

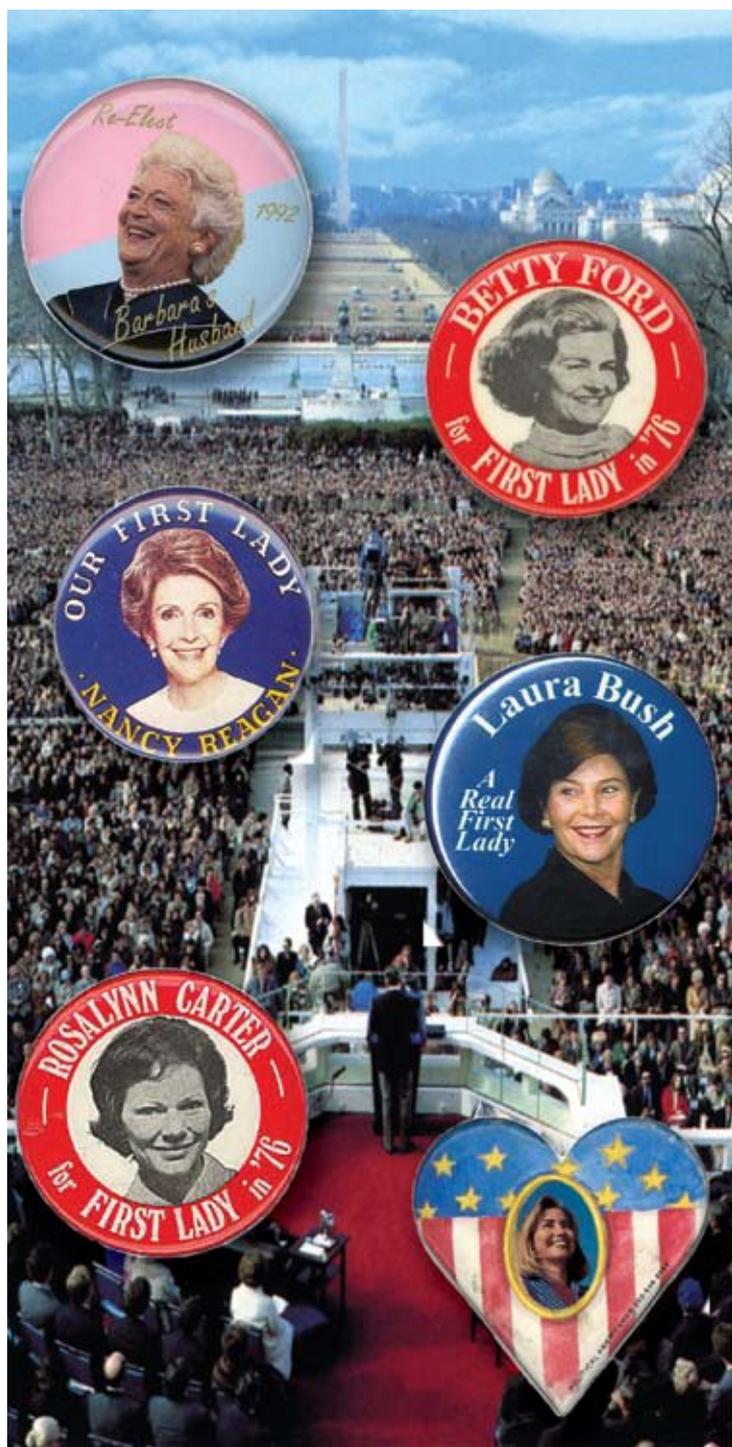
TEAM PLAYERS

**Triumph and Tribulation
on the
Campaign Trail**



Presidential campaigns that celebrate our freedom to choose a leader by election of the people are events unique to our country. It is an expectant, exciting time – a promise kept by the Constitution for a better future. Rituals developed over time and became traditions of presidential hopefuls – the campaign slogans and songs, hundreds of speeches, thousands of handshakes, the countless miles of travel across the country to meet voters - all reported by the ever-present media. The candidate must do a balancing act as leader and entertainer to influence the American voters. Today the potential first spouse is expected to be involved in campaign issues, and her activities are as closely scrutinized as the candidate's. However, these women haven't always been an official part of the ritual contest.

