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Carter Family

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Last edited by NGE Staff on 06/06/2017



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The election of [Plains](#) native [Jimmy Carter](#) to the U.S. presidency brought members of his immediate and extended family into the public eye. Carter is the oldest of four children born to Earl Carter and [Gordy Carter](#), as well as the husband of [Rosalynn Carter](#), with whom he has four children.

Earl Carter

James Earl Carter, called Earl, was born in 1894 in [Calhoun County](#). He attended [Riverside Military Academy](#) in [Gainesville](#) and served in [World War I](#) (1917-18). Upon his return to Georgia after the war, he owned a [peanut](#)-shelling plant and farmed in [Sumter County](#). He met and married [Lillian Gordy](#). He also ran a small general store and later, a large warehouse for farmers in Plains. Prospering, he owned hundreds of acres of land by the time the future president was born. The family employed household help and many laborers on their fields. Politically active, Earl served on the [Sumter County Board of Education](#) and the [Rural Electrification Administration](#) board in Sumter County before his election

[legislator](#), a position he held for a year before his death in 1953 from pancreatic [cancer](#), that later killed both of his daughters and his younger son.

Lillian Gordy Carter

Lillian Gordy Carter was born in Richland in 1898. Her father, James Jackson Gordy, instilled in his daughter a strong interest in social justice. She married Earl Carter in 1923 and made her home with him. During the first decades of their marriage, Lillian, a registered nurse, worked in a hospital and often provided care without charge for patients who could not afford treatment, many of whom were African Americans. From 1955 to 1962 she was housemother to an Auburn University dormitory in Auburn, Alabama, and in her late sixties she served as a Peace Corps volunteer in India, from 1963 to 1968.

Known to the public as "Miss Lillian," the president's mother was politically active for decades. She campaigned for his election, helping her husband in his campaign for the state legislature, running the campaign for U.S. president Lyndon B. Johnson in Sumter County, and later making more than 60 speeches during her son's campaign for president. Outspoken on progressive issues in a time before many southern women were politically active, "Miss Lillian" was a role model for many, including her son.

Lillian Carter received the Covenant of Peace award in 1977 from the Synagogue Council of America. She was named honorary chair of the Peace Corps National Advisory Council in 1980. She died in 1983. In 2008 Jimmy Carter published a biography of her entitled *A Remarkable Mother*.

Jimmy Carter



[Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter](#)

James Earl Carter Jr., known as Jimmy, was born in Plains, Georgia, in 1924. After first attending Georgia Southwestern College (now [Georgia Southwestern State University](#)) and the [Georgia Institute of Technology](#), Carter graduated in 1946 from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. That same year he married Plains native Rosalynn Carter. He began service in the navy, which lasted until his father's death in 1953, when Carter returned to Plains to run the family business.

Carter entered politics in 1962 with his election to the Georgia state legislature. He ran unsuccessfully for [governor](#) in 1966 but four years later won the office. In 1976 Carter entered the race for the U.S. presidency and won the election over incumbent candidate Gerald R. Ford. Following his failed bid for reelection in 1980, Carter returned to Plains, Georgia, where he established the [Carter Center](#) in [Atlanta](#) and became a professor at [Emory University](#).

worldwide in the years after leaving the White House for his efforts to advance peace and
Carter received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. He is also the author of numerous books, r
from political analysis to memoir to fiction,

Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter are the parents of four children: Jack, Chip, Jeff, and Amy. A
various places during Carter's time in the navy, all four children are graduates of Plains H

Jack Carter

John William Carter, known as Jack, was born in Portsmouth, Virginia, in
1947. He earned a degree in [nuclear physics](#) at the Georgia Institute of
Technology and a law degree at the [University of Georgia](#). After a tour of
duty in Vietnam during the Vietnam War (1961-75), Jack practiced [law](#) in
[Calhoun](#). He later took a job as a foreign-exchange advisor with the
Chicago Board of Trade in Illinois. His first marriage, to Judy Langford of
Calhoun, produced two children, Jason James (born in 1975) and Sarah
Rosemary (born in 1978). Jack lives in Nevada with his second wife,
Elizabeth Brasfield, who has two children, Sarah and John Chuldenko,
from a previous marriage.



Jimmy an

Jack's son, Jason, followed in his great-grandmother's footsteps by joining the Peace Co
completing a degree in political science at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina,
to Lesotho, South Africa, from 1998 to 2000. Upon his return, Jason attended law school
University of Georgia and wrote a book, *Power Lines: Two Years on South Africa's Border*
experience in the Peace Corps. In 2006 Jason and his wife, Katie, had their first child, He
Carter, the first great-grandchild of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter.

