

# John F. Kennedy Massachusetts Connections



The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with the exception of Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

The Library is located in the Dorchester section of Boston, off Morrissey Boulevard, next to the campus of the University of Massachusetts/Boston. Parking is free.

There is free shuttle-service from the JFK/UMass  Stop on the Red Line. The Museum is fully handicapped accessible. For more information, call 866.JFK.1960 or visit [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org)

*“A man may die,  
nations may rise and fall,  
but an idea lives on.”*

*John F. Kennedy, 1963*

## JOHN F. KENNEDY

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

Columbia Point, Boston, MA 02125

[jfklibrary.org](http://jfklibrary.org)



**John Fitzgerald Kennedy** treasured his Irish ancestry and his Boston roots. He was proud to call Massachusetts his home.

The President's eight great-grandparents all migrated from Ireland to Boston, Massachusetts during the devastating Potato Famine of the late 1840's, seeking to take advantage of the economic opportunity offered in America. By the end of the century, both of President Kennedy's grandfathers had become successful Boston politicians. Patrick J. Kennedy was a tavern owner and later a banker who served in both Houses of the Massachusetts Legislature and was the political "boss" of a ward in Boston. John F. "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, a colorful politician who served in the Massachusetts State Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, was also mayor of Boston for three terms.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born in Brookline, Massachusetts on May 29, 1917. At the end of WWII, he returned to Massachusetts a decorated war hero, choosing to enter politics in the tradition of his two grandfathers. First elected to the U.S. Congress in 1946 and the United States Senate in 1952, JFK represented the citizens of Massachusetts for 14 years before being elected President of the United States on November 8, 1960.

In his farewell address to the citizens of Massachusetts before his inauguration as 35th President of the United States, President-elect John F. Kennedy spoke of his love for Massachusetts and its people to whom he felt deeply indebted for a lifetime of friendship and trust.

"And so it is that I carry with me from this state to that high and lonely office to which I now succeed more than fond memories of firm friendships," President-elect Kennedy said in a January 9, 1961 address at the State House. "The enduring qualities of Massachusetts – the common threads woven by the Pilgrim and the Puritan, the fisherman and the farmer, the Yankee and the immigrant – will not be and could not be forgotten in this nation's executive mansion. They are an indelible part of my life, my convictions, my view of the past, and my hopes for the future."

**John F. Kennedy**  
**Presidential Library and Museum**  
Columbia Point  
Boston, MA  
617.514.1600  
[www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org)



Located on a ten-acre waterfront park overlooking the city that launched him to greatness is the nation's official memorial to John Fitzgerald Kennedy. The spectacular waterfront site was chosen by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who also selected I.M. Pei as the architect to design the building. The Library was dedicated in 1979 by members of the President's family, including his wife Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and his children Caroline and John F. Kennedy Jr.

The Museum, one of Boston's most popular tourist attractions, features 25 multimedia exhibits and period settings from the White House, offering an exciting "you are there" experience and creating a stirring account of President Kennedy's thousand days in office.

Also housed at the Library are all the personal and public papers and artifacts of John F. Kennedy, his family, and members of his administration, making the Library one of the nation's most important resources for the study of mid-20th century American history.

**2** John F. Kennedy  
National Historic Site  
83 Beals Street  
Brookline, MA  
617.566.7937  
www.nps.gov/jofi

*Birthplace of  
the 35th President*

PHOTO BY JIM HIGGINS.  
COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,  
JOHN F. KENNEDY NHS



This historic site is the three-story, nine-room dwelling (c.1909) in which Joseph P. and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy established their first home in 1914. Here three of their first four children were born, including their second son John F. Kennedy on the afternoon of May 29, 1917. In 1967, the president's mother restored the birthplace to her recollection of its 1917 appearance, which includes the bed in which the president was born, his bassinet, and the piano on which he took lessons. Designated a National Historic Landmark, the house is maintained by the National Park Service and is open to the public for Ranger-guided tours from May – October, Wednesday - Sunday.