Campaigning for her husband's run for the presidency is one of the biggest self-sacrifices a First Lady want-to-be can make. The commitment to the campaign and the road to election night are simultaneously exhilarating and exhausting. In the early social norms of this country, the political activities of a candidate's wife were limited. Nineteenth-century wives could host public parties and accept social invitations. She might wave a handkerchief from a window during a "hurrah parade" or quietly listen to a campaign speech behind a closed door. She could delight the crowd by sending them a winsome smile from the front porch campaign of her own home. But she could not openly show knowledge of politics and she could not vote. As the wife of a newly-elected president, her media coverage consisted of the description of the lovely gown she wore to the Inaugural Ball. The 19th Amendment to the Constitution that gave women the right to vote also gave them the opportunity to take a dynamic role in the political arena. Today a potential First Lady must multi-task while campaigning – she must know her husband's issues and concerns while answering questions about her own causes and activities. The media still scrutinizes the clothes she's wearing, but now they also report on her actions and what potential assets she brings to the presidency.





Dolley Madison

The first openly successful political First Lady was Dolley Madison. She was politically savvy of the all-male politics in Washington in 1809. She used the only acceptable means of campaigning a woman could: she threw lavish parties. By using her natural ability to start conversations with “props” (books, snuff and a parrot on her shoulder), she cleverly brought political enemies together. They enjoyed themselves amid good food, beverage, pretty women, lively conversation and entertainment. Always appreciative of the importance of celebrating political victories, Mrs. Madison hosted the first public Inaugural Ball, thus beginning a favorite tradition to the festivities of Inaugural Day.

Mary Lincoln

Mary Lincoln had a natural, keen interest in politics. She grew up in a household filled with active it was inherent that she who shared her interests. Stephen Douglas before partner and political ally, Lincoln received the 1860 for the presidency by



to his supporters. After taking it in for a moment, his next thought was to share it with his wife as he stated to the men, “There’s a little woman down at our house would like to hear this. I’ll go down and tell her.”

Kentucky politicians, so would marry someone She was courted by finding her happiness in Abraham Lincoln. When Republican nomination telegraph, he read it aloud

Frances Cleveland

When President Grover Cleveland married the twenty-one-year-old Frances Folsom in the White House in 1886, it was a fairy-tale that made wonderful press. An extensive entourage of media reported on the highly popular First Lady’s every move although she never granted interviews. Her likeness was exploited on advertisements for all types of products, including such remedies as malt tonics and sulfur bitters. Political friends and foes were well aware of her star power. Even though they had no true voting power, “Frances Cleveland Clubs” were organized by women throughout the country for their “candidate.” Democratic campaign

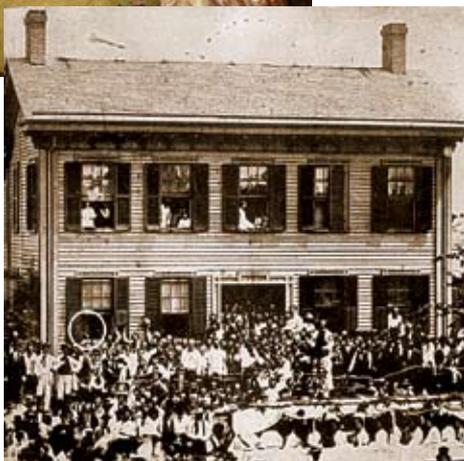




Above: Dolley Madison entertains

Right: Front Porch Campaign at the Lincoln home (Mary Lincoln is in lower left window)

Below: Frances Cleveland's image on advertising and campaign materials



managers took full advantage of the fervor in 1888 by placing her image on a variety of campaign novelties. Republican organizers countered with images of their candidate's wife, Mrs. Caroline Harrison. While women still had a long way to go in the political arena, the exciting part was that the candidates' wives were being acknowledged for their campaign clout.

