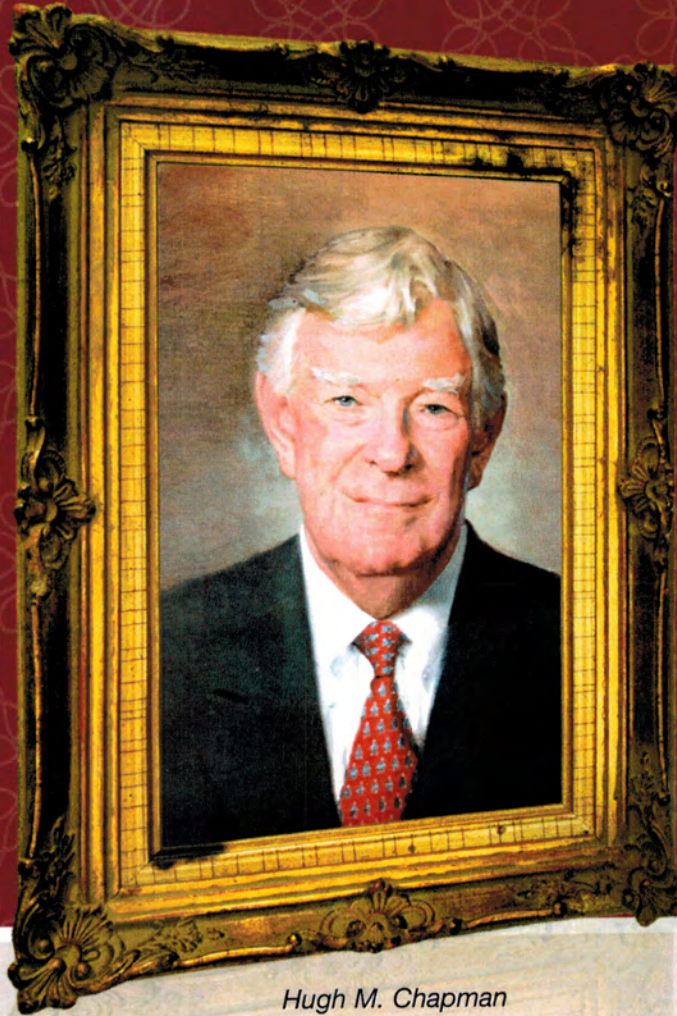


# Undaunted Spirit



Hugh M. Chapman  
September 11, 1932 - April 29, 2007

*Hugh McMaster Chapman knew about “the Spirit of Warm Springs” long before he became president of The Citizens and Southern Bank in South Carolina in 1958, long before he became president of The Citizens and Southern Corporation of Atlanta in 1986, and long before he became chairman of NationsBank South in 1992.*

# Atlanta Leader Among Many Warm Springs Alumni Honored On Columns

He knew about it way before he was director and chairman of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce in the early 1990s, before he was a trustee and past chairman of the Woodruff Arts Center, before he became a six-year member of the executive committee for Central Atlanta Progress, and prior to being director of finance for the Atlanta Olympic Games.

For him, HBO's award-winning movie "Warm Springs" in 2005 was simply a reminder and the Quadrangle column donated last year in his honor by his wife, Janis, a fitting tribute for someone who knew about and supported Roosevelt Warm Springs for over 57 years ... or ever since he and three teammates from the Chattanooga Baylor High School football team contracted polio in 1948.

"The football schedule had to be canceled and it made headlines all over the South, but we were just real fortunate there was a place like Warm Springs," he said while recalling that era of mass epidemics and national fears over infantile paralysis last fall. "They shut down the school (Baylor) for three weeks and the Health Department people reviewed every aspect of what we had done and been through together, trying to determine a cause, but we had different types and different symptoms and they never did establish a connection."

Retired since 1997 and living in Buckhead, Chapman recently surrendered to another life altering illness, acute leukemia. Diagnosed in January 2006, he had been receiving chemotherapy two or three times a month before passing away on April 29. It's safe to say, he retained the undaunted spirit he acquired in Warm Springs to the very end.

