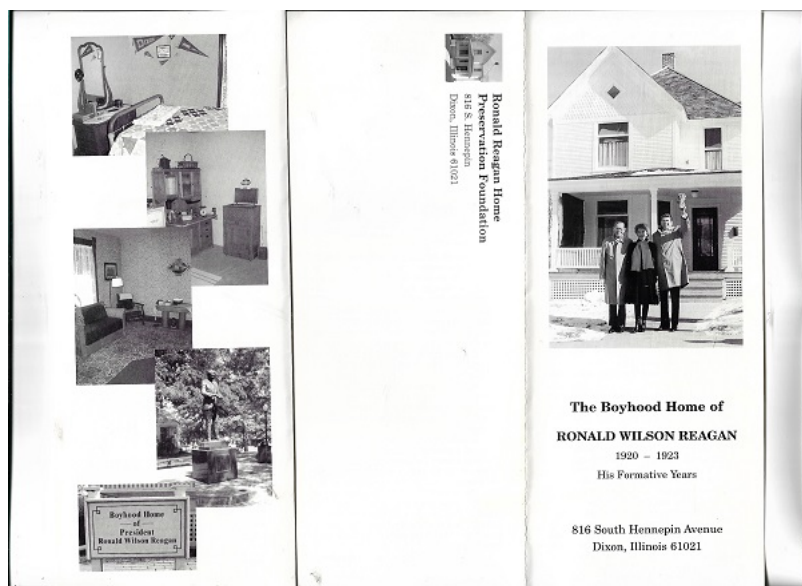


VZPOMÍNKY (22)

DIXON, Illinois

Dům, kde pozdější prezident USA Ronald Reagan prožil v letech 1920 - 1923 svá chlapecká léta (formativní, jak řekl).

Na fotografii skříž, kam si s bratrem ukládali své finanční úspory. Fotografie z roku 1984.



Ronald Reagan's Boyhood Home

The Reagan family, Jack, Nellie and their two sons, Neil (age 12) and Ronald (age 9), moved to Dixon and into this house at 816 S. Hennepin on December 6, 1920.

The house was conveniently located for the family. The boys attended school at South Side School, later known as South Central School, just 3 1/2 blocks north on Hennepin.

Only three weeks after moving here, Ronald and Neil both took out library cards and Ronald checked out the first of several hundred books from the Dixon Public Library, one block north of the house. Neil and Ronald were baptized here on June 21, 1922.

The first Christmas Church, where both Mrs. Reagan and Ronald attended church and later became Sunday School teachers, is one block north of the house. Neil and Ronald were baptized here on June 21, 1922.

The Dixon YMCA where Ronald learned to swim was one block east of the library. Because of his training here, he secured the job of life-guard at Lowell Park at the end of his sophomore year of high school. He was lifeguard for 7 years and put himself through college with his savings. He is credited with saving 77 lives during his time as lifeguard. A bronze plaque noting this fact is displayed at the Leland Community Building. Ronald and Neil both worked as caddies at the Dixon Country Club in 1921 and 1923. Ronald was drum major for the YMCA Band. See photos on wall of bedroom and matted over fireplace.

Ronald and Neil, or "Dutch" and "Moon" as they were known in Dixon, spent many hours playing football in the side yard with their friends.

Many hours were also spent in the barn where the Reagan boys raised rabbits, and Ronald had a collection of bird eggs and bird nests. Mr. Reagan used the barn as a garage for the family car. Just north of the barn the family had a large garden.

The house has three bedrooms upstairs. The boys shared one room, their parents had one room, and the spare room was used as a sewing room by Mrs. Reagan. She did alterations and sewing to help with family expenses. Nellie Reagan later worked in a local ladies dress shop.



selling appeared. Jack Reagan sold shoes in one of the local shoe stores.

This house is the only home in Dixon mentioned in Ronald Reagan's autobiography, "Where's the Best of Me", although the family lived in four other houses in Dixon. After achieving success in motion pictures, Ronald moved his parents in California in 1937 and bought them their first home they ever owned.

A single family rental home in 1920, the house was later converted into a two-apartment building.

In the summer of 1980, after the Republican National Convention, a mailman noticed the house was for sale. To save the house for posterity, he went to the real estate office and put down \$250.

Donations were solicited for the down payment and a group of local businessmen signed a note to guarantee the mortgage. The house was purchased for \$31,500. Fund raising activities and donations enabled the mortgage to be paid off by the winter of 1981.

