial Year.

Smithsonian describes *polio* as a disease that "affects the motor neurons that control muscles, especially those of the limbs, breathing and swallowing and can cause paralysis and sometimes death."

As a result of the Salk and Sabin vaccines the last case of wild polio occurred in the United States in 1979. A massive international vaccination program began in the 1980's with a goal of eliminating transmission of poliovirus everywhere in the world. Rotary has been in the forefront of that global partnership since 1988, reducing the number of polio cases worldwide by 99 percent.

In due time *Whatever Happened to Polio?* closed; other topics are now featured in the Smithsonian. For several Rotarians, the question became "whatever happened to that Smithsonian exhibit when the museum showing ended?"

PDG Ray Taylor, Founder/Secretary of Polio Survivors & Associates (PSA), a Rotarian Action Group, suggested "now is the time for PSA and RHHIF to form an alliance to actively promote ... moving ... the Smithsonian exhibit to Warm Springs, Georgia." RHHIF Chair Dave Groner agreed. RHHIF and PSA plan to share an information booth in the House of Friendship during the RI convention in Salt Lake City next June. (See article on page 2)

Why RHHIF?

This fellowship was established by the Rotarians who had saved the Chicago Unity Building's *Room 711*. Rotarians of this fellowship saved *Comely Bank* during Rotary's Centennial Year. Now it is appropriate for us to save *Whatever Happened to Polio?*, the story of the signature project of Rotary International.

Why Warm Springs?

Today the Polio Hall of Fame is located at the Roosevelt Institute for Rehabilitation in Warm Springs Georgia. The most famous polio survivor in American history was Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 32nd President of the United States. "Like other polio patients, FDR was fascinated by hydrotherapy, the use of water to treat disability and disease," writes University of Texas Professor David M. Oshinsky in his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Polio: An American Story*.

The healing powers of the Georgia warm springs had been known to the Creek Indians who, according to Oshinsky, "gave safe passage to those in need of the healing waters. In the antebellum era influential southerners like John C. Calhoun and Henry Clay had come by stage-coach seeking remedies" for rheumatism and other diseases. Franklin Roosevelt arrived in October 1924 and enjoyed the soothing effect of the warm springs as often as his schedule would permit throughout the remainder of his life.

FDR died in Warm Springs 12 April 1945.



RHHIF and PSA hope to save Smithsonian's *Whatever Happened to Polio?* exhibit and find it a permanent home in Georgia.