

The Little White House NEWSLETTER



Roosevelt's Little White House - 706-655-5870 - 401 Little White House Rd. - Warm Springs, Ga. 31830

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WARM SPRINGS, GEORGIA: Where Polio Met It's Match

The worldwide movement to eradicate polio began here. It is a great Georgia story, a southern story, a national story and a world story.

The next time you reach in your pocket and pull out a dime, take a look at it. It is our nations smallest coin yet it is the most important coin minted in our nations history.

Franklin D. Roosevelt founded the Georgia Warm Springs Polio Foundation in 1927. This was the first center in the world for treatment of the after effects of polio. After being elected to Governor of New York in 1928 and 1930, he decided to run for president of the United States. He was elected in 1932 and in 1933, he celebrated his birthday in Warm Springs with the polio patients.

The first Birthday Ball was held in 1934, with 4,376 communities joining in 600 separate celebrations that raised over one million dollars for Warm Springs. Future Birthday Balls continued to raise about a million dollars per year, with contributions split

between Warm Springs and the local communities where the balls were held.

In 1938, FDR created the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, not only to help Warm Springs

but also the victims of polio throughout the country. To increase awareness of the campaign, radio personality and philanthropist Eddie Cantor took to the air waves and urged Americans to send their loose change to President Roosevelt in "a march of dimes to reach all the way to the White House."

Soon, millions of dimes flooded the White House.

In 1945, the annual March

of Dimes campaign raised 18.9 million dollars for the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Soon after FDR died, legislation was introduced to place the image of Roosevelt on the dime and in 1946 the Roosevelt dime was introduced to the public on January 30, FDR's birthday.



source: FDR Library



No man has ever had a finer birthday remembrance from his friends and fellows than you have given me tonight. It is with a humble and thankful heart that I accept this tribute through me to the stricken ones of our great national family.
 Franklin D. Roosevelt



The Coin With A Purpose

Franklin Roosevelt’s dedication to finding a cure for polio benefited millions of children worldwide. But it was the participation of Americans across the nation in Birthday Balls that made the campaign a success. Their hard work and financial support supported the development of new methods of treatment to improve the lives of those stricken with polio and the creation of a vaccine to protect future generations from its devastation. Although the Birthday Balls ended in 1945 with the death of President Roosevelt, both of their legacies live on in the March of Dimes. What began with a birthday party in Warm Springs, Georgia, has touched the lives of children across the globe. That is something we can be very proud of.



The March of Dimes was a grassroots campaign run primarily by volunteers. Over the years, millions of people gave their dimes to support both the care of people who got polio and research into prevention and treatment. Those contributions financed Jonas Salk, Albert Sabin, and the other researchers who developed the polio vaccines that children around the world receive today.