This is a book about community, written by a community.

Here are authors who share a fascination with small urban places and understand their value, supported by librarians, archivists, and neighborhood residents eager to share pictures and tell stories about the neighborhoods they and their families have called home. We have in common a love of the city and a deep appreciation for those who keep its history. Seen from my perspective as editor, this is an extraordinary network of individuals doing important work for Washington, D.C.

While a version of Washington at Home was published in 1988, this is a new book. There are new chapters: Barry Farm / Hillsdale, Columbia Heights, Congress Heights, Kenilworth, the Palisades, and Wesley Heights / Spring Valley. There is also a new chapter under a revived historical name, East Washington Heights, that includes Fort Dupont, Hillcrest, Penn Branch, and Randle Highlands. Other chapters have been updated and revised, most by the original authors. Sadly, Ruth Ann Overbeck and Marvin Caplan, two of the original authors, have passed away. We miss them greatly and are dedicating this volume to their memories. Their work remains, however, updated by others. Another innovation is the addition of reference notes, making the new edition a better tool for researchers as well as a good read for the layperson. Finally, most of the illustrations are new, with a special emphasis on maps that place the stories in space as well as in time.

Thanks first and foremost go to all to the authors, who, in the midst of busy lives, made time for this project. I have learned from all of them, have been thankful for their patience with seemingly endless questions, and have been grateful for the care they have taken to get it right.

Orchestrating this effort would not have been possible without a team of other extraordinary people who volunteered their time. Thanks to Jane Levey, my consulting editor, who has been my colleague in Washington history for decades on many projects, and whose depth of knowledge of the city and sensitivity to its nuances make her advice and thoughtful editing invaluable. Anne Rollins signed on as a photo researcher and copy editor and became my sidekick and solace; she never gave up trying to correct an obscure reference or to find a picture we knew was there — somewhere. Thanks also to Larry Bowring for his expertise and his patience in producing the sometimes challenging contemporary maps, and to Rick Reinhard who went back again and again until satisfied he had captured the essence of a place in his photographs. Rick Busch and Marilyn Newton chased down information, looked for photos, and were always ready to take a call. While this team is key to the success of this book, I take responsibility for any mistakes that remain despite all our careful work.
This edition of *Washington at Home* is sponsored by Cultural Tourism DC. The coalition of more than two hundred District cultural and neighborhood organizations was formed in 1999 to help residents and visitors find and experience the historical and cultural attractions that lie not only on the National Mall but also throughout the neighborhoods of our residential city. Its work, particularly on the development of marked neighborhood heritage trails and walking tours, has also inspired and encouraged interest in neighborhood historical research on the part of residents and scholars alike. The staff of Cultural Tourism DC was also always ready to help, especially Mara Cherkasky and Erinn Roos.

I speak for all the authors in expressing our deep gratitude to those who keep the city’s historical records. Their gracious help with our requests often came with inspired suggestions that led to treasures we never would have found otherwise. Staff and volunteers at the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., have been particularly helpful, including Kiplinger Library director Yvonne Carignan, special collections librarian Colleen McKnight, reference librarian Lida Churchville, and volunteers Elizabeth Ratigan and Jack Brewer. We offer a very special tribute to the late Richard F. “Dick” Evans, the full-time HSW volunteer who had just finished his brilliant and dedicated help with photographs for this book when illness took him too suddenly from us in the summer of 2008. Everyone who knew him feels that loss deeply. Readers of the notes will see how much our authors have drawn on the scholarship published in the *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* (the society’s former name) and its successor, *Washington History*.

We are all equally indebted to the staff in the Washingtoniana Division of the DC Public Library, led by Karen Blackman-Mills—another gold mine of information on Washington and its communities. Faye Haskins time and again helped track down photographs from its huge collections; Jerry McCoy and Mark Greek were always helpful. Thanks go also to Joellen ElBashir and Donna Wells of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University, and Clifford L. Muse, university archivist. David Haberstich and Kay Peterson assisted us in using the outstanding collection of photographs by the Scurlock Studio in the Archives Center at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History. David Anderson, author of the Foggy Bottom chapter and, at that time, head of the Special Collections Division of the Gelman Library at George Washington University, helped with images from that collection. The staff of the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress is always a tremendous resource for Washington historians.


