File V

Background Resources & Information
Photo's of FDR's Home
Resources
Roosevelt Genealogy
Photo Permission Slip

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Photo's Courtesy of FDR Presidential Library

Main Entrance Hallway

NPS Photo

Formal Parlor

NPS Photo

Roosevelt Living room

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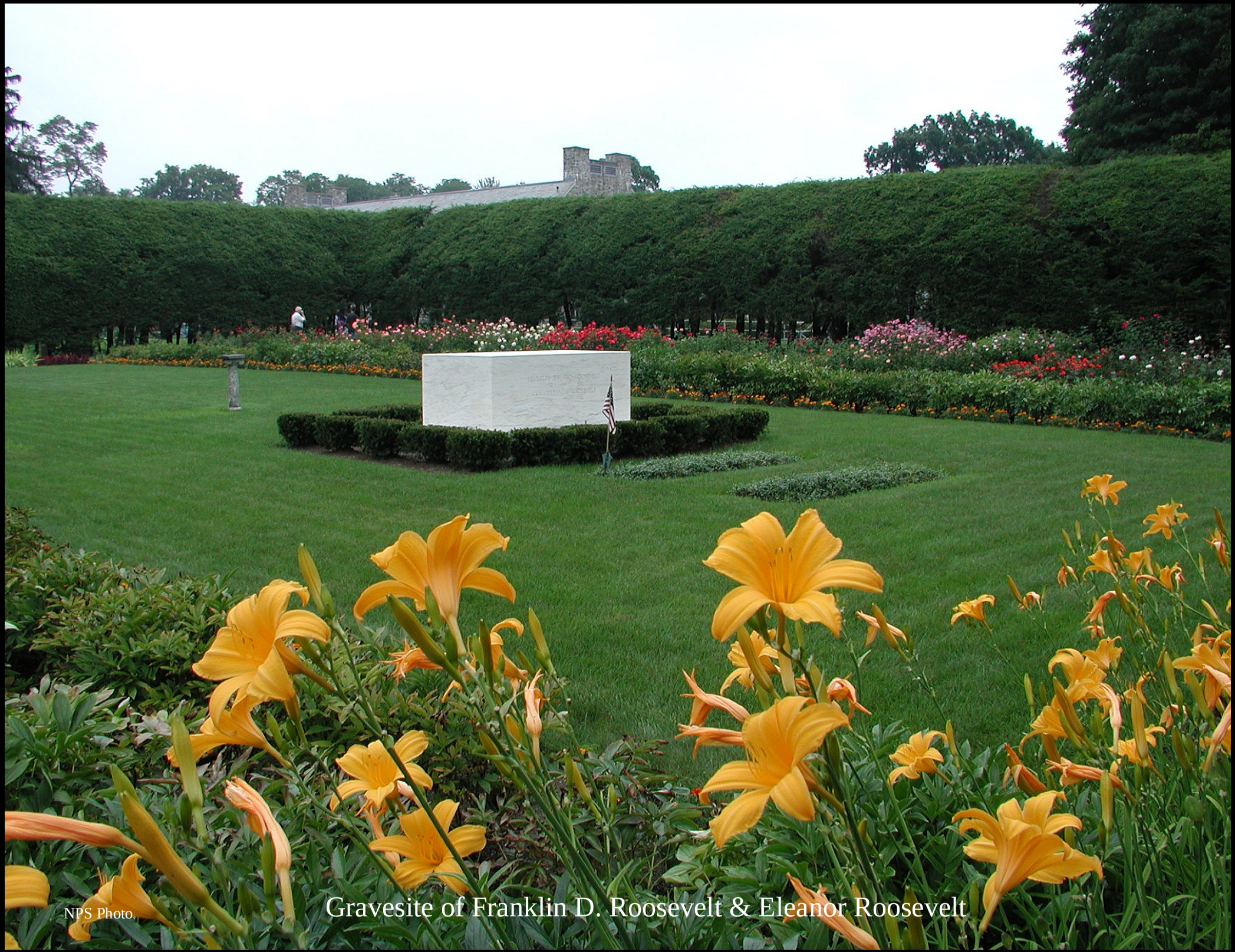
FDR’s Bedroom
NPS Photo



NPS Photo.

Gravesite of Franklin D. Roosevelt & Eleanor Roosevelt

Teacher Information

Background History of the Roosevelt Family

Delano Family

Background Information

Roosevelt Family History

By late 17th Century, the Roosevelt Family had made the central Hudson River Valley their home but generations of the family moved between this area and New York City. Much of the Roosevelt family money was derived from various business ventures, the most profitable of which was sugar refining in New York City where Isaac "the Patriot" Roosevelt (1726 -1794) built and managed his enterprises.