**3** Kennedy Family Home  
51 Abbottsford Road  
Brookline, MA



Joseph and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy moved their growing family to these more spacious quarters nearby on the northeast corner of Abbottsford and Naples Road in 1920. Eunice, Patricia, and Robert were all born in the house. Built in 1897, the home is located in the Graffam-McKay National Register Historic District. The home is private and not open to the public and we ask that you be considerate of their property and privacy. In 1927, the Kennedy family left Brookline and moved to Riverdale in the Bronx, New York.

**4** St. Aidan's Church  
201 Freeman Street  
Brookline, MA



The nation's first Irish-Catholic President was baptized on June 19, 1917 in Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, located just a short distance from the two houses where the Kennedy family lived. The church was designed by Maginnis and Walsh, recipients of several American Institute of Architect's medals. Following its sale by the Boston Archdiocese in 2003, St. Aidan's became part of a mixed income residential complex which retains the historic church building and courtyard. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**5** Edward Devotion School  
345 Harvard Street  
Brookline, MA



JFK attended Edward Devotion Elementary School, a Brookline public school, from kindergarten in 1921 until the beginning of 3rd grade. The school was founded in 1894 and named after Edward Devotion (1667–1744), who bequeathed money to the town for education. Devotion's 17th century house stands in the school's forecourt and is operated by the Brookline Historical Society. The middle section of the school (behind the Devotion House) is the only section remaining from John F. Kennedy's time.

**6** Harvard University  
Cambridge, MA



In the fall of 1936, JFK followed a family tradition and entered Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. As a freshman he lived in Weld Hall and then went on to Winthrop House. Today the rooms JFK occupied in Winthrop House at Harvard are called the “Kennedy Suite” and are used by the Kennedy School of Government to house guest speakers. In 1940, JFK graduated from Harvard with honors. His senior thesis, about the tensions in Europe, would later become the best-selling book, *Why England Slept*. JFK was awarded an honorary doctorate of law from Harvard in 1956. Student-led tours of Harvard are available by visiting [www.Harvard.edu/Visitors](http://www.Harvard.edu/Visitors) or by calling Trademark Tours at 617.674.7788.

**7** Spee Club at Harvard  
76 Mount Auburn Street  
Cambridge, MA



A beautiful brick building houses the Spee Club, one of Harvard’s all-male, final social clubs. Members have meals, relax, socialize and study at the Spee Club, and JFK wrote many letters using his Spee Club stationery. Robert F. Kennedy was also a Spee Club member. In 1962, the Spee Club commissioned one of its members, artist William F. Draper, to paint what is one of only three Kennedy portraits painted from life. He is depicted wearing the Spee Club tie. The Spee Club has loaned this portrait to the Kennedy Presidential Library, where it now hangs in the President’s Room.

**8** The Institute of Politics  
Harvard University  
79 John F. Kennedy Street  
Cambridge, MA  
[www.iop.harvard.edu](http://www.iop.harvard.edu)



The John F. Kennedy Institute of Politics (IOP) was created to serve as a living memorial to President John F. Kennedy and inspire Harvard students towards careers in politics and public service. Following President Kennedy’s death in 1963, the Kennedy Library Corporation raised more than \$20 million for both the construction of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, and for the creation and endowment of an institute at Harvard for the study of politics and public affairs. In 1966, the Kennedy Library Corporation presented Harvard University with an endowment for the creation of the Institute of Politics.