The D.C. Office of Historic Preservation has sponsored extensive research on Wash-
ington’s historic districts that has enriched the work of many of the authors. Steve Callcott of that office was always ready to help, as were others, in particular Amanda Molson.

Individuals throughout the city have searched for photographs for us in their personal or institutional collections, often sharing our excitement when just the right image appeared. Our thanks go to Lavinia Wohlfarth of the Brookland Community Development Corporation; Ian Richardson at the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church; Lynn Turner of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms at the State Department; Christian Minter at the Fort Dupont Ice Arena; Liz Whisnant of Horace Mann Elementary School; Heather Riggins of the Kiplinger Washington Collection; Carter Bowman and Janet Ricks of Mount Zion United Methodist Church; Ron Harvey, Debbie Kirkley, Stephen W. Syphax, and Sam Tamburro of the National Park Service; Tom Jacobus and Patricia Gamby at the Washington Aqueduct; Liza Lorenz of the Shakespeare Theatre Company; James Goode, curator of the Albert H. Small Collection; Rabbi Ethan Seidel, Marcia Goldman, and Carl Bergman of Tifereth Israel Congregation; Sherman Fleck of the U.S. Army; and Bill Rice, who did photo research for the first edition of this book.

We are also grateful to all the individuals who have provided photographs from their private collections; they are noted in the picture credits. We particularly want to pay tribute to Robert A. Truax, who generously shared his photo collection with so many of us over the years. We mourn his passing at the age of 93 in spring 2009 — he was a pioneer in our field. Austin H. Kiplinger and Albert H. Small have been devoted collectors of Washingtoniana for decades; I join the community of Washington historians in thanking them for the treasures they have preserved and so generously make available. My personal thanks also go to friends and colleagues who helped in ways too many to detail — Sally Berk, Nicky Cymrot, Patsy Fletcher, Joan Habib, Don Hawkins, Jim Kise, Nola Klamberg, Carole Kolker, Brian Kraft, Terri Robinson, Julie Rogers, Anne Satterthwaite, and Barbara Wolfson — and my thanks and apologies to others who, in this long project, may have helped me along and whose name I have not recalled.

The new _Washington at Home_ would not exist without those who funded this ambitious undertaking. We are enormously grateful to the Meyer Foundation, the B.F. Saul Company, Long & Foster Real Estate, and the Lois and Richard England Family Foundation. Mark Griffin was instrumental in making the first edition of this book happen, for which I continue to be thankful, and he contributed again to this volume.

Close readers of the contributors’ brief biographies may note the number of degrees in American studies from George Washington University. That department has been a catalyst for scholarship on the history of Washington and is owed thanks from all of us who have, like the city, been the beneficiaries. Historian Howard Gillette, formerly of that department, and a mentor to so many including myself, is due particular acclaim, as are Roderick S. French, who did so much to turn the attention of the university to the city through the Department of Experimental Studies in the 1970s, and the late Letitia Woods Brown who did the same. I owe my own thanks to another mentor at George
Washington University, James Oliver Horton, who introduced me to social and African American history. The department's involvement in Washington history also includes the work of Richard Longstreth in architectural history and historic preservation, and Bernard Mergen who taught us all the value of material culture.

My husband, Sam, has been my soulmate in this sail through the history of Washington, his hometown. An extraordinary writer and student of this city, his knowledge, patience, technical prowess, and never-ending sense of humor have kept me afloat. My love and appreciation go also to my sons Nathaniel and Benjamin, who have lived with us on Capitol Hill and in Cleveland Park, who have endured endless talk about the history of their hometown.

My love of neighborhoods began in my childhood world on 54th Street and Washington Boulevard in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where my church, school and playground, park, drugstore soda fountain, and neighbors with open doors were all within roller-skate reach. As suburban Tysons Corner and Rockville Pike prepare to reorganize around small, new, distinct communities, it feels to me that it might not just be sentimentality that suggests this way of life is regaining its appeal.
Some Major Events Affecting Washington Neighborhoods