(1697 - 1900)
The Roosevelt family had a tradition of naming the males from every other generation either Isaac or James. Isaac's son James (1790 – 1847) selected a site near Poughkeepsie, New York to build his home in 1818. He named the estate "Mount Hope." Later, James' son Isaac (1780 - 1863) also lived at "Mount Hope" with his wife until he purchased his own land nearby in 1828 and created an estate he named Rosedale. Because of the family wealth Isaac's son James (FDR's father, 1828 - 1900) grew up in a privileged environment. When the older James died in 1847 he left the Mount Hope property to his grandson James.

The Purchase of Springwood

After finishing school at Harvard University Law School and traveling to Europe, James Roosevelt returned to Mount Hope. In 1853 he married his second cousin Rebecca R. Howland (1831 – 1876). James Roosevelt, his wife Rebecca, and son James Roosevelt Roosevelt, more commonly referred to as "Rosy" (1854 – 1927), lived at Mount Hope, near the Josiah Wheeler estate. Wheeler and James Roosevelt knew each other socially and both bred racing trotters. In 1865, the Roosevelts' Mount Hope was destroyed by fire while the family was overseas. Upon their return, James purchased the Wheeler estate, a decision likely influenced by the presence of the racing track and stables in the 10-acre meadow between the house and Albany Post Road. That fall he brought his wife Rebecca and son Rosy to the estate, renaming it "Springwood".

The Roosevelts in Hyde Park

At Springwood the Roosevelts had an active social life and James, commonly referred to as "Mr. James," took an active role in civic affairs. He became a vestryman and warden of Hyde Park's St. James Church, was elected Town Supervisor of Hyde Park (1871 – 72), and was a member of the board of managers of the Hudson River State Hospital. The Roosevelts also spent some of their time in New York City where they rented housekeeping hotel suites. While visiting the New York City hotel in 1876 Rebecca died suddenly of a heart attack.

After Rebecca's death James lived at Springwood and maintained a close relationship with his son Rosy. He bred trotting horses at Springwood until approximately 1877 when he gave it up because he felt the sport had become too corrupt. In 1878 James gave the "Red House" or

"Boreel House" on the adjoining property south of Springwood to his son Rosy and daughter-in law Helen Astor as a wedding present.

The Marriage of James Roosevelt to Sara Delano

James remained single for four years. At an 1880 dinner party hosted by a relative Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt (mother of the future President, Theodore Roosevelt), James was introduced to 26 year-old Sara Delano (1854 – 1941). Sara was born and raised at her family estate, Algonac, located south of Hyde Park on the west side of the Hudson River in Newburg, New York. Like James, Sara also grew up in a privileged home with private tutors, trips to the far east, social outings in Manhattan, and days spent riding and sledding at her parents' home. James and Sara's courtship lasted a very short time and they were wed on October 7, 1880. At the age of 52 (and by then a grandfather) James had a new bride who came to live with him at Springwood. Her new stepson Rosy was six months younger than she was.

The Birth of Franklin Delano Roosevelt

On January 30, 1882, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born to James and Sara. The birth was very difficult and Sara was advised not to have any more children. From the day he was born, FDR became the primary focus of her life.

James Roosevelt, the Gentlemen Farmer

James continued to be active in civic affairs in the small community of Hyde Park. He served as a member of the school board and as an Overseer of Highway maintenance for a section of Albany Post Road. While active in a variety of businesses he turned his attention to farming at his Hyde Park estate. He had been a gentlemen farmer at Mount Hope and successfully ran the estate at a profit by raising grain and hay crops. This success continued at Springwood where he expanded his property holdings and increased his herd of Channel Island dairy cows. The sales from the milk, grain, hay and other produce from the gardens paid for the upkeep of Springwood and a family home in New York City. The Roosevelts always used Springwood as more than just a seasonal home. Although they traveled extensively between their New York City home, summer home (in Canada), and Europe, Hyde Park remained their permanent residence.

Father & Son

When at Hyde Park, James, in semi-retirement, kept close to his family and despite his advancing age and declining health spent a great deal of time with Franklin. It was very unusual for fathers of that era to give their children as much attention as James gave Franklin. He often took his son for long rides to observe the estate's production. FDR's interest in conservation of forestry and his appreciation for the land unquestionably sprang from these rides and his father's love of the outdoors. James knew much about the trees on the estate and taught his son that they should not be cut unless they were diseased or dead. When he was a child Franklin: …"knew every tree, every rock and stream on the place, and never forgot the people who

when he was small…He had a garden and was always building things - houses in the old pine trees which served every purpose."

Sara Roosevelt

Sara Roosevelt also appreciated the gardens on the estate spending a considerable amount of time in the rose garden and greenhouse. Her favorite flower was the rose, perhaps because the Roosevelt name was of Dutch origin meaning "field of roses". Many of Sara's diary entries described her time spent in the garden. Where she often spent time gathering flowers for the house or the hospital in Poughkeepsie. During the winter months roses and carnations grown in the greenhouse provided cut flowers for Springwood and the home in New York City. It was Sara who oversaw the greenhouse and gardens.

FDR's Education

The Roosevelt family led a happy existence at Springwood. FDR's parents intended to send him to boarding school when he was 12 years old but kept him home an addition two years because they could not bear to be parted from him. At the age of 14 FDR enrolled at Groton in Massachusetts. Vacations and breaks from school provided him with the opportunity to return to his beloved home where he would "trek the woods".

When graduating form Groton in 1900 Franklin followed in his father's footsteps by attending Harvard University. With a B.A. in History under his belt FDR continued his education at Colombia University studying law. He passed the bar examination in 1907.

James Roosevelt's Legacy

James' health had continuously deteriorated and on December 6, 1900 he died at the age of 72. James Roosevelt's legacy at Springwood was the accumulation of a great deal of land for his family. He was responsible for teaching FDR to respect and love the river, land and trees. He had extended the veranda on the house and built new outbuildings including a coach house and a duplex for staff quarters. But few changes occurred in the area surrounding the main house. The rose garden and vegetable garden continued to be used by the family. James left the land and the estate to Sara Roosevelt with the provision that ownership of the property would be passed on to FDR if he outlived his mother.

(1900 – 1945)
The Marriage of Franklin D. Roosevelt to Anna Eleanor Roosevelt

On March 17th 1905 FDR married his fifth cousin once removed, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, President Theodore Roosevelt's niece. In1908 Eleanor and Franklin lived in a New York City duplex townhouse that had been a wedding gift from Sara who lived in half of the duplex that had connecting doors on different levels. Although they lived in New York City Eleanor and FDR took every advantage of the opportunity to bring their growing family to Hyde Park for extended visits. FDR had always wanted a large family as he himself was an only child and they had six children: Anna (1906- 1975), James (1907 – 1991), Franklin Jr. (1909- 1909), Elliott (1910 – 1990), Franklin Jr. (1914 – 1988), and John (1916 – 1981).

In 1910, FDR's attention turned to the Estate when he decided much of the estate land was no longer viable for farming. With the help of the New York State College of Forestry he implemented a forestry program to produce revenue required to maintain the property. Eleanor recalled "Franklin's Mother never allowed him to interfere with the running of the place at Hyde Park, or the farm, but the woodland was his and he ran that on his own."

FDR and Polio

In August of 1921 FDR contracted infantile paralysis, better known as polio. He maintained a positive attitude, although his legs became weaker and weaker. He had heard of a resort in Georgia with warm, mineral –rich waters that might be able to cure his polio. He became enamored with the place and wanted to share it with others who were also battling the effects of polio by turning the defunct resort into the Polio Institute. Eleanor felt that FDR's battle with polio taught him "…the greatest of all lessons: infinite patience and a never-ending persistence."

Throughout this time his mother continued to oversee the running of the family estate. Sara felt her son, now handicapped, should retire to Hyde Park to spend his days overseeing the farm. But it was Eleanor who fought to keep FDR's political aspirations alive. In 1928, with new strength and courage, Franklin Delano Roosevelt once again entered the political arena and was elected Governor of New York State.

FDR's Sense of Place

"All that is within me cries out to return to my home on the Hudson River"

President Roosevelt had a deep and lasting connection to "Springwood", his lifelong home in the Hudson River Valley. Encouraged by loving parents, young Roosevelt grew to know every rock and tree on the place. It is one of the few places where an American President was born, grew to maturity and was buried. FDR never severed the bonds to his home using it through out his life as a refuge, a sanctuary, and a gathering place where ambitions became political reality. At Springwood the sheer force of will and the support of his family and friends allowed FDR to overcome personal tragedy and whenever FDR was in need of rest in his Presidential years, he traveled home to Springwood. The estate worked its magic on him and he "…confounded his staff by the ease with which, even the darkest hours, he managed to shake off the burdens of the presidency upon his arrival at Hyde Park, and emerged stronger and more confident in a matter of days."

FDR always felt strongly about the plantings on his estate, and once even timed a visit to Hyde Park to coincide with the blooming of the Dogwoods. After contracting polio, one of FDR's favorite activities was to drive through his plantations in his hand-operated Ford. He was proud of this section of the Hudson River Valley and he shared the region with friends and world leaders, including Winston Churchill.

The lessons learned at Springwood were transformed into public policy, first in New York as Governor, and later nationwide as President. Reforestation, soil conservation, the preservation of National Parks and National Forests, the Civilian Conservation Corps: all can be traced backed to a life of exploration and work on the land at Hyde Park. FDR believed in the regenerative effects of forests saying, … "the forests are the lungs of our land, purifying our air and giving fresh strength to our people."

As President, he implemented the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) to employ young men to aid in the conservation effort on state and federal land. This program existed over ten years and employed more than 2.5 million men. On January 22, 1936 FDR wrote of his interest in conservation:

"…I have for a long time been interested in the conservation and preservation of our natural resources, not only those resources of great money value, but also of scenic value, which if once destroyed, can never be replaced. Anyone who has read the history of our country knows how in our rush to acquire land and subdue the forests, many of these natural resources were destroyed for all time. It is fortunate that there have always been a few men who have stood stoutly for their preservation."

FDR's Political History

NY State Senator

FDR's political career began in 1910 when he was elected a New York State Senator. He was appointed chairman of the Forest, Fish & Game Commission 1910. This appointment coincided with the rising awareness of the State's need for adequate protection of its forests, streams and wildlife resources. He was re-elected 1912.

On March 17th 1913, President Woodrow Wilson appointed FDR as Assistant Secretary to the Navy, an office he held throughout WWI. In 1920 Franklin ran, but was defeated in, the race for Vice Presidency of the United States.

FDR's political career came to an abrupt halt in August of 1921 when he contracted infantile paralysis, better known as polio. The illness took affect while he was vacationing at the family's summer home Campobello in Nova Scotia. He was transferred to a hospital in New York City where he stayed through the spring of 1922 when he was finally able to return to Hyde Park. FDR was determined to walk again without the use of crutches and exercised his legs as he tried to walk down the old home road to Albany Post Road and back. As the weather became warmer FDR swam in the pond in an attempt to regain the use of his legs.

NY State Governor

In 1928, and again in1930, FDR was elected Governor of New York State. On January 1, 1929 he was sworn in as Governor in Albany, NY. Foreign trade dropped to a third of its normal level, farm foreclosures accelerated, and many banks failed. President Hoover was confident that this was a temporary condition. In October of 1929 the New York Stock exchange crashed and the nation entered the Great Depression. Between 1930 and 1932 the number of unemployed Americans rose from four million to twelve million. In 1931 the depression intensified and Governor Roosevelt authorized the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (TERA) making New York State government the first to assist in depression relief efforts.

As Governor, Roosevelt had to react to the economic crisis in hard-hit New York. Speaking from Warm Springs, Georgia in May 1932 Roosevelt stated "Clearly it is a duty of government in an emergency to prevent any man, woman or child from starving." His progressive ideas became the framework for social and economic reforms for New York. He was the leader in supporting state unemployment insurance, reforestation, old-age pensions, and promoting hydroelectric power so the state could electrify rural areas and supply affordable electricity to homes and factories.

(1932- 1944)
32nd President of the United States and the only four term President.

The affection FDR felt toward the Hyde Park community was reciprocated, especially on election night. From the time FDR first ran for office he cast his ballot on Election Day at Hyde Park's town hall. Each election night his neighbors would parade down the entrance drive by torchlight. Even though FDR never carried Dutchess County the tradition was to show their support, and they helped him celebrate after the final election results were in.

On March 4th, 1933 Franklin Delano Roosevelt was sworn in as President of the United States. When he took office the American economy was in great distress. Millions of Americans were out of work and the American banking and credit systems were in the state of near collapse. In his "first 100 days" in office FDR closed the banks and reopened them only if they were financially secure. He implemented "New Deal Programs" including the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps), FERA (Federal Relief Administration), TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority), AAA (Agricultural Adjustment Act), and the NRA (National Recovery Administration). In the President's first inauguration address to the American people he said it was time" to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly," and to remain hopeful because "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." The new President brought an air confidence and hope to the nation.

President Roosevelt won a landslide victory in the1936 presidential election. Although voters approved of the New Deal, adverse Supreme Court decisions, weakening congressional support, partisan conflict, labor unrest, and the continuing recession challenged FDR and his vision for social and economic reform. The United States did not fully recover from the Depression until the labor demands of wartime industries and the armed services during WWII produced full employment.

By the end of FDR's second term international crisis began to dominate his attention. German Chancellor Adolf Hitler, elected to office in 1932, had rebuilt German military power and formed the Axis alliance to pursue a foreign policy of aggression and expansion in Europe. FDR realized America's need for national preparedness.

Roosevelt debated whether to run for a third term in office. He told Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr. "I do not want to run unless...things get very, very, much worse in Europe." Development in Europe did get much worse with the German invasion and occupation of France. In June of 1940, FDR decided to go for re-election to a third term. In 1944, in the middle of WWII, Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for an unprecedented fourth term, against the advice of his doctors, family, and friends. His health was failing, but his goal was to see the end of World War II. He also wanted to participate in shaping the post war world, which included establishing an organization called the United nations, which he hoped would prevent future wars.

The Death of Sara Roosevelt

On September 7, 1941, Sara Delano Roosevelt died at the age of 86 and the estate passed to FDR. After the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941, as the United States entered WWII the 240th Military Police Battalion arrived at Hyde Park to protect the President and his family. The battalion's 'A' Company was housed at the Bellefield estate north of Springwood while the 'B' Company was housed a mile-and-a-half north on the third floor of the Vanderbilt Mansion and in the mansion coach house.

The Death of the President

Near the end of his life FDR donated two parcels of land to the United States Government. In 1939 the first parcel of 16.31 acres was donated to the National Archives and Records as the site of his Presidential Library. In 1943, arrangements were completed to donate 33.23 acres to the National Park Service including his family home "Springwood", several outbuildings, the rose and vegetable gardens, orchards, and fields. The National Park Service officially took ownership in November of 1945 six months after FDR's death.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt died of cerebral hemorrhage on April 12, 1945, in Warm Springs, Georgia. After traveling from Georgia to Washington FDR's coffin was brought to Hyde Park by train. His body, followed by a riderless horse, was brought up the river road through the woods he was so found of. He was buried in the rose garden as specified in his will.

In November 1945 Eleanor relinquished ownership of the Springwood property to the National Park Service and moved to her Val-kill home. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote about her husbands feeling toward the estate, and why he donated it to the National Park Service:

“I think Franklin realized that the historic library, the house, and the peaceful resting-place behind the high hedge, with flowers blooming around it, would perhaps mean something to the people of the United States. They would understand the rest and peace and strength, which he had gained here and perhaps learn to come, and to go away with some sense of healing and courage themselves. If this place serves this purpose, it will fulfill; I think the desire, which was nearest to my husband’s heart when he gave the place to the Government.”

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New York State standards see www.emsc.nysed.gov.

Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your son or daughter will be participating in a school field trip to the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites. He/she will be participating in a curriculum-based house tour, environmental education program, or other special history education programs.

For the purpose of promoting and offering our education programs to teachers and students we will be photographing the students and teachers during their school field trip. We need your signature and printed name for permission to use these photographs for our teacher materials, advertising materials and web site. Please sign and print your name below to give us permission. Please return the bottom portion of this letter to your child's teacher as soon as possible. Thank you for cooperation and assistance in promoting our educational programs.

Sincerely,

Susanne Norris

Education Specialist Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites

Release Form

I give permission for my child's photograph of class participation at the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites to be used in park brochures and other advertising materials for school programs.

_____ _____

Printed Parent/Guardian's Name Parent/Guardian's Signature

_____ _____

Student Name Date

School Name and Grade _____

Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites
Program Evaluation

We are glad that you and your class participated in our curriculum-based education programs. Please help us continue to improve our programming and its development by taking a few minutes to complete this evaluation.

Name of School:_____ Teacher's Name:_____
School Address:_____
Grade Level:_____ Date of Visit:_____
Program Title and Park Site:_____ _____
How did you find out about our programs? _____

Pre-Visit Site Materials: Y/N
____ I used the pre-and post visit materials.
____ The materials helped prepare students for the trip to the site?
____ The materials were useful in preparing students for State testing?
____ The materials aided me in meeting NYS curriculum standards.

Onsite programs:

Please circle response to the following questions.
1(high/agree) 2 (medium/OK) 3 (low/disagree)

Relevant to curriculum	1	2	3
Interest level of students	1	2	3
Appropriateness of activities	1	2	3
Level of presentation	1	2	3
Methods of presentation	1	2	3
Age appropriateness	1	2	3
Accuracy of information	1	2	3
Quality	1	2	3

Do you plan to participate in the program next year? Y/N
Why/Why not_____
Additional Comments:

Please return this evaluation to:
Education Specialist, Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites, 4097 Albany Post Rd. Hyde Park, NY 12538