

# Ronald Reagan

## Autobiography (1990)

He was born 6Feb1911 in IL and died 5June2004 in CA. His parents were Jack & Nelle Reagan (he called them by their first names). He was brought up to believe **we determine our own destiny.** At 13, he put on his mom's glasses and could see clearly for the first time (he was extremely nearsighted). He could memorize things quickly. He loved the applause given him when he was onstage.

He worked as a lifeguard in the summers of 1925-1932 at Lowell Park, IL earning \$15/wk and saved 77 lives. He got a scholarship to Eureka College in 1928. In '32 he went to Des Moines & got a job in Radio as a traveling sports announcer for \$10/game. And then promoted to announcer (DJ) at \$100/mo & later \$75/wk. On a rainy day in '37 he took a day off from the Cubs spring training on Catalina to interview at Warner Brothers & got a contract for \$200/wk. His 1<sup>st</sup> movie was "Love is in the Air". His first 'A' list movie was Knute Rockne. His favorite postwar movie was "The Winning Team". His last movie was "The Killers" in '64.

1941 WWII broke out and he was drafted, but was used in Hollywood to make training & documentary films. He married Jane Wyman & had 2 kids (Maureen & Michael) before they divorced in '48. He bought an 8-acre ranch in San Fernando Valley & started riding horses.

FDR only intended his welfare & relief programs to be temporary during the depression. But it is almost impossible to close down a bureaucracy once it is created. WWII is what ended the depression. He got a growing distaste for big government. Mobsters & Communists were trying to take over the actor's union so he became pres of the union to fight it. AS an actor he was in the 94% tax bracket and not happy about it.

He married Nancy Davis on 4Mar52. They children were Patricia & Ron. He hosted a TV show called the general Electric Theater and traveled the country talking at their plants ('54 - '62). They upgraded their ranch for a 350-acre one in the Santa Monica mtns & a dream home overlooking the ocean (later forced to sale for taxes). 1962 he switched from Democrat to Republican & in '64 supported Goldwater for pres.

He was elected governor of CA in '66 & '70. He loved his line-item veto power (used 943 times) [unfortunately US pres don't get to use this] & taking his case to the people via "fireside chats". In 2 yrs he converted the state deficit into a surplus and gave the 1<sup>st</sup> tax rebate. This was the worse sin for a bureaucrat because it meant a budget cut the next yr. He began to reform the welfare system. If CA were a nation, it would be the 7<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world.

They bought 688-acre ranch north of San Diego. Between '65 - '80 the federal budget jumped 5 times while the federal deficit grew 53 times. 1978 CA voters passed prop 13 (cutting property taxes) & setting off a revolt across the nation. In 1980 unemployment, inflation & interest rates were double digits (prime rate was 21.5% [highest since the civil war]).

1980 he became the 40<sup>th</sup> pres of the US (& re-elected in '84). He wanted tax reform & a balanced budget. Ironically lowering tax rates increases government revenues. He kept a journal while in the Whitehouse.

Ron's Quotes:

"An apparently random turn in the road can lead you a long way from where you intended to go." "Everybody wants to do something with one's life that will give him or her pride and a sense of accomplishment." "No nation in history has ever survived a tax burden that reached a third of its national income." "We didn't have those things when we were your age. We invented them" "Of all the ways God has blessed me, giving her to me was the greatest." "Deficits are not caused by too little taxing, they are caused by too much spending."

Quotes: "The history of liberty is the history of limitation of government's power, not increasing of it." (Woodrow Wilson)