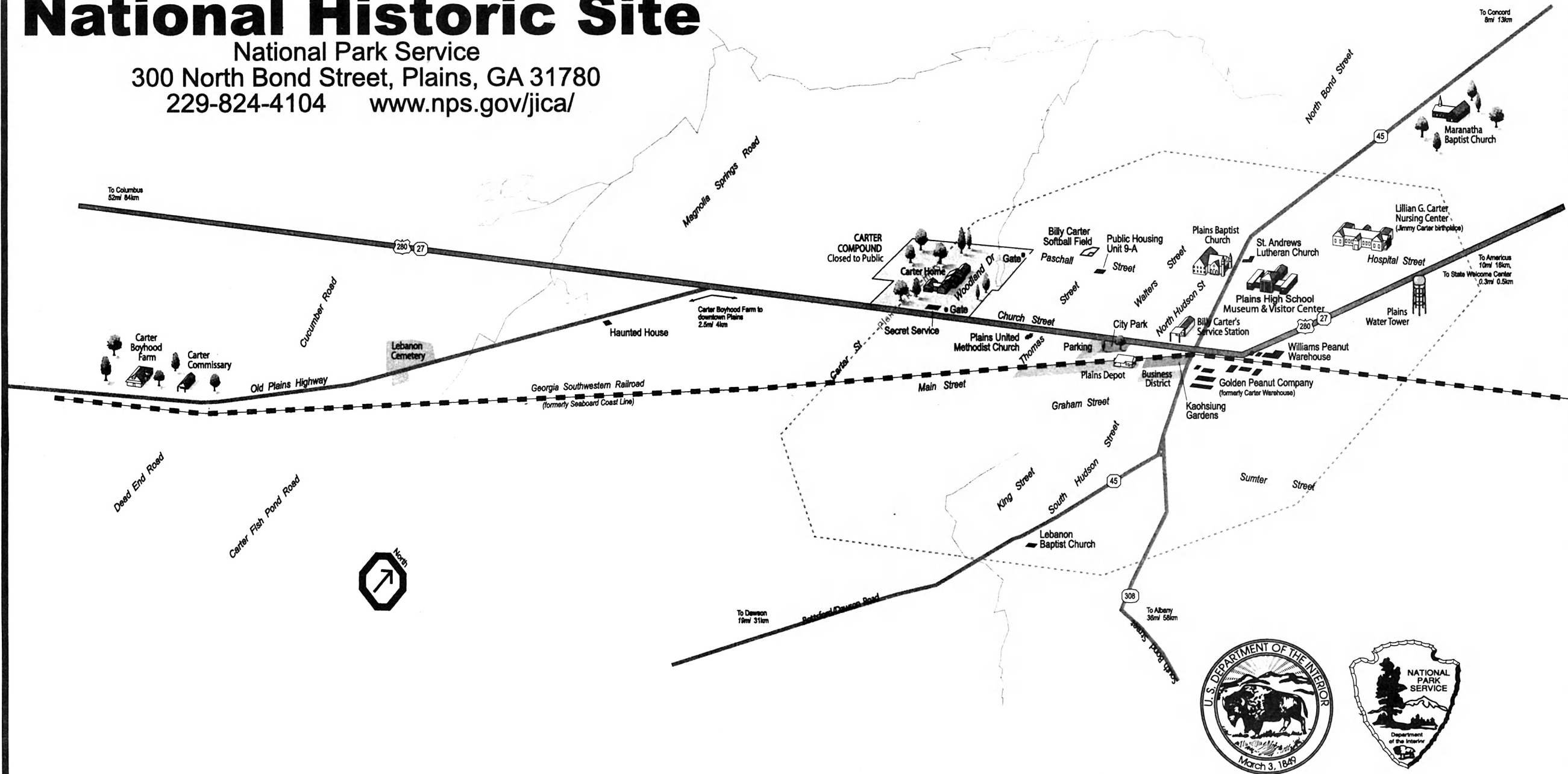


Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

National Park Service
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Touring Plains