Ida McKinley

Another step in the direction of emancipation for women was twofold in the successful campaign of William McKinley in 1896. Mark Hanna, the brilliant campaign strategist behind the McKinley campaign, used his first-hand knowledge of the unquestionable devotion between Ida and William that also included Ida's epilepsy into the mix of the campaign. Though her condition was never publicly addressed – she was said to be an “invalid” – it is remarkable that a woman's disability would be used to sway votes. Mrs. McKinley gamely allowed this private intrusion at a time when people with disabilities were kept out of sight. She traveled and attended programs with William; his natural attentiveness to her only endeared him more to the public. Her image appeared on an unprecedented number of campaign artifacts as a nod of acknowledgement to the women voting in the western states of Wyoming, and for the first time in Utah and Idaho. How sweet Ida's triumph must have been when the press reported that the audience clapped as she entered the ballroom on the arm of her husband in her white satin gown with diamond accessories for the 1897 Inaugural Ball.



Helen Taft

Helen Herron Taft was a master at using the only tools available to a political wife at the turn of the century – the “calling card” and the “at-home card”. Politicians' wives in Washington society spent their days visiting and receiving callers. In return they reported it all to their husbands. This all-important precedent was an acceptable way for women to acknowledge their husbands' accomplishments as they climbed the community's social ladder. Helen Taft's ambition was for William Howard Taft to become president, and she worked tirelessly on his behalf. President



Above: Ida McKinley's image on campaign ribbon and tray (along with image of Vice President's wife); Left: Republican First Lady Nellie Taft attends the 1912 Democratic Convention

Right: Nellie Taft rides with newly elected President, husband William Howard Taft, from Capitol to White House after inauguration - the first First Lady to do so.



Theodore Roosevelt accused Mrs. Taft of aspiring to the presidency on her own behalf. Though she couldn't openly acknowledge that she helped Taft write speeches, her private encouragement and attentiveness gave him confidence during the grueling campaign of 1908. Her personal victory was enlightened by becoming the first First Lady to ride next to the President from the Capitol Building to the White House after the inauguration ceremony.



Florence Harding

The end of World War I brought feelings of nostalgia; indeed, the 1920 campaign slogan was “a return to normalcy.” It was the last of the “front porch” campaigns, but with an unprecedented twist – thanks to the 19th Amendment, women could vote for the first time. The 1920 presidential campaign was remarkable in more ways than one, and Florence Harding took the opportunities available to her with her usual aplomb. Mrs. Harding was a successful business woman before becoming First Lady; for years she managed her husband’s thriving local newspaper, the *Marion Star* in Marion, Ohio. With her first-hand knowledge of the importance of the media and a good photo, campaign advisors realized she was a major key to winning the presidency. Florence took an active part in her husband’s campaign by encouraging women to vote. She used the “homey” appeal of the dutiful wife during the front porch campaign to her advantage while simultaneously being a political advisor to her husband as she watched crowd reactions to his speeches. There was even a newspaper series, “The Girl Next Door,” that reported on all the activities at Mrs. Harding’s house. When Florence cast her vote for Warren Harding, her own activism had guaranteed he would win the election.

Eleanor Roosevelt

When it came to stamina, aces. Since her husband and legs,” she tirelessly town to another across approach that Franklin long before FDR’s run also unique in that it gave independence as a politically active woman never seen before. She even



Eleanor Roosevelt had it in relied on her to be his “eyes campaigned from one the country. It was a team and Eleanor developed for the presidency. It was Mrs. Roosevelt a public



Above: Florence Harding prepares to vote in the 1920 election; the first year women could vote in a national election.

Right: Eleanor Roosevelt addresses the 1940 Democratic Convention



attended the Inaugural Ball in 1933 solo since FDR was officially eager to begin work on "The New Deal" as the newly-elected President. When FDR ran for an unprecedented third term in 1940, there was great unease within the Democratic Party. He asked Eleanor to speak at the convention; this first for a First Lady was so successful that it saved the party from splitting and led to the ground-breaking victory.

