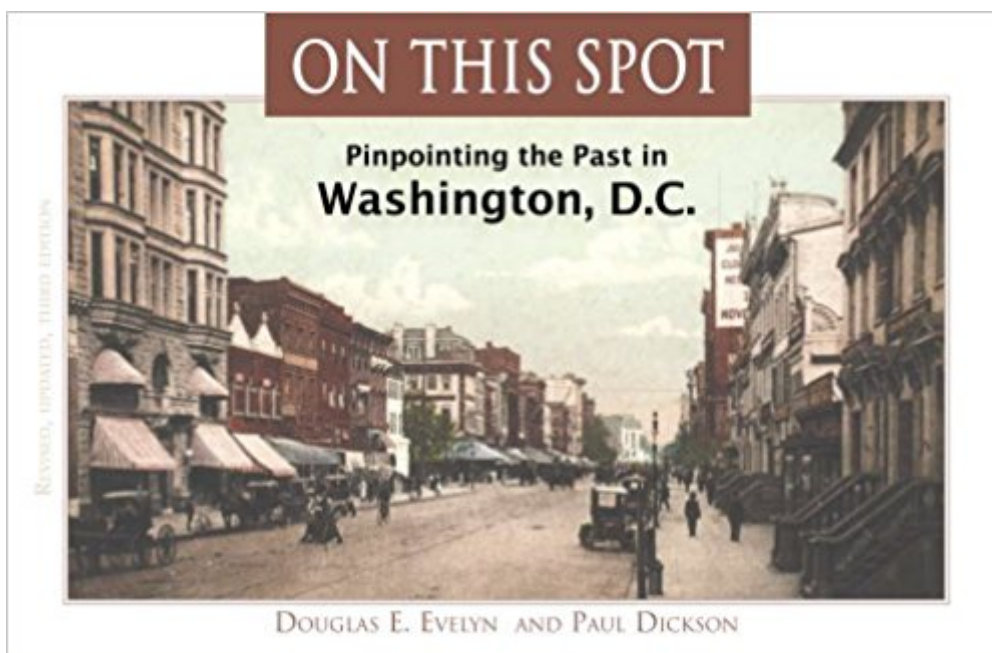


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On This Spot: Pinpointing The Past In Washington DC (Capital Travels)



Synopsis

Now for a new generation of DC residents and visitorsâa celebration of Washington, DC, its history, people, and neighborhoodsâthrough fascinating archival photos and lively accounts. This is not a standard guidebook. Itâs a book that carries you back in time to meet the men and women who built and developed our Nationâs Capitalânot just the political types, but also the spies, murderers, bartenders, and writers. Stand on the spots where they stood when historic events took place, like the Fort McNair tennis courts, the historic spot where the Lincoln assassination conspirators were hanged. See the now august buildings and landscapes through the historical perspective of the rough, dirty, unhealthy place Washington once was. Neighborhood by neighborhood and using the 19 illustrated maps in *On This Spot*, you can travel through Washington, DCâs history on your own. Features the sites where:

- * Important events took place*
- Famous people from American history lived, worked, and died*
- DCâs changing neighborhoods*
- Buildings that have been lost and those that have been saved

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Customer Reviews

Witty and readable . . . this book will delight all those who like their history made both entertaining and accessible. (The Washington Post). . . a wonderful source of historical information for the browser as well as a travelerâs goldmine. (Library Journal). . . thousands of fanciful facts . . . Thereâs a whole city out there to discover. (Washington City Paper) The enlarged and revised third edition of the city's only historic guidebook has just been published by Capital Books. It is a

celebration of Washington's history that invites you to stand on the exact spot where history was made. The tennis courts at Fort McNair, for example, were where the Lincoln assassination conspirators were hanged. Neighborhood by neighborhood and using the 19 illustrated maps and more than 100 evocative photos "On This Spot" carries the reader back in time to meet the men and women who built and developed our nation's capital - not just the statesmen and politicians, but also the spies, murderers, bartenders and writers. You might need an extra copy of this classic for your guest bedroom. (The Washington Times)

PAUL DICKSON is a full-time freelance writer living in Garrett Park, Md. He has written or co-authored more than 45 books, including two recent books on American history both set primarily in Washington: *Sputnik: The Shock of the Century* and *The Bonus Army* "An American Epic (with Thomas B. Allen). DOUGLAS E. EVELYN retired in 2005 after 36 years at the Smithsonian where he served consecutively as deputy director of the National Portrait Gallery, American History, and American Indian museums. He's been a student of Washington history since his arrival in the city in 1963, and is currently a museum consultant and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Good quick reference for historic places in DC

This guide to the historical landmarks of D.C. succeeds in presenting a thoroughly unique viewpoint of the city and its long and colorful history. Through an entertaining combination of anecdotes about and images of historical sites -- both existing and long gone -- each destination has its own story, ranging from the political to the criminal. Dividing the city by neighborhood, rather than into walking paths, this portable little book is indispensable for anyone interested in the history behind the geography. From stories about the lack of plumbing in the White House to descriptions of Murder Bay, the red-light district and slum that became Federal Triangle in the 1920s, this account entertains and educates in snippets any resident or tourist can handle. I perused the first edition, published in 1992, but the most recent edition was released in 2008. As a D.C. bibliophile, it should be no surprise that the entries that caught my attention were literary in nature. I am including a list of some of my favorites, but don't just listen to me -- check this book out for yourself! Bookstores... In 1801, one of the first bookstores in D.C. was opened by Daniel Rapine at Jersey and Independence Aves., SE. The Aurora Bookstore, another early establishment in operation from 1801-7, was operated by William Duane, a newspaper editor, at Pennsylvania Ave. and 6th St.,