Chip Carter

James Earl III Carter, known as Chip, was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, in
1950. He was educated in public schools before going to work in his
family's peanut business and has participated in a variety of business
ventures. Active in politics, Chip served as a member of the Plains City
Council and participated on the Democratic National Committee. He also
served as president of an international exchange program, Friendship
Force, which was cofounded in 1977 by his parents. His marriage to Caron
Griffin in 1973 produced one child, James Earl IV, who was born in 1977.



Carter Fa

After a divorce in 1980, Chip married again. His second marriage, to Ginger Hodges of Americus, produced one child, Margaret Alicia, born in 1987. Today he lives in his third wife, Becky Payne.

Jeff Carter

Donnel Jeffrey Carter, known as Jeff, was born in New London, Connecticut, in 1952. He honors from George Washington University, in Washington, D.C., where he completed geography, and he is the cofounder of Computer Mapping Consultants, based in Kingwood, Virginia. Jeff married Annette Jene Davis of Arlington in 1975. The couple has three children: Jeffrey (born in 1984), Jeremy Davis (born in 1987), and James Carlton (born in 1991). Jeff lives in the metropolitan Atlanta area.

Amy Carter



Amy Lynn Carter, born in Plains in 1967, was a young girl during her father's presidential tenure (1977-81). From the time television captured her being awakened to hear that her father had won the election, Amy was the object of frequent attention in the media. She attended Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where she earned her master's degree in art history at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. In 1995 she collaborated with her father on a children's book, *The Little Baby Snoogle-Fleejer*, and she later illustrated his book *Christmas in Plains* (2001). Amy married James Gregory V. Carter in 1999 and they became the parents of Hugo James in 1999. The family resides in Atlanta.

Quoted by her father during his presidential campaign for her pro-disarmament stance on nuclear weapons and active in anti-apartheid demonstrations during college, Amy demonstrated an outspokenness reminiscent of her paternal grandmother's. She was elected in 1998 to the Board of Directors and served as a Councilor at the Carter Center.

Gloria Carter Spann

Gloria Carter, the second child of Earl and Lillian Carter, was born in Plains in 1926. She married William Hardy, a World War II force captain, in 1945, and the couple had one son, William T. Carter. After divorcing in 1949, the son took the surname Spann after he was adopted by Walter G. Spann. Gloria married in 1950. Known for her love of traveling on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, she worked for a time as an art teacher and on the family farm in Plains. She died in 1990 of pancreatic cancer.

Ruth Carter Stapleton

Ruth Carter was born in 1929 and married veterinarian Robert T. Stapleton in 1948. They had four children: Lynn, Scott, Patricia, and Michael. Living in Fayetteville, North Carolina, she was a well-known Christian evangelist and faith healer. She died in 1983 of pancreatic cancer.

Billy Carter

William Alton Carter, known as Billy, was born in 1937. During his brother's presidency, Billy was portrayed in the media as a "good ole boy" with a fondness for beer and celebrity. Despite his public image, Billy was both well educated, having attended Emory University in Atlanta for a couple of years, and well read, having inherited a habit of voracious reading from his mother. Billy returned to Plains after serving in the Marine Corps as a private from 1955 to 1959. He married Sybil Spires, also of Plains, in 1955 and became the father of six children: Kim, Jana Kae, William "Buddy," Marle, Mandy, and Earl. Billy ran the family business in Plains during most of the 1960s and 1970s. In 1979 he entered an alcohol rehabilitation program. In the 1980s he traveled the country, lecturing about his struggles with alcoholism and, later, cancer, with which he was diagnosed in 1987. He died in 1988.



Jimmy Carter

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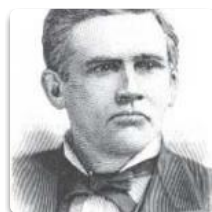
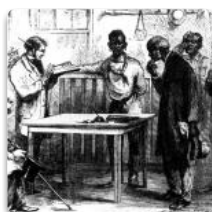
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Billy Carter and Sybil Carter, with Ken Estes, *Billy: Billy Carter's Reflections on His Struggles with Fame, Alcoholism, and Cancer* (Newport, R.I.: Edgehill, [1989]).

Hugh Alton Carter, with Frances Spatz Leighton, *Cousin Beedie and Cousin Hot: My Life in the Carter Family of Plains, Georgia* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978).

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