The house was opened to the public in the fall of 1980, although it had not been restored and no furniture was in the house. Thousands of people from all over the world visited the house in 1981 and 1982.

To re-roof the house with wood shingles, as

it was in 1920, 50 cent donations per shingle were solicited. The donor signed a shingle and a record was kept of each donor. Over 8,400 people donated shingles. All 50 states and over 50 countries were represented by the donors.

The restoration of the house and reconstruction of the barn to its 1920 condition was completed, and the house was furnished with furniture typical of the period, in time for President Reagan's birthday visit, February 6, 1984. The house has been open to the public since that date.

Some of the furnishings were donated by members of the Reagan Home Volunteers.

The lot on which the house stands was originally owned by Father John Dixon, founder of Dixon. The original owner of the house was William C. Thompson, who built the house in 1891 for approximately \$1,500.

Ronald Reagan's Boyhood Home was approved for the National Register of Historic Places on March 28, 1982. The house is owned by the Ronald Reagan Home Preservation Foundation, a non-profit organization.

Over 20 volunteers serve as interpreters and tour guides at the Reagan Home. Without their help, the facility could not operate.

There is no admission to visit this historic home.

From 1920-1923, Ronald Reagan attended the South Side School, later known as the South Central School.



Currently under renovation, the school will be the home of the Dixon Historic Center. The Center, featuring displays that depict the life of President Reagan, will open at a future date, yet to be announced.



During his formative years in Dixon, Reagan developed many skills through the activities in which he participated - skills that fostered the growth of his talents, his personality, and character during his later adult years.

Having become an able swimmer, Reagan worked as a lifeguard at Dixon's magnificent Lowell Park. Utilizing his creative abilities, President Reagan served as Art Director of his 1928 senior class yearbook.



Located in Northern Illinois, the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home is easily accessible.



Hours for the Reagan Home and Gift Shop

April through November
Monday through Saturday
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Sunday
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

December and January

CLOSED

February and March - Open weekends Only
Saturday - 10:00 - 4:00
Sunday - 1:00 - 4:00

Closed New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. All other holidays, open regular hours.

Parking is available in the parking lot adjacent to the Reagan Boyhood Home. Buses may unload and load visitors in front of the Home.

Groups - Special arrangements for group tours may be made by calling (815) 288-3404.

Admission Free - The Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home is owned and operated by the Ronald Reagan Home Preservation Foundation, a private not-for-profit corporation. All tour guides serve the Reagan Boyhood Home as volunteers.

816 South Hennepin Avenue
Dixon, IL 61021
(815) 288-3404 or (815) 288-5176

Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home



★ Dixon, Illinois ★

On December 6, 1920, the Reagan family moved to Dixon and into this house at 816 South Hennepin. Ronald was 9 and his brother, Neil, was 12. The town of Dixon afforded the family a rich community life.



Ronald Reagan was able to take advantage of the many offerings of the community -- the Dixon Public Library, the First Christian Church, the Dixon YMCA, and the myriad of activities provided by his school life. Dixon, as one of the oldest riverfront towns in Illinois, had the degree of economic development and stability that fostered such community life.



The community resources of Dixon offset the financial limitations of the Reagan family in providing extracurricular activities for both Ronald and Neil.

Ronald Reagan

President Reagan and his older brother Neil shared one of the three upstairs bedrooms as pictured here. Their parents, Jack and Nelle, shared another room; the third was used as a sewing room by Mrs. Reagan who supplemented the family's income by doing mending.



The kitchen of the Reagan home was typical of that era, as shown here, equipped with a top-loading icebox, a gas stove, and a pantry.

Family activity extended beyond the house to both the barn and the yard. The Reagan brothers raised rabbits in the barn. The family maintained a large garden just north of the barn. Both Ronald and Neil, or "Dutch" and "Moon" as they were known in Dixon, spent many hours playing football on the side yard with their friends.

In addition to the kitchen, the downstairs of the house had a sitting room (pictured to the right), a parlor, and a dining room.



The restoration of the home and reconstruction of the barn to its 1920 condition was completed, and the house furnished with furniture typical of the period, in time for President Reagan's birthday visit to Dixon on February 6, 1984.



The lot on which the house stands was originally owned by Father John Dixon, founder of Dixon. The house was originally built in 1891.



