

Gerald R. Ford

38th President

Born: July 14, 1913

Birthplace: Omaha, NE

Died: Dec. 27, 2006

Burial Site: Gerald R. Ford Presidential
Museum, Grand Rapids, MI

Spouse: Elizabeth Bloomer

Occupation: Lawyer

Political Party: Republican

Term: 1974-1977

Vice President: Nelson Rockefeller



Gerald R. Ford is this nation's most unique president in that he never came to office by the electoral process. Richard Nixon tapped Ford, House minority leader, to be his vice president after the resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew, who was under fire for tax evasion.

Ford, a middle-of-the-road Republican, was born July 14, 1914 in Omaha, NE. He graduated from the University of Michigan, where he was selected as most valuable player on that school's football team. Ford, a graduate of the Yale Law School, joined the Navy in 1942 and served for four years during World War II, coming out in 1946 as a lieutenant commander.

He spent 25 years in the House, eight of those years as Republican leader.

President Nixon picked Ford as his vice president in 1973 and he was sworn into office on December 6, 1973, after the Senate and House approved his nomination under the provision of a recently passed constitutional amendment. Ford became president on August 9, 1974, when President Nixon resigned in the face of mounting political pressure resulting from the Watergate investigation. Ford's popularity grew during his first years in office as he directed a dramatic rescue of the merchant vessel Mayaguez and its 39 crew members and the dramatic Apollo-Soyuz "handshake in space."

In 1980, Ford was defeated by Jimmy Carter, who campaigned on the need for change.