

ARTIFACT CAPTIONS

artifact001.jpg

Chimes of Normandy

The Chimes of Normandy, 1937

This hand-carved clock case was built by twenty-year-old Ernestine Guerrero of San Antonio, Texas. Guerrero's family had received food assistance through the New Deal while her father, a carpenter, was unemployed. It took Guerrero a year to create this scroll-cut sculpture, titled *The Chimes of Normandy*. She used a kit pattern and wood she salvaged from the grocery boxes provided to her family. FDR was impressed with Guerrero's gift and put it on display in the Roosevelt Library.

MO 1941.4.8

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact002.jpg

Dutch Bible

Amsterdam, 1686

FDR took the oath of office on the Roosevelt family Bible—opened to a verse in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians:

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Roosevelt used this Bible at all four of his inaugurations.

MO 1942.99.3

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact003.jpg

Eleanor Roosevelt's Red Cross Uniform and Travel Purse

ca. 1943

Eleanor Roosevelt used this Red Cross uniform and travel purse during her 25,000 mile tour of the South Pacific in August-September, 1943 as a representative of the American Red Cross. The First Lady also wore a second uniform made of seersucker fabric during her trip.

MO 1971-40 (A&B)

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact004.jpg

Eleanor Roosevelt's Suitcase

Eleanor used this canvas suitcase during many of her far-flung travels during the 1950s and 1960s. She is carrying it at New York's LaGuardia Airport in the 1960 photograph above.

MO 1976.302

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact005.jpg

Eleanor Roosevelt's Typewriter

Ca. 1904-1905

Mrs. Roosevelt used this L.C. Smith Super Speed typewriter when working on books, articles, and newspaper columns at her Val-Kill home.

L 1971.43

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact006.jpg

FDR's 1936 Ford Phaeton

President Roosevelt's 1936 Ford Phaeton was specially outfitted for hand controlled braking and acceleration.

MO 1947-70-1

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact007.jpg

FDR's Campaign Hat

Roosevelt wore distinctive felt hats like this one during his four presidential campaigns. He used this "lucky" gray felt campaign hat in all four campaigns.

MO 1945.58.20

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact008.jpg

FDR's Oval Office Desk

Franklin Roosevelt used this desk and chair in the White House Oval Office throughout the 12 years he served as President of the United States. At this historic desk he signed the act creating the Tennessee Valley Authority, the declarations of war with Japan and Germany, the GI Bill and other landmark laws. Here he also met with national and world leaders and presided over eight hundred press conferences.

The desk was used previously by President Herbert Hoover. It was presented to Hoover by the Grand Rapids Furniture Manufacturer's Association in 1930. When Roosevelt took office amid the turmoil of the Great Depression he did not bother to change the office furnishings he inherited from his predecessor.

The mementos and knickknacks on the desk all belonged to FDR. Most were gifts from friends and admirers. They are arranged largely as they were at the time of his death. The touchscreen to your right contains information about all these items.

MO 1947.84.1

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact009.jpg

Hobby Horse

Franklin's Delano grandparents gave him this hobby horse when he was four years old. He named it "Mexico." It was later enjoyed by FDR's children and grandchildren.

MO 1946.33.1

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact010.jpg

Leg braces used by Franklin Roosevelt

Steel, leather

FDR could not stand without the support of leg braces like these. They were strapped to his legs and locked at the knee. These braces weigh approximately ten pounds. In order to appear to "walk" in public, Roosevelt used a cane and a strong companion's arm to support his weight while he pitched his body forward. This required skill and considerable upper body strength, developed through practice and exercise.

MO 1998.3a, b

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact011.jpg

Pince-nez (pinch nose) Spectacles

FDR used these distinctive pince-nez spectacles on Inauguration Day.

LHM 2010.5a-c

On loan from Henry Morgenthau III

artifact012.jpg

Radio Microphone

FDR used this RCA model 4-A-1 carbon condenser microphone to deliver some of his Fireside Chats from the White House. Early 1930s.

MO 1997.10

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact013.jpg

Sphinx

This papier-mache depiction of FDR as the Great Sphinx of Giza was created as a humorous commentary on the President's prolonged refusal to say whether he would run for a third term in 1940. It was the centerpiece for a satirical skit at the annual dinner of the Gridiron Club (the organization of White House correspondents) on December 8, 1939. Roosevelt attended the dinner as guest of honor.

The Sphinx sculpture was constructed by James D. Preston, former superintendent of the Senate Press Gallery. FDR was so delighted with the sculpture he had it shipped to the Roosevelt Library, where it was put on display in 1941.

MO 1941-12-40

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact014.jpg

Tiger Claw Jewelry Set

ca. 1880s

Tiger claws, gold

Eleanor treasured this jewelry because of its connection to her father. In 1881, Elliott Roosevelt hunted tigers in India and had their claws mounted as a gift to his mother. The jewelry eventually passed to Eleanor.

MO 1970.29a-g

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection

artifact015.jpg

Torah

This manuscript scroll of the Torah (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, which Christians call the Old Testament) was removed from a synagogue in Czechoslovakia for safekeeping after the 1938 Munich Crisis and brought secretly to the United States. The overwhelming majority of Czechoslovakia's Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. On March 14, 1939, the National Council of Young Israel presented it to President Roosevelt to "inspire thousands upon thousands of young people with deeper respect and reverence for the eternal values contained therein."

Under Jewish law, the sacred text of the Torah must be altered before it can be exhibited. A Jewish religious scribe (known as a sofer) has examined this Torah and confirmed that a portion of the sacred scroll was removed before it was given to FDR.

MO 1944.132.1

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Museum Collection