NW.Libraries...The first library in D.C. was established in 1812 on Pennsylvania Ave. and 13th St., NW, where the International Trade Center building currently resides. It was open for two hours on two days of the week, for shareholders only. The city's main public library from 1903 to the late 1960s, given by Andrew Carnegie, was housed in a building located on New York Avenue, between 6th and 9th Sts., NW.Publishers...In 1847, The National Era abolitionist newspaper was established near 7th St. and F St., NW. The press serialized a story by Harriet Beecher Stowe that later appeared as the book Uncle Tom's Cabin.Authors...While working as a Civil War nurse, Walt Whitman lived in various boarding houses in the District, particularly in Northwest at addresses such as at M St., L St., and 15th St.One of the nation's most popular and quoted stories in the late nineteenth century, "Man without a Country," was penned by Edward Everett Hale at the Tabard Inn, on 1739 N St., NW.Sinclair Lewis lived at 1814 16th St., NW, from 1919 to 1920, while he completed Main Street.E.D.E.N. Southworth, a popular romance novelist, lived at 13th and C Sts., SW, before moving to 36th and Prospect Sts., NW -- later the location of the 1973 movie "The Exorcist."...Oh My!!! Paul Dickson is a full-time freelance writer living in Garrett Park, Maryland. He has written or co-authored more than forty-five books, including two recent books on American history both set primarily in Washington, D.C.: Sputnik: The Shock of the Century and The Bonus Army: An American Epic (with Thomas B. Allen). Douglas E. Evelyn retired in 2005 after nearly four decades at the Smithsonian. He is currently a museum consultant and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Indispensable.So many of us come to this city from elsewhere. So many of us stay, for reasons other than its charm. Where you lived before you came here, you knew, for example, why there was a Van Wyck Expressway and how to pronounce it, who Harry Van Arsdale was.Once here you have to learn about Foxhall Road and Constitution Avenue. Why Foggy Bottom is Foggy Bottom and why the Watergate Hotel is so named. There is no better way to do so than reading Evelyn and Dickson's book. It is a way to instant "roots."Coming from anywhere in America you know of the monuments here; the granite, the marble, the glass edifices erected to our nation's heroes. They are in this book, yes. But, more importantly, something else.The poet James Fenton offers this, about another country:It is not what they built. It is what they knocked down.It is not the houses. It is the spaces between the houses.It is not the streets that exist. It is the streets that no longer exist.And this is true, too, of our nation's capital. The federal buildings will remain lighted at night and open to tourists during the days.But the Knickerbocker Theater at 18th Street and Columbia Road NW lasts only in photographs and words. "Get Rich Quick Wallingford" the showgoers were watching in 1922

when the roof collapsed under snow and 98 people died. The tents of the "Bonus Army" are long gone. Twenty thousand veterans camped by the Anacostia River asking for the government-promised payment for their services in the Great War. These veterans were literally burned out by their soldier-successors, Patton, MacArthur, and Eisenhower. Nothing of their encampment remains. (And now on this spot the Newsmuseum.) The Chinese legation occupied Senator William Stewart's castle at Connecticut Ave. and Dupont Circle. In 1901 the castle was razed; the Chinese remain, but their embassy is now on Wisconsin Avenue near the Naval Observatory. Evelyn and Dickson also note that Chinatown itself moved. Imagine that. The whole of it, when the government began buying up property for the federal courthouse. This is a book for browsers, for walkers, for anyone who wants to know the guts and sinew of D.C. as well as its advertised charms. Note that the new edition is greatly expanded and that the maps are hugely improved, more detailed and with numbers on each street and avenue correlating to the text descriptions. The photographs too are wisely chosen, many of them from the authors' collections. Many will find the one of Klanswomen on Pennsylvania Avenue where Barack Obama just strode to the White House and the view of swimmers at a "white's only" beach at the site where the Jefferson Memorial is now particularly instructive. I take this book down often from the shelf. I cannot recommend it more highly. greenman, Garrett Park, MD

ON THIS SPOT is a wonderful reference for the newcomer, inaugural visitor, tourist, or D.C. resident. This handy-sized volume helps the visitor to peel away the layers of the city, to discover the stories and scandals underneath the facade of monuments and museums we all recognize. Full of wonderful primary source materials, this book is a great guide to the different sections of the city, organized with a map for each section that pinpoints the stories and photographs that are discussed. As a newcomer to Washington, I am using it to explore the city a section at a time, a very enriching experience. As I stood in the magnificent space that is the Building Museum, I could visualize the incredible scene of frozen canaries falling to the dance floor during Grover Cleveland's first inaugural ball (p.127). Stories like these bring history alive. I will also use it as a resource for my school library and share it with my teaching staff. This kind of writing encourages us all to ask the next question and look behind the facade. It is great fun and my new best gift for visitors to Washington D.C.

I ordered this book after hearing an interview with the author on my local NPR show. Right away, I learned things about the block I live on. What would I change? I'd add an index. I like to pick up this

book and read about particular areas, not read the book from cover to cover. But it's hard to find exactly what I'm looking for without an index (the table of contents has very few details). You'll enjoy the book!

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