Mamie Eisenhower

Mamie Eisenhower found life on the campaign trail exhilarating. After many years as a roving military wife, she was happy to be able to accompany her husband during the whistle stop campaign of 1952. The post-World War II



years focused on the return to a stability the American public was keen to embrace. After thirty years, women were accustomed to the idea of voting and the political parties paid notice. The power to reach a greater audience through television was realized by the Republican Party organizers, and campaign advertisements were used to full advantage. The slogan, "I like Ike", coupled with a

frenzy of campaign souvenirs appealed to women. No one was happier to wear "Ike" jewelry than Mamie. Her genuine adoration of Dwight Eisenhower only added to his magnetism. Mrs. Eisenhower's first-hand knowledge of women's struggles brought on by war made her popular in her own right.

Jacqueline Kennedy

Women have always rallied around each other in understanding and support of the issues that are uniquely female. Pregnancy was never easy for Jacqueline Kennedy, so her female family members "rallied around" her.

They substituted for the future First Lady by attending the many women's teas and socials held during the 1960 campaign. Her political partner, Lady Bird Johnson (she had also suffered miscarriages), gladly filled in for her along the campaign trail. But Mrs. Kennedy used her own talents in a unique way. She recorded campaign spots in Spanish urging votes for her husband. These ads are regarded as some of the most effective of all time in campaign history by calling attention to minorities and their inclusion in the country's voting process.



Vote
for my husband
or for Governor Stevenson,
but please vote

BY MAMIE EISENHOWER

Mamie
Eisenhower
(right)
and Jackie
Kennedy
(below
and bottom
right) help
their husbands'
campaign



Lady Bird Johnson

Lady Bird Johnson brought the role of First Lady into the position of activism it represents to this day. Lyndon Johnson passed the Civil Rights Act in 1963, which brought the end to Jim Crow laws of the South. As a Southern woman, Mrs. Johnson understood the stressful situation and decided to do a whistle stop campaign trip through eight Southern states on her own. A nineteen car train was renovated and dubbed "The Lady Bird Special". The four-day, 1,628-mile trip began on October 6, 1964, in Washington, DC. The trek was covered by 150 members of the media, including 30 from foreign countries. There were reports of bomb threats by hate groups along the route; hence, a separate engine preceded "The Lady Bird Special" down the track by fifteen minutes. Regardless of the danger, at each of the 40 stops local bands would play "Hello, Lyndon" and "Happy Days Are Here Again." Hundreds of thousands of campaign souvenirs were passed out along with Lady Bird's recipe for pecan pie. She gave 47 speeches, and emphasized her purpose by telling the crowd – which included hecklers and picketers – "This is a campaign trip, and I would like to ask you for your vote for both Johnsons." When she arrived in New Orleans on October 9th, the media deemed the First Lady's campaign trip a historic success.



Patricia Nixon

The "Dick and Pat Nixon Team" began in 1946 when Nixon began his political career after WWII. Pat Nixon was always heavily involved in all aspects of her husband's campaigns – from answering phones in the office to appearances at political rallies. No First Lady had as much experience with the ups and downs of the campaign trail as Mrs. Nixon; 1968 marked her eighth campaign. Mrs. Nixon was a hard worker and strong competitor, and she disliked losing. By 1968, she was profoundly aware of the private sacrifices necessary for Richard Nixon's success. The assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., the anti-war demonstrations and street riots made her acutely fearful for her husband's safety. At the same time she understood the extensive problems he would face. The Nixon's shared a love of travel, and they greatly enjoyed the rigors of the campaign trail.





Above Left: Lady Bird Johnson on the “Lady Bird Special” campaign trip; Above: Lady Bird’s image appears on a telephone campaign brochure



Left and Below: Pat Nixon played an active role in her husband’s campaigns



Photo above courtesy Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum

One of their greatest feats was campaigning in all fifty states during the 1960 presidential campaign. Never comfortable with public speaking, her strength was her personal touch and genuine caring for people on a one-on-one basis at each campaign event.

