

PRESIDENTIAL DIARY, OFFICE OF THE: The President's Daily Diary, 1981-1989 –
REAGAN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

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PRESIDENTIAL DIARY, OFFICE OF THE: The President's Daily Diary, 1981-1989
(11.8 ft, Boxes 1-30)

I. THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY DIARY (Boxes 1-29)

The President's Daily Diary is a day-by-day record of Ronald Reagan's eight years as President. It chronicles such activities as meetings, briefings, press conferences, telephone calls, photo sessions, meals, travel, and recreation. Presidential Diarist Ellen Jones (McCathran), a National Archives employee detailed to the White House, had chief responsibility for creating the Diary, based on documents provided by various White House units.

The primary Diary document for most days is a log, entered on a standard form. The logs list starting and ending times for activities, brief descriptions for activities which require explanation, and information on persons or groups involved. Some log entries refer to appendices which provide full participant lists, and other additional information, for certain meetings, air travel, and social affairs.

The Daily Diary originally contained several gaps, up to three weeks in length, which usually corresponded to President Reagan's trips outside the Washington, DC area. The Diary also stopped completely in October 1988, apparently because the Diarist fell behind in compiling it. In order to fill the gaps, the Reagan Library has transferred to the Daily Diary selected documents from other collections within the Office of the Presidential Diary. The transferred materials consist of draft versions of logs and appendices, plus other documents containing the types of information generally found in the Daily Diary. With the additional materials, there are only a few days which are totally missing from the Daily Diary. However, documentation for many days, especially those which President Reagan spent at Camp David or Rancho del Cielo (his California ranch), remains sketchy. Furthermore, the Diary does not provide a complete list of participants for every event, and sometimes refers the reader to appendices which were never created.

For days without either final or draft logs, the primary Diary document is often a copy of the President's advance schedule that has handwritten notes, usually from Presidential aide Jim Kuhn, on events and event times as they actually occurred. Where the amount of handwriting has made such a schedule difficult to read, the Reagan Library has inserted a typed chronological chart based on the schedule and its notes.

II. THE PRESIDENT'S BLOCK SCHEDULES (Box 30)

This series consists of: copies of President Reagan's final monthly "block schedules" through December 1988; various marked and unmarked draft block schedules through January 1989; and overhead transparency copies for final block schedules through August 1983. The final block schedules, listing each day's planned activities in a monthly calendar format, were created after the corresponding months ended. Presidential Diarist Ellen McCathran supplied various information, such as actual event start times, for the final block schedules.

The block schedules carefully document President Reagan's scheduled activities in and around the White House. They provide little information on President Reagan's activities on overseas trips, at Camp David, or at Rancho del Cielo (his California ranch).

BOX FOLDER LIST: PRESIDENTIAL DIARY, OFFICE OF THE : THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY DIARY: RECORDS

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Box 30

[The President's Schedule - January 1981-December 1982]
[The President's Schedule - January 1983-December 1985]
[The President's Schedule - January 1986-July 1987]
[The President's Schedule - August 1987-December 1988]
[Transparencies of] The President's Schedule-1981
[Transparencies of] The President's Schedule-1982
[Transparencies of] The President's Schedule-[January-August] 1983