

2007-03-18 Sign Smith-The Man; His Legacy



Glyndon “Sign” Smith

ROTARIAN PROFILE

Glyndon “Sign” Smith

Glyndon “Sign” Smith, a nationally known magician, came to Eureka in 1923 to participate in the grand opening of the Eureka Inn.

Sign, maybe in his 40’s wrapped and locked in chains



He liked Eureka so much that he decided to make it his permanent home. He established a sign painting business and thus the name “Sign,” by which he was known for the rest of his life. Unlike what one might expect from a performing artist, he was a quiet, unassuming man who rarely spoke except when he was providing entertainment at meetings or special events. In 1928, Sign joined the Rotary Club of Eureka. Thus began a 69 year legendary period of perfect attendance at weekly meetings.

One Rotarian in 2007, who has been in the club over 40 years, remembers Sign entertaining the club members and their children every year at “Children’s Day at Rotary.” Sign would perform slight of hand tricks for the kids. A few children were invited up to the front table where Sign would pull items out of their pockets, ears etc.

Another remembrance was when a committee would take part of the program time to promote the Rotary Magazine. They would bring Sign to the podium demonstrating his photographic memory. Members from the audience finding a copy of the magazine on the table would call out a page number and location on the page and Sign would respond by describing what was in that page location. Sign never missed knowing the answer.

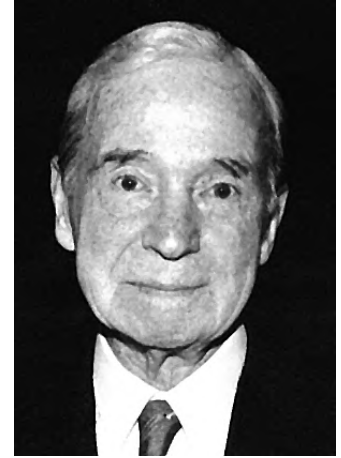
In 1929 he married Ruth, a local school teacher of home economics. They were together at their H Street home until her death in 1991. During that time they were frequent travelers to all corners of the world. His travels were always coordinated with cities where he could make-up Rotary meetings.

Ruth Smith probably in her late 80’s



In 1997, Sign died at age 98. During the last years of his life he was assisted by Rotary members who provided transportation to Club meetings so that he could keep up his attendance. He actually attended the Club meeting the week preceding his death.

Upon Sign's death, he provided a substantial sum with which the Club established the Sign and Ruth Smith Endowment Fund, administered by the Rotary Club of Eureka and the Humboldt Area Foundation. His legacy will live on for many years as his generosity continues to enrich the Eureka community and its needs.



Glyndon "Sign" Smith
1899-1997