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FACT SHEET
Philly's Presidential Fast Facts

American presidents have developed an affinity for Philadelphia, where they've tossed out the first pitch, danced, schooled, cut ribbons and challenged Americans to be better. Here are just a few highlights of presidential moments in the city from the very first inaugural address in 1793 through the present day:

Presidential Visits (in reverse chronological order):

- Presidential candidate **Joe Biden**, and former vice president, chose Center City, Philadelphia as the site of his 2020 presidential campaign headquarters and held his campaign kickoff rally on May 18, 2020 at Eakins Oval in front of the **Philadelphia Museum of Art**.
- A few presidents have visited the **National Constitution Center** since its groundbreaking in 2000. Most recently, **President George W. Bush** and his wife Laura Bush visited the Center in November 2018 to receive the Liberty Medal for their Military Service Initiative within the Bush Institute. **Presidents Bill Clinton** and **George H.W. Bush** have been frequent visitors and each served as chair of the Center's Board of Trustees. The elder Bush visited in 2004 when he was honored by the Eisenhower Fellowships, in 2007 to donate his service revolver to the Center's impressive collection and again in 2007 and 2008 to present the Liberty Medal. Since attending the NCC's groundbreaking ceremonies in 2000, **Bill Clinton** has returned numerous times. He made appearances in 2004 as part of his book-signing tour, in 2006 for the National Youth Service Learning Conference, in 2009 for a discussion on 21st century skills for students, in 2009 and 2010 to award the Liberty Medal and in 2013 for a State Budget Crisis Task Force event. In 2006, Bush and Clinton together received the Constitution Center's prestigious Liberty Medal for their efforts with the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund and Bush-Clinton Tsunami partnership.
- Following the same route that Abraham Lincoln rode 150 years earlier, **President Barack Obama** and **Vice President Joe Biden** made their way to the inauguration on a whistle stop train tour that wove its way from Philadelphia, the first stop, through Delaware and Maryland on its way to Washington, DC in January 2009.
- **Barack Obama** delivered his memorable speech on race in March 2008 at the **National Constitution Center**, and Obama and **Hillary Clinton** debated here in April 2008 during the Democratic primary race.
- **Independence National Historical Park** is a popular spot for presidential appearances. Soon-to-be **President George W. Bush** visited in July 2000 during the Republican National Convention, but the largest gathering was the 1997 Presidents' Summit for America's Future, featuring former presidents **Jimmy Carter**, **George H.W. Bush** and **then-President Bill Clinton**.
- September 17, 1987 was a busy day for **President Ronald Reagan**. After addressing a host of dignitaries assembled by **Independence Hall** for the bicentennial of the *U.S. Constitution* and dedicating a monument to mark the event, he was the featured guest at a reception at the Franklin Plaza Hotel.
- **President Gerald R. Ford** gave the keynote address at **Independence Hall** on July 4, 1976 to mark the U.S. Bicentennial.

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- Numerous presidents have visited the **University of Pennsylvania** campus, including **President Franklin Delano Roosevelt**, who spoke at the University's Bicentennial commencement in 1940. It was also at this ceremony that **President Herbert Hoover** received a second honorary doctorate from Penn. **President Donald Trump** graduated from Penn's prestigious Wharton School in 1968.
- A bronze marker in front of **Independence Hall** commemorates **President John F. Kennedy's** Independence Day speech on July 4, 1962.
- During each of **President Herbert Hoover's** visits to Philadelphia in 1929, 1930 and 1931, he threw out the ceremonial first ball of the **World Series** playoff games.
- Escorted by the First City Troop, **President William H. Taft** was the guest of honor at the dedication of **Wanamaker's Department Store** (now **Macy's**) at 13th and Market streets on December 30, 1911. A bronze plaque inlaid in the Juniper Street entrance marks the spot.
- **President Ulysses S. Grant** officially opened the grandest world's fair of its day, the United States Centennial in **Fairmount Park** on May 10, 1876.
- **Congress Hall** was the site of two presidential inaugural addresses: **President George Washington** in 1793 and **President John Adams** in 1797.
- **George Washington** was a frequent visitor to the **Powel House**, even celebrating his 20th wedding anniversary there in 1779 with an evening of dining and dancing.

More Presidential Notables:

- On view at **The Franklin Institute**, Philadelphia's iconic science museum, through January 3, 2021: *The Presidents By Madame Tussauds*, featuring life-like wax figures of every American president. The exhibit takes visitors on a journey through American history, highlighting the highs and lows that define each president and exploring the broad trends in technology and society that impacted each era.
- Democrats have held their **Democratic National Convention** in Philadelphia three times — in 2016, 1948 and 1936. At the 2016 convention, **Hillary Clinton** became the first woman nominated for president by a major party.
- Debuting on Independence Mall in December 2010, **The President's House: Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation** shows off structural fragments of the home where Presidents Washington and Adams lived during their terms and where nine enslaved people served the first president. At the open-air Independence National Historical Park site, located just steps from the Liberty Bell Center, visitors learn about the events that transpired at the President's House through illustrated glass panels, timelines and video re-enactments.
- The Republican Party held its first **Republican National Convention** in Philadelphia in 1856. They returned in 1872, 1900, 1940, 1948 and 2000.
- Known as the Germantown White House, the **Deshler-Morris House** in Germantown is the oldest existing official presidential residence. President Washington resided there in 1793 to escape the Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia and returned in 1794 using the home as a summer retreat.
- Every president from Theodore Roosevelt through Ronald Reagan stayed at the historic Bellevue hotel, which is now the **Hyatt at The Bellevue Philadelphia**.

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