



George H. W. Bush
1924 - 2018
Inducted 1991

George Herbert Walker Bush was born June 12, 1924 in Milton, Massachusetts, the second son of Prescott Bush and Dorothy Walker Bush. His family moved to Greenwich, Connecticut shortly after his birth and he attended the Greenwich Country Day School and graduated from Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts in 1942. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Bush enlisted in the United States Navy and eventually became the nation's youngest naval aviator. He flew 58 combat missions during WWII from 1942 to 1945.

Weeks after his return from the Pacific, Bush married Barbara Pierce in Rye, New York on January 6, 1945. Bush had been accepted to Yale University before he enlisted in the military and took up the offer after his discharge. He graduated from Yale University in 1948 with a degree in economics and he and his wife, Barbara, moved to West Texas.

Bush worked as an equipment clerk, then as a drilling tool salesman for International Derrick & Equipment Company. In 1949, Bush moved his family to California, but returned to Texas, settling in Midland in 1950. In 1951, Bush and partner John Overby established the Bush-Overby Oil Development Company. The Bush-Overby Company later merged with J. Hugh Liedtke and his brother William Liedtke to form the Zapata Petroleum Corporation. By the end of 1954, Zapata Petroleum Corporation had drilled 71 wells, producing an average of 1250 barrels of oil a day.

Later, Bush founded the Zapata Off-Shore Company as part of the Zapata Corporation. He served as president of the new company which developed offshore drilling equipment. In March of 1956, the company's first rig, the "Scorpion", was commissioned by Bush. It was the first electrically powered jack-up rig. Bush would bring Zapata Off-Shore Company and his young, growing family eastward to Houston in 1958.

In 1966, George H.W. Bush was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. He was appointed to the House Ways and Means committee as a first-term congressman. In 1971, Nixon appointed Bush Ambassador to the United Nations. In 1976, Ford appointed Bush Director of Central Intelligence. Bush was selected as Ronald Reagan's running mate in 1980. On January 20, 1989, Bush succeeded Ronald Reagan as the 41st President of the United States.