"Among the things I learned at Warm Springs was patience and perseverance. There were always other people worse off than me," he stated last fall. "You play with the hand you're dealt. You pick up the pieces and go on and you don't feel sorry for yourself."

On one of the 125 columns surrounding the historic Quadrangle that were replaced as part of the Roosevelt Warm Springs Column Campaign (April 2004-July 2006), his bronze column plaque reads: "To Honor Hugh M. Chapman, Baylor School Epidemic — 1948, By His Wife — Janis.

Of his three teammates who also contracted polio that fall, Tom Smoot, the captain of the team from Knoxville, died within two weeks, while both Pat Brooks, who now lives in Valdosta, and Jack Wright of Talladega, Ala., were victims of the spinal brand of the disease, resulting in a lifetime of braces or wheelchairs.

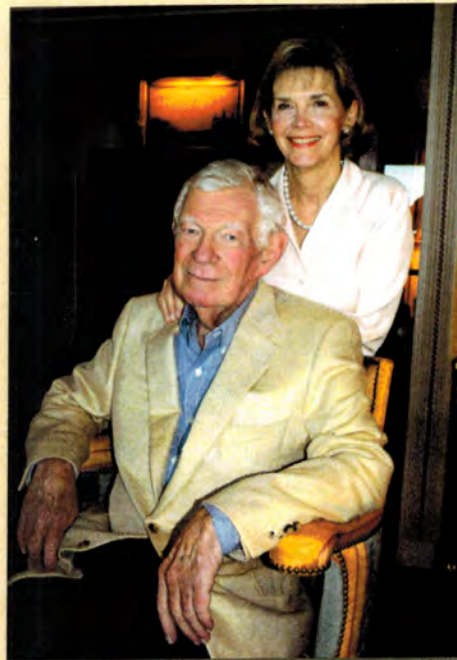
Chapman, on the other hand, suffered from bulba polio, which affected his face and jaws, right shoulder and right hand. "I had to be in a wheelchair while I was in Warm Springs, but it was so they could use a device to keep my arm and shoulder elevated," he said. In addition, he suffered from nausea, fever and severe headaches while drifting in and out of consciousness for the first several weeks of his illness.

Along with her husband, Janis Chapman visited Warm Springs for the first time early last summer and was touched by what she saw and heard. "It really helped me understand what the place meant to him and so many others," she said. "I had read about the column campaign and after seeing the place, I knew I wanted to leave his name there for posterity. He accomplished a lot in his life and there's no doubt in my mind that his experiences in Warm Springs helped make him the success he was."

Throughout his life, Chapman remained in touch with his two surviving teammates. For them, a tragic moment in time bound

them together like no prep football victory ever could. And for Roosevelt Warm Springs, Chapman's victory in life as one of the South's financial leaders is just one of thousands of lifetime trophies the National Historic Landmark can be proud of in this its 80th year of compassionate care.

Hugh and Janis Chapman last September.



**POSTSCRIPT:** This story was written last fall, but due to publication changes and other issues, not printed in this magazine until now.

Despite his illness and resulting significant weight loss, Mr. and Mrs. Chapman were gracious enough to receive me in their Atlanta high-rise home on Peachtree Street last Sept. 14. It was a visit I won't forget. The "spirit" of which we remain so proud in Warm Springs was obvious in him, especially when he walked me to the elevator to say goodbye. That simple act of courtesy spoke volumes, at least in my mind, about the man. Just a few days before he died, I spoke with Mr. Chapman again. Due to the time lapse involved, I wanted him to read the story before it went to press. Once again, he seemed in good spirits and indicated he would look forward to receiving it.

I mailed it that same day and later learned he enjoyed it. The story of Hugh Chapman and the Chattanooga polio epidemic of 1948 is just one of many success stories commemorated by the columns that now surround Warm Springs' historic Quadrangle. Written "in their own words" by the donors themselves, a special publication has been produced to commemorate the new columns entitled, "The Stories Behind The Columns."

Anyone interested in receiving a copy can call 706-655-5666. — Martin Harmon