

● **1925: Margaret Hilda Roberts** born October 13, in Grantham, Lincolnshire, daughter of grocer

● **1944-50:** Attends **Somerville College, Oxford**, gaining degree in chemistry. Work as research chemist includes helping develop first soft frozen ice cream

● **1950-51:** Stands as youngest woman Conservative candidate in safe Labour seat of Dartford, but loses in two elections. Marries wealthy businessman **Denis Thatcher**

● **1953:** Qualifies as barrister, specialising in tax issues. Twins **Carol** and **Mark** born

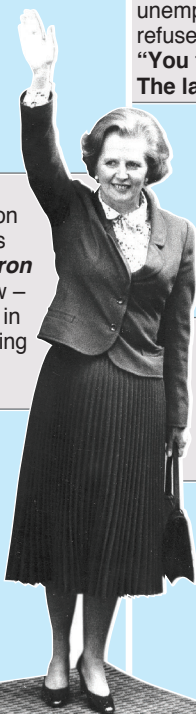
● **1959:** Enters parliament as Conservative MP for Finchley

● **1970-74:** Secretary of State for Education and Science in **Edward Heath's** government – decision to abolish free milk in schools provokes storm of protest

● **1974-75:** Following two general election defeats, Thatcher challenges Heath for party leadership, and wins. Heath never forgives “that woman”

● **1976:** Scathing attack in speech on Soviet Union sees her nicknamed “**Iron Lady**” by Moscow – Thatcher delights in image of unwavering and steadfast character

● **May 4, 1979:** Conservatives returned to power following winter of severe industrial unrest. Margaret Thatcher becomes UK's first woman Prime Minister



Margaret Thatcher – Britain's Iron Lady turns 80



● **1980:** As UK slides into recession government policy is blamed for soaring unemployment. Thatcher refuses to make U-turn – “You turn if you want to. The lady's not for turning”

● **1981:** Thatcher begins programme of privatisation of state-run industries. By end of decade privatisation adopted in over 50 countries globally

● **1982:** Jobless total reaches 3.6 million. Argentina invades Falklands – Thatcher sends task force to recapture islands

● **1983:** Despite unrest in UK inner cities and ongoing violence in Northern Ireland, “**Falklands Factor**” sweeps Thatcher to second, landslide election victory

● **1984: “Handbags”** European Community colleagues to agree to slash Britain's share of EC budget. Collapse of year-long **Miners' Strike** signals turning point in UK politics, significantly curtailing power of militant trade unions



Thatcher escapes IRA assassination attempt in Brighton hotel – five people killed

● **1985:** First Western leader to support reformist Soviet leader **Mikhail Gorbachev**, declaring, “**We can do business together**”

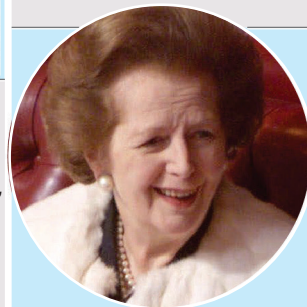
● **1986:** Supports U.S. bombing raid on Libya from bases in UK

● **1987:** Re-elected with slightly reduced majority

● **1988:** Speech outlining opposition to increasing federalisation of European Community, specifically **Economic and Monetary Union**, causes outcry

● **1989:** Popularity again declines as economy suffers from high interest rates. Introduces deeply unpopular “**Community Charge**” – better known as **Poll Tax**

● **1990, Mar:** Poll Tax riot in London. **Aug:** Pressures U.S. President **George H. W. Bush** to deploy troops to drive Iraq out of Kuwait – famously telling him it is “**no time to go wobbly!**” **Oct:** Reluctantly agrees to join European **Exchange Rate Mechanism** in preparation for monetary union. **Nov:** Thatcher challenged for Tory leadership – resigns after failing to win automatic re-elect



● **1992:** Resigns as MP, enters House of Lords as **Baroness Thatcher**

● **1998:** Pays controversial visit to former Chilean dictator **Augusto Pinochet**, under house arrest in Britain facing charges of torture and conspiracy to murder

● **2002:** Advised by doctors to make no more public speeches, having suffered several small strokes

● **2004:** Attends funeral of former U.S. President and close ally, **Ronald Reagan**

● **2005, Jun:** Appointed to **Order of the Garter**, UK's highest order of chivalry. **October 13:** Celebrates 80th birthday