1790  Congress chooses a Potomac River location for the nation's capital.
1791  George Washington announces the specific site for the Federal City.
Andrew Ellicott and Benjamin Banneker survey the boundaries of the District of Columbia; Peter Charles L’Enfant designs the Federal City.
1800  The federal government moves from Philadelphia to Washington City.
1801  Washington City receives a charter from the federal government, providing an elected council and presidentially appointed mayor. Georgetown and Alexandria elect their own local governments; Washington and Alexandria counties governed by justices of the peace.
1804  Public schools established for white children.
1807  First known private school for African American children opens.
1812  The Washington City charter is amended to allow an elected board of aldermen, from which body a council and a mayor are chosen.
1820  The mayor begins to be elected directly by the people.
1846  The Virginia section of the District is retroceded to the state of Virginia.
1861–65  Washington is command central for the Union cause in the Civil War.
1862  Horse-drawn streetcars begin regular service for the general public.
Slavery is abolished in Washington, D.C.
First public schools for African Americans established on a segregated basis.
1864–74  Local ordinances protect rights of African Americans to public education and access to public accommodations, including seating on public streetcars.
1871  The City of Washington, Georgetown, and Washington County are combined under a new territorial government, with a governor and governor’s council appointed by the president of the United States, and an elected House of Delegates.
1871–74  The territorial government modernizes the city — grading and paving streets, laying sewer and water mains, and planting trees, thus inspiring a real estate boom.
1874  Congress replaces the territorial government with three commissioners appointed by the president of the United States. District residents lose all voting rights.
1878  The Organic Act makes the commissioner system permanent for the entire District of Columbia and eliminates the governmental distinctions between Washington City, Georgetown, and Washington County.
1888  The first electric streetcar in the city runs on the Eckington & Soldier’s Home Railway line.

1890  Boundary Street, once the northern edge of Washington City, becomes Florida Avenue, symbolically erasing the distinction between the L’Enfant city and the rest of the District.

1891  The Chevy Chase Land Company builds the first major bridge across the Rock Creek chasm at today’s Calvert Street, opening new opportunities for suburban developments west of the creek.

1893  Congress authorizes the extension of the L’Enfant Plan, with its diagonal avenues superimposed on a grid system, to the entire District. A national economic panic slows the development of new subdivisions in the District.

1896  *Plessy v. Ferguson* establishes separate but equal doctrine that increases discrimination affecting Washington’s large African American population and encourages residential segregation.

1898  A revised highway act exempts previously planned developments from the extension of the L’Enfant street plan.

1899  Congress passes legislation establishing the city’s first building height limit, which will create the city’s unique low-scale profile.

1901  Laws protecting the rights of African Americans passed during Reconstruction are quietly dropped from the D.C. Code.

1901–2  The McMillan Commission Plan lays out a vision for today’s National Mall and a citywide park system.

1917–18  Population surges as Washington gears up for World War I.

1920  The city enacts its first zoning regulations.

1920s  The automobile becomes affordable for the middle class, opening up land far from the streetcar lines for suburban development.

1929–37  Federal Triangle rises between Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues, separating downtown from the National Mall.

1933–41  The New Deal of President Franklin D. Roosevelt brings population growth, and neighborhoods expand despite the Great Depression.

1941–45  World War II brings thousands of newcomers to the city, causing severe crowding. War-related demands for materials shut down the private housing industry, but the government builds housing for war workers in the District.

1945–50  A postwar building boom begins to fill the District’s open spaces. Suburban developments grow outside the boundaries of the District as it becomes the heart of a thriving metropolitan area.

1948  The Supreme Court in *Hurd v. Hodge* declares discriminatory housing covenants unenforceable.
1950  Population reaches its highest level to date at 802,178.

1953  The Supreme Court rules in the restaurant case District of Columbia v. John R. Thompson Co. that public accommodations must be open to all in the District of Columbia, affirming laws passed in the 1870s that had been left out of the D.C. Code in 1901.

1954  In Brown v. Board of Education, and a companion District case, Bolling v. Sharpe, the Supreme Court desegregates the nation’s public schools.

1954–60  Most of Southwest Washington is leveled by urban renewal.

1957  White flight and population shifts create an African American majority population in Washington.

1966  Griffith baseball stadium closes.

1967  President Lyndon Johnson creates a new system of government for the District of Columbia by executive order, with a presidenially appointed mayor/commissioner and council.

1968  Civil disturbances following the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. engulf many neighborhoods of the city. Burned-out areas would remain in a state of disrepair for forty years in some places.

1974  The Home Rule Act of 1973 returns an elected local government to the District of Columbia, but Congress keeps final control over the city budget, local