**9** JFK Park  
Cambridge, MA



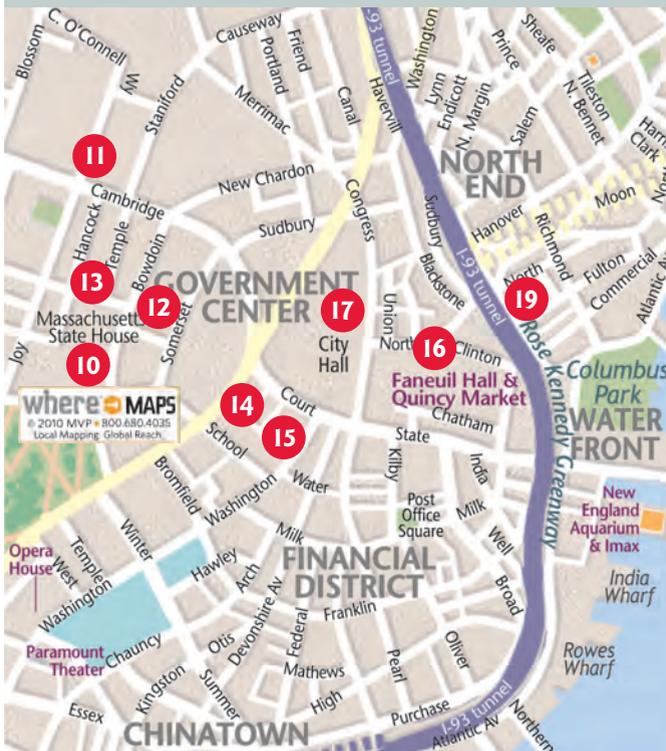
The John F. Kennedy Park was created as a memorial to the former president. It is located at the corner of Memorial Drive and John F. Kennedy Street across from the Charles River. This multi-acre site has been beautifully landscaped and is in its glory in May with plants that bloom around the anniversary of JFK’s May 29th birthday. Stone pillars at the park’s entrance have memorable words from JFK carved into the stone. A fountain, which symbolizes JFK’s love for the sea, is also inscribed with his quotes. The park is free and open to the public.

## Maps and Locations

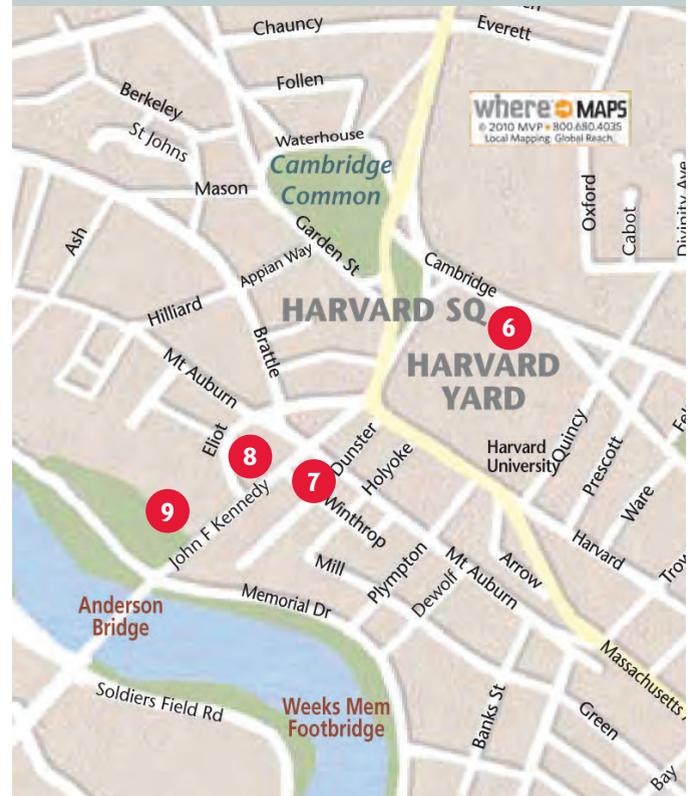
### Brookline, Massachusetts



### Downtown, Boston, Massachusetts

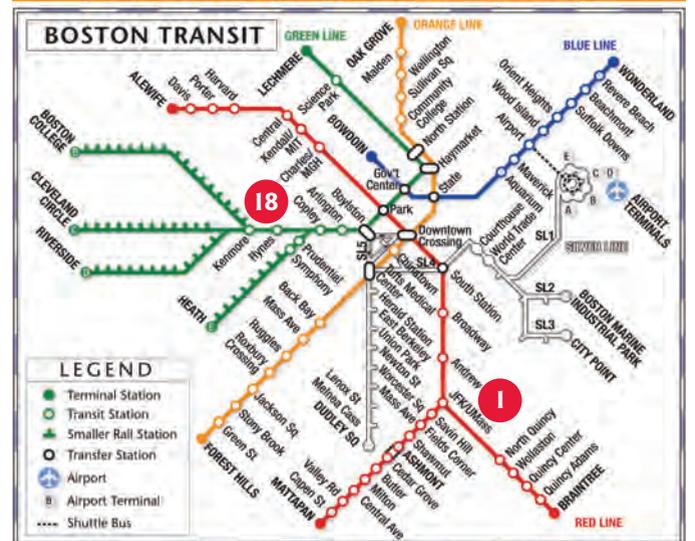


### Cambridge, Massachusetts



MBTA

### MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY



**10** Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA  
www.sec.state.ma.us



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President-elect John F. Kennedy delivered his memorable “City Upon a Hill” speech to a joint session of the Massachusetts legislature in the State House on January 9, 1961. While he never served at the State House, his grandfather P.J. (Patrick Joseph) Kennedy served five consecutive one-year terms in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, followed by three two-year terms in the state senate. JFK’s maternal grandfather, John F. “Honey Fitz” Fitzgerald, was elected to a two-year term in the Massachusetts Senate in 1892. On May 29, 1990, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts dedicated a bronze statue of a youthful JFK in mid-stride, hand in his suit jacket pocket. The statue is located outside the West Wing. State House tours are available by calling 617.727.3676. Tours run Monday-Friday, 10am-3:30pm. But call ahead before you go.

**11** Old West Church  
131 Cambridge St  
Boston, MA



On the chilly Election Day morning of November 8, 1960, John F. Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy cast their ballots in the basement of the West End Branch of the Boston Public Library, which today is the Old West Church. The 200 year-old Federal-style building was designed in 1806 by architect Asher Benjamin.

**12** Old Hotel Bellevue  
21 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA



When John F. Kennedy decided in 1946 to run for the congressional seat once held by his grandfather John “Honey Fitz” Fitzgerald, he moved to Boston and rented a two-room suite in the old Hotel Bellevue, down the hall from Honey Fitz. The building at 21 Beacon St. is now private housing, but the hotel name remains engraved above the doorway and detailed stonework and ornate iron balconies adorn the exterior.

**13** JFK’s Official Boston Residence  
122 Bowdoin Street  
Boston, MA

PHOTO CREDIT: DOUGLAS JAMES/LOOK



On the east side of the State House is 122 Bowdoin Street, the site of JFK’s official Boston residence. Apartment 36, his two bedroom apartment located on the third floor, served as



JFK’s headquarters for his congressional campaign and his registered voting address when he served in Congress and when he resided at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

PHOTO CREDIT: DOUGLAS JAMES/LOOK

#### 14 Omni Parker House

60 School Street  
Boston, MA  
617.227.8600  
[www.OmniHotels.com/Boston](http://www.OmniHotels.com/Boston)



The Parker House, located on the corner of Tremont and School Street, is the longest continuously operating hotel in the United States. It was here where generations of local and national politicians gathered for private meetings, press conferences and power breakfasts, including JFK's maternal grandfather, Boston Mayor John "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald. In 1923, when JFK was 6 years old, it is said that he made his first public speech at the Parker House. He was coached by Clement Norton to say "This is the best grandfather a child ever had" at a party for "Honey Fitz." While it is better known as the birthplace of the Boston cream pie and Parker House rolls, the hotel is where JFK announced his run for U.S. Congress in 1946 and where he held his bachelor party in 1953.

#### 15 Old City Hall

45 School Street  
Boston, MA



Old City Hall, built between 1862 and 1865, is located between the Old South Meeting House and King's Chapel. Thirty-eight Boston mayors, including John F. Kennedy's grandfather, John F. "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, and James Michael Curley, served their terms of office at this site over a period of 128 years. In 1906, Fitzgerald was elected Mayor of Boston, becoming the first American-born Irish-Catholic to be elected to that office. Fitzgerald served as mayor of Boston from 1906 to 1908, was defeated for re-election, but returned to the office again from 1910 to 1914. After city government moved to the current Boston City Hall in 1969, Old City Hall was converted to serve other functions.

#### 16 Faneuil Hall

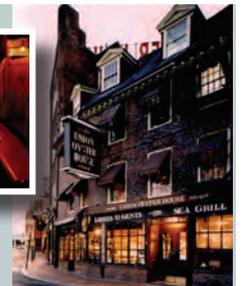
Congress Street  
Boston, MA



Faneuil Hall was the site of JFK's final campaign speech on November 7, 1960, a one-hour nationally televised address. In 1742, Boston's wealthiest merchant, Peter Faneuil, as a gift to the city, built Faneuil Hall. The edifice was home to merchants, fishermen, and meat and produce sellers, and provided a platform for the country's most famous orators. It is where colonists first protested the Sugar Act in 1764 and established the doctrine of "no taxation without representation." Firebrand Samuel Adams rallied the citizens of Boston to the cause of independence from Great Britain in the hallowed hall, and George Washington toasted the nation there on its first birthday. Through the years Faneuil Hall has played host to many impassioned speakers, from Oliver Wendall Holmes and Susan B. Anthony to President Bill Clinton and Senator Edward Kennedy, always living up to its nickname, "The Cradle of Liberty."

#### 17 Ye Olde

Union Oyster House  
41 Union Street  
Boston, MA  
617.227.2750  
[www.unionoysterhouse.com](http://www.unionoysterhouse.com)



While serving in Congress from the 11th Massachusetts District beginning in 1946, John F. Kennedy lived in Apartment 36 at the Bellevue Hotel beside the State House, which served as his legal voting address. The bachelor congressman spent Sunday afternoons at Table 18 of the nearby Union Oyster House eating lobster stew and reading the newspapers, a custom memorialized by a small plaque in the booth. Union Oyster House is the oldest continuously operating restaurant in America and opened in 1826. The restaurant has only had three owners and has been run by the Milano family since 1970.

**18** Fenway Park  
4 Yawkey Way  
Boston, MA  
[www.redsox.com](http://www.redsox.com)



Fenway Park, home to the beloved Boston Red Sox, has Kennedy history of its own. In 1912 John F. “Honey Fitz” Fitzgerald, Mayor of Boston, threw out the inaugural pitch at the Boston

Red Sox new ball park, Fenway Park, and again at the 1912 World Series game at Fenway. Then in April 1946 a 28-year-old John F. Kennedy was at Fenway Park and posed for a photo with Hank Greenberg, Ted Williams and rookie Eddie Pellagrini during a game against Detroit. In the days following that photo, Kennedy would make his debut into politics and announce his candidacy for the US Congress. Tours of Fenway Park are available 7 days a week, by calling 617.226.6666.

**19** Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy  
Greenway  
Boston, MA  
617.292.0020  
[www.rosekennedygreenway.org](http://www.rosekennedygreenway.org)



The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway is a ribbon of parkland that curves around the city of Boston in a mile long path connecting several neighborhoods. It is dedicated to the memory of John F. Kennedy’s mother, Rose, the family matriarch. In a bit of irony, the greenway supplanted the elevated highway that was named in honor of her father. Experience the entire Greenway on foot by starting at either Chinatown Park in the south or at the North End Parks.

JFK Hyannis Museum  
Hyannis, MA  
508.790.3077  
[www.jfkhyannismuseum.org](http://www.jfkhyannismuseum.org)



The John F. Kennedy Hyannis Museum is a multimedia exhibit designed to open a window on the days JFK spent on Cape Cod. The exhibit features over 80 photographs spanning the years 1934 to 1963 and is arranged in thematic groupings to reflect John F. Kennedy, his family, his friends and the Cape Cod he so dearly loved. In addition to photography, a video narrated by Walter Cronkite depicts the president’s experiences on the Cape.

Cape Cod National Seashore  
[www.nps.gov/caco](http://www.nps.gov/caco)



On August 7, 1961, just 7 months after President Kennedy was elected to office, he signed a bill authorizing the establishment of the Cape Cod National Seashore. A long-time summer resident of the Cape, JFK had co-sponsored the legislation while in the Senate. The goal, he wrote, was “to preserve the natural and historic values of a portion of Cape Cod for the inspiration and enjoyment of people all over the United States.” Today the Seashore encompasses more than 43,000 acres and draws more than 4,000,000 visitors a year.