



## Face of Fillmore

*By Sherry Shepard*  
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Millard Fillmore, the thirteenth President of the United States, will be forever connected to the Face of Fillmore because of his name. Early on in the history of our area, politicians proposed that the county and city be named after the President apparently in hopes of swaying him toward Utah becoming a state. Those attempts were unsuccessful, as Utah did not achieve statehood until more than forty years later.

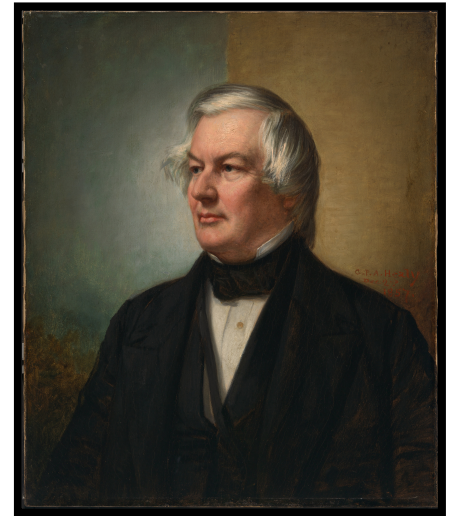
The date 1851, the year Fillmore was settled, has another interesting connection to Millard Fillmore. It was in that year that the President had a bathtub installed in the White House. This improvement was not without controversy as many people believed that submersing oneself in hot water was an unhealthy practice. Unhealthy or not, it helped relieve the stress of being Commander in Chief.

Fillmore was also known for two other improvements to the presidential home - a library (possibly so he could read in the bathtub) and a kitchen stove.

One of the more famous White House myths about bathtubs tells about William Howard Taft, the 27th President. Taft holds a unique position in American political history. As President of the United States and 10<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, he is the only person to have served in the highest office in both the executive and judicial branches of our government. Taft was also the largest man to ever serve in either office. Unfortunately, a White House legend tells of how it took six of the strongest men on White House grounds to get him out of the bathtub when he became stuck there one day. Rumors were rampant that it took a large amount of butter to help grease his way out.



William Howard Taft - 1909



Millard Fillmore

The oldest known bath was discovered in the early 1900s in the Indus Valley in Pakistan and dates back to 2500 B.C. It sat on a great mound and was a sacred site and the closest thing to a temple. The Great Bath, as it is known, occupied the highest mound in the 250-acre city. Archeologists believe that bathing and cleanliness was associated with godliness in the ancient civilization. At the same time, bathing was a religious ritual it was connected to the healing waters of rivers. The Greeks and Romans were really the key drivers behind the popularity of bathing as recreation. Baths

became an experience that was open to all. Rich and poor alike would pour into the great Roman baths to cleanse and relax. Bathing in 300 B.C. a way to socialize and women and men bathed together. Roman baths had a reception room, which led to three different bathrooms that had waters that were hot, warm, and cold. Thanks to the Crusades, the popularity of bathing spread all over the ancient world.

Many baths sprouted up around thermal hot springs that bubbled up from the earth. The famed Hungarian baths began this way and continue to be a public bathing spot today.

Bathing fell out of fashion in European countries as a result of the spread of diseases. By the time the first settlers arrived came to the shores of the Americas, they believed that merely changing their undergarments on a regular basis was sufficient. Native American tried to convince them otherwise, but they did not listen. At the time, the colonists believed submerging one's body in water weakened the immune system.

Looking to more modern time, the first private bathtub was installed in a private home around 1842 in the United States.

Luckily, the bathtub is now considered a necessity in all homes.