

James Carter

39th President

Born: October 1, 1924

Birthplace: Plains, GA

Spouse: Rosalynn Smith

Occupation: Farmer, engineer, scientist,
businessman

Political Party: Democratic

Term: 1977-1981

Vice President: Walter Mondale



As the nation's 39th president, Jimmy Carter led America into groundbreaking international accords and achieved some domestic policy successes despite staggering economic difficulties.

James Earl Carter, Jr., the son of a merchant and farmer in Plains, GA, was born in 1924. Carter, who always dreamed of becoming a sailor, graduated from the Naval Academy in 1946. The same year, he married Rosalynn Smith and embarked on seven years of service in the Navy.

At 29, Carter returned to Georgia to take over his family's farm after his father died.

The 1954 Supreme Court decision to desegregate the schools and the resulting backlash pushed Carter, a father of four, to run for the county school board. He won a school board seat and later was elected a state senator. Although Carter lost his bid for governor in 1966, he was elected in 1970.

In 1976, Carter became president of the United States, with Walter Mondale serving as his vice president. Carter, perceived as a Washington outsider by the American public, defeated President Gerald R. Ford.

Carter forged important international bonds. In the Camp David Accord of 1979, he helped Israel and Egypt look past ancient disputes to form peaceful ties. America began a new relationship with Panama by turning the U.S. Canal in that country over to Panamanian control.