Rosalynn Carter

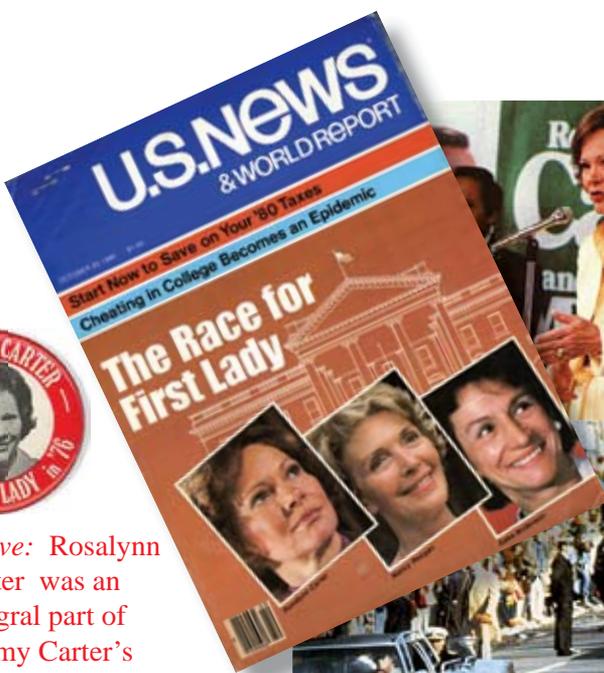
Like Pat Nixon, Rosalynn Carter enjoyed the challenges of the campaign trail. When Jimmy Carter decided to run in the 1976 presidential race, Rosalynn took off on her own grassroots campaign schedule so that she could optimize her visits to more people in many places. Her first stop was Florida where she and a friend knocked on doors, passed out brochures, and searched out local newspapers and radio stations in each town. Mrs. Carter wrote down her own questions about Jimmy Carter and handed them to the media; later in the campaign, if the right questions weren't asked she would state her answers anyway. The press dubbed her the "Steel Magnolia." She championed her own interests and what she would focus on as First Lady – national health care for the mentally ill and the elderly, and women's issues such as ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment. By the end of the eighteen months-long campaign, she had traveled to forty-two states and soloed hundreds of speeches and interviews.



Hillary Clinton

Hillary Clinton is marking a new chapter in First Lady History. She is the most openly politically-involved First Lady to date. Even though Bill Clinton stated his wife would be a full partner in his presidency while campaigning in 1992, her role was (and is) truly groundbreaking. Within the partnership between them goals – something all First Ladies, and all women can understand. And now with the 2008 campaign in full swing, first, former and want-to-be First Ladies, and a potential First Spouse are poised to make and add to the rich history of *Team Players: Triumph & Tribulation on the Campaign Trail*.





Above: Rosalynn Carter was an integral part of Jimmy Carter's campaign; *Right:* The Carters were the first presidential couple to walk from the Capitol to the White House following the inauguration



Left: First Lady Hillary Clinton meets with women U.S. Senators of both parties in 1993; *Below:* There was intense media scrutiny of her role.





TEAM PLAYERS: *Triumph and Tribulation on
the Campaign Trail*

April 1 - November 21, 2008

This exhibit is made possible from the generosity of the following individuals and institutions:

Albert T. Reid Collection, Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

*Carol Channing, performance of "Hello Lyndon"
C-SPAN*

Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library

Jerry Herman, music and lyrics to "Hello Lyndon"

Jimmy Carter Presidential Library

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library

North Canton TV and Appliance

Ohio Historical Society

Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation

Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum

U. S. Naval Photographic Center

University of South Carolina

Tours: Tuesday - Saturday at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.
and 12:30, 1:30 & 2:30 p.m.;

plus Sundays at 12:30, 1:30 & 2:30 p.m. in June, July & August
Reservations required for groups of 6 or more only, recommended
for all others.

205 & 331 Market Avenue South, Canton, Ohio 44702
(330) 452-0876 - www.firstladies.org

Cover photo courtesy Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum