

The original documents are located in Box 9, folder “Biographies - President, First Lady, and Susan Ford” of the Robert T. Hartmann Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

The First Lady

MRS. GERALD R. FORD (Elizabeth Anne Bloomer) was born in Chicago, Illinois, on April 8, 1918, the daughter of Hortense and William Stephenson Bloomer. She moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, with her family, when she was three years old.

At the age of eight, Betty Bloomer began studying dance, which developed into a lifelong interest. After graduation from Central High School in Grand Rapids in 1936, she attended two summer sessions of the Bennington School of Dance in Vermont, where she first met Martha Graham. She continued her dance career with Miss Graham in New York City, eventually as a member of the Martha Graham Concert group. She also modeled part-time with the John Powers Agency.

Betty Bloomer returned to Grand Rapids in 1941 and became a fashion coordinator for a department store. She also formed her own dance group and taught dance to handicapped children.

On October 15, 1948, she married Gerald R. Ford, who was elected to the U. S. House of Representatives from Michigan's 5th District only weeks after their wedding.

The Fords lived in Alexandria, Virginia and became the parents of four children. Mrs. Ford's activities during the 1950's and 1960's concentrated on her husband and family. Keeping up with three sons, Mike, Jack, Steve, and daughter, Susan, left time only for extensive involvement with the Republican Party and the Episcopal Church.

Her husband's confirmation as Vice President in 1973 brought new responsibilities, which increased when he became President in August 1974.

As First Lady, Mrs. Ford has continued her interest in the arts and handcrafts and focused attention on handicapped children and women's issues.

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 21, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR BOB HARTMANN

FROM: JACK HUSHEN

SUBJECT: THE PRESIDENT'S BIOGRAPHY

Attached is the revised biography of President Ford in which we corrected the birthdate of Michael Ford and changed the wording around the President's nomination and confirmation for the Vice Presidency.

It is sent to you for your information.

Attachment

File

THE WHITE HOUSE

BIOGRAPHY OF THE PRESIDENT

GERALD R. FORD, Republican 38th President of the United States, was born in Omaha, Nebraska, July 14, 1913; attended public schools, Grand Rapids, Michigan; B. A., University of Michigan, 1935; L. L. B., Yale University Law School, 1941; won all-city and all-state football honors in Grand Rapids during high school; member of University of Michigan's national championship football teams, 1932, 1933; Michigan's most valuable player, 1934; assistant varsity football coach at Yale while law student there; in 1942 entered the U. S. Navy, serving 47 months during World War II; participated in 3rd and 5th Fleet carrier operations aboard the aircraft carrier U. S. S. Monterey for two years; discharged 1946 and resumed practice of law; elected to U. S. House of Representatives in 1948 and reelected every two years through 1972, serving 25 years in House; named in November 1963 to the Presidential Commission investigating the assassination of President John F. Kennedy; author (with John R. Stiles) of the book, "Portrait of the Assassin" (1965); permanent chairman of the 1968 and 1972 Republican National Conventions; visited The People's Republic of China in late June and early July 1972 on behalf of President Nixon; recipient of American Political Science Association's Distinguished Congressional Service Award, 1961; recipient of American Good Government Society's George Washington Award, 1966; recipient of American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award as "giant of accomplishment," 1971; recipient of AMVETS Silver Helmet Award, 1971; recipient of honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, The Citadel, and numerous colleges; married Elizabeth Bloomer October 15, 1948; children: Michael Gerald, born March 14, 1950; John Gardner, March 16, 1952; Steven Meigs, May 19, 1956; and Susan Elizabeth, July 6, 1957; Chairman of the Republican Conference, 88th Congress; minority Leader, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd and 1st Session, 93rd Congresses; nominated Vice President on October 12, 1973, to succeed Spiro T. Agnew, who resigned, and confirmed December 6; succeeded to the Presidency August 9, 1974, following the resignation of Richard M. Nixon.

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9/21/74

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THE WHITE HOUSE

SUSAN ELIZABETH FORD

Biographical Data

The youngest of the Ford offspring and the only daughter, 17-year old Susan Ford is a senior at the Holton Arms School in Bethesda, Maryland.

She was born at Columbia Womens Hospital in Washington, D.C. on July 6, 1957. She attended the Episcopal Kindergarten of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, the church in Alexandria, Virginia, to which the Fords belong. First through sixth grades were spent at Douglas MacArthur Elementary School, and seventh and eighth grades at Howard Middle School. (Both schools are in Alexandria). She started as a freshman at Holton Arms.

Susan is a sports enthusiast and enjoys skiing, water skiing, swimming, biking, horseback riding and tennis. Among other hobbies are cooking, photography and needlepoint. She also enjoys caring for a growing family of plants, which now number 30 and fill a large corner of the Solarium, the Ford's family room in the White House.

Susan started modern dance classes when she was eight and continued through the sixth grade. She has since taken classes in both modern dance and ballet.

The 5'8" blond is fond of animals and has in her charge a Siamese cat named Shan and a golden retriever named Liberty. Susan's previous pets have included various rabbits, dogs, a fish, snakes and gerbils.

Susan worked the summer of 1973 selling guide books for the White House Historical Association and has also worked as a babysitter and answering phones for a medical telethon. She took two courses during the summer of 1974. Earlier summers have been spent at Camp Arbutus near Traverse City, Michigan, and Camp Robin Hood in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

At Holton Arms, Susan is a member of the Photography Club and is taking a photography class. As a freshman, she was one of six students chosen as an honor tour guide and has continued giving tours to parents and prospective students each year. She was elected to the yearbook staff as a senior and is working in the advertising, management and business end of the book.

Susan would like to attend Mount Vernon College in Washington, D.C. and is considering the possibility of a career in child care or fashion. She has visited many hospitals and childrens centers and is particularly interested in the education of mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed children.

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Office of the White House Press Secretary

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In 1942 he entered the U. S. Navy, serving almost four years during World War II and participated in 3rd and 5th Fleet carrier operations aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Monterey for two years. He was discharged in 1946 and resumed the practice of law.

President Ford was elected to the U. S. House of Representatives in 1948 and reelected every two years through 1972, serving 25 years in the House. He was elected Chairman of the Republican Conference in 1963 and chosen Minority Leader in 1965. He also was permanent chairman of the 1968 and 1972 Republican National Conventions.

In November 1963, he was made a member of the Presidential Commission investigating the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and authored (with John R. Stiles) the book, Portrait of the Assassin (1965).

President Ford was nominated Vice President on October 12, 1973, to succeed Spiro T. Agnew, who resigned, and was confirmed December 6. He succeeded to the Presidency August 9, 1974, following the resignation of Richard Nixon.

President Ford is the recipient of the following awards:

American Political Science Association's Distinguished Congressional Service Award, 1961.

American Good Government Society's George Washington Award, 1966

American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award as "Giant of Accomplishment", 1971

AMVETS Silver Helmet Award, 1971

Boy Scouts of America "Silver Buffalo Award" for distinguished service to our country and its youth, 1975

He has received Honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from:

University of Pennsylvania

Notre Dame University

Ohio State University

University of Michigan

Michigan State University

Western Michigan University

The Citadel

(and numerous colleges)



President Ford received all-city and all-state football honors in Grand Rapids during high school, and he was a member of the University of Michigan's national championship football teams in 1932 and 1933. In 1934 he was named the University of Michigan's most valuable player. He served as assistant varsity football coach at Yale while a law student there.

He married Elizabeth Bloomer on October 15, 1948, and they are the parents of four children:

Michael Gerald	Born March 14, 1950
John Gardner	Born March 16, 1952
Steven Meigs	Born May 19, 1956
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February 1976

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February 1976

MRS. GERALD R. FORD

Birthdate: April 8, 1918

Mrs. Betty Ford came to the White House determined to make the mansion as warm, friendly, and open as the Ford family homes have always been. Her own lively interests in the arts, handicapped children and women's rights have been combined with a focus on home and family life.

Mrs. Ford was born Elizabeth Anne Bloomer in Chicago, Illinois. Her family moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, when she was three and she began her study of dance there when she was eight. After graduating from high school in 1936, Mrs. Ford attended two summer sessions of the Bennington School of Dance, where she first met Martha Graham. Her dance career continued in New York City, where she joined one of Miss Graham's troupes and modeled with the John Powers Agency.

She returned to Grand Rapids in 1941 and became fashion coordinator for a local department store. She also formed her own dance group and taught dance to handicapped children.

Only weeks after their 1948 marriage, Gerald and Betty Ford moved to Washington, where he began his political career as representative from Michigan's 5th District and she began hers as a wife and mother. Within seven years, the four children were born.

During the 1950's and 1960's, Betty Ford's world centered on her active family of three sons and one daughter. Her outside activities primarily involved the Episcopal Church and the Republican Party.

Three years ago with the two younger children almost out of high school, Mrs. Ford thought of going back to work outside the home. But before she found such a job, her husband became Vice-President and in August, 1974, President. Those jobs gave her new responsibilities which used her experience in entertaining, meeting people, and keeping a busy schedule.

In White House entertaining, Mrs. Ford has relaxed the official style to make it more people-oriented. The decorations often are American handicrafts, and the guest lists reflect the diverse interests of the entire Ford family.

Mrs. Ford's lifelong enthusiasm for the arts has shown up in decorations, White House guests, and, most especially, in her own involvement in artistic events. Her schedule shows an active interest in handicapped children and her statements a firm commitment to women's rights.

Today, the Ford home has a very special address, and as President and First Lady, Gerald and Betty Ford have unique responsibilities. But the Fords and their four children, Mike, 25, Jack, 23, Steve, 19, and Susan, 18, continue to be a close-knit family despite geographical separations.

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