In January 1977, an 18-car "Peanut Special" train departed from the railroad depot in Plains filled to capacity with supporters bound for the inauguration of the 39th President. Plains was no longer the obscure town of Carter's youth. Even before Jimmy Carter was elected President in 1976, the depot was in the spotlight as his campaign headquarters and backdrop for political speeches. The press set up a "T.V. City" of trailers and electronic equipment by the water tower. A campaign symbol in the form of a 10-foot "smiling" peanut appeared in town. After the election, the community of fewer than 700 drew several thousand visitors each day; souvenir shops and restaurants opened, and a state visitor center was built outside town. The Secret Service installed guard booths and security devices at the Woodland Drive home.

Despite all the changes that national attention has brought, Carter's hometown remains "a magnet that has always drawn me and Rosalynn back...in bright, happy times, also times when we were disappointed and distressed." Plains has done its best to maintain the atmosphere of a small, agricultural town. The railroad depot, along with Carter's boyhood farm, school, and current residence make up the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, established in 1987. Other buildings and areas are included in the surrounding preservation district.

Sites to Visit

Plains High School Museum and Visitor Center - (Open daily 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) Plains High School opened in 1921 and served students until 1979. It has a rich history of educators and a progressive curriculum. Graduates of this school have made tremendous contributions to Georgia, as well as the world. Notable graduates include President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Smith Carter. Plains High School now serves as the museum and visitor center of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site.

Plains Depot (1976 Campaign Headquarters) - (Open daily 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) The train depot served as the Presidential Campaign headquarters for Jimmy Carter. It now contains a self-guided museum detailing his grassroots campaign.

Boyhood Farm - (Open daily 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) The Carter farm reflects the background and influences that contributed to the development of President Carter's beliefs and personality. Jimmy Carter lived on the farm from 1928 until he departed for college in 1941.

(Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day)

Other Areas of Interest

Lebanon Cemetery - Earl and Lillian Carter are buried here, as are Jimmy's sister, Gloria, his brother, Billy, and several other family members.

Haunted House - The Carters and their three sons rented this house, living here from 1956 to 1961. Built in the 1850s, it is one of the oldest houses in the county. Generations of ghost stories have inspired its current name.

Plains United Methodist Church - While on leave from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1945, Jimmy Carter went on a date with his sister Ruth's best friend, Rosalynn Smith. Just after his graduation, the two were married at this church on July 7, 1946.

Public Housing Unit 9-A - "Not having any assured income," wrote Jimmy Carter about their return to Plains in 1953, "we applied for-and were assigned-an apartment in the new housing project in Plains." The Carters lived in the Dura Apartments for a year. The complex still provides public housing.

Plains Baptist Church - Jimmy Carter was a member of this church from childhood until he became President. He was baptized here as a young boy.

Maranatha Baptist Church - This church was established when the congregation of the Plains Baptist Church split in the 1970s. President Carter is an active member of the church and serves as a deacon and Sunday School teacher. President Carter has built furniture for the church and helps maintain the grounds.

Lillian G. Carter Nursing Center - This nursing center was formerly the Wise Sanitarium, one of the smallest hospitals accredited in Georgia. Lillian Gordy Carter began her nurse's training here and became a registered nurse. Her son, Jimmy, was born here on October 1, 1924.

Golden Peanut Company - Formerly the Carter Warehouse, this was the site of the family farm supply business. The company and its operating plant, as presently constituted, is the result of Jimmy Carter's assumption of the family business in 1953 and family ownership of the plant until its sale in 1981. Billy Carter was also active in the business.

Billy Carter's Service Station - Jimmy Carter's younger brother, Billy, owned and operated this gas station from 1972-1981. It was a popular place for visitors and members of the news media.

Carter Residence (Closed to public) - This ranch-style home was built in 1961. It is the only house that the Carters ever owned.

Business District - These brick commercial buildings were constructed in the 1890s. Downtown Plains remains relatively unchanged since Carter's youth.