

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Betty Currie

PERSON

Currie, Betty

Alternative Names: Betty Currie;

Life Dates: November 10, 1939-

Place of Birth: Edwards, Mississippi, USA

Residence: Hollywood, Maryland

Occupations: Presidential Secretary

Biographical Note

President Bill Clinton's personal secretary Betty Currie was born Betty Grace Williams on November 10, 1939, in Edwards, Mississippi. Soon after her birth, Currie's parents, Theodore R. and Vivian U. Williams moved with their nine children to Waukegan, Illinois. She attended McAllister Elementary School on Waukegan's Southside. Graduating from Waukegan Township High School's business course in 1957, Currie found clerical employment at the nearby U. S. Naval Training Station at Great Lakes, Illinois.

Following a move to Washington, D.C., Currie worked for the U. S. Navy Department, U. S. Postal Service Headquarters, U. S. Agency for International Development, U. S. Peace Corps/Action, and U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. Always striving, Currie completed special training by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and was enrolled at Howard University, American University and Antioch College.

Retiring from government service in 1984, Currie volunteered for Operation Rescue, the United Way, the Commission on the Status of Women, and Rainbow Christian Services. Currie also volunteered for the failed Democratic presidential campaigns of Mondale/Ferraro in 1984 and the Dukakis/Bentsen ticket of 1988. She hesitantly joined the Clinton/Gore campaign in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1991, where she served with James Carville in the "war room".

Following Bill Clinton's 1992 election to the presidency, Currie was chosen to serve as his personal secretary in the White House. She served throughout both of Clinton's terms. In this capacity, Currie coordinated the Presidents communications including phone calls, letters, e-mails, coordinating appointments and greeted all visitors. Meeting heroes like Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks compensated for the long hours. In 1997,

Currie testified before the special prosecutor's investigation of the Clinton/Lewinsky affair amidst a frenzy of media attention. Described by journalist and colleagues as truthful, she still retains her association with the Clinton family.

Currie, finally retired at the time of her interview, lives in suburban Maryland with her husband and "Socks", Chelsea Clinton's White House cat. She has a grown daughter.

Related Entries

McAllister Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Waukegan High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

United States Navy [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1978 to ?]

United States Postal Service [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1991 to 1993]

United States Agency for International Development [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

United States Peace Corps [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to 1988]

United States Department of Health and Human Services [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

White House [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Secretary