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1 minute to discover an aspect of Rotary's history

Dorothy Horstmann, a pioneer in the fight against polio

Dr. Dorothy Horstmann, born in 1911 in Spokane, Washington, played a pivotal role in the history of medicine by making a fundamental discovery: the presence of the polio virus in the blood before it reaches the central nervous system.

This major breakthrough proved that a vaccine capable of stimulating the production of blood antibodies could block infection, paving the way directly for the development of the vaccines by Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin.

Later, mandated by the WHO, her scientific evaluations made it possible to validate and approve Sabin's oral vaccine on a global scale.

Her scientific work forms the cornerstone of Rotary International's activities.

By demonstrating the effectiveness and safety of the oral vaccine, which is easy to administer on a large scale, Dr. Horstmann provided Rotary with the essential tool to launch its global "PolioPlus" program. Her scientific legacy now allows Rotary and its partners to be on the verge of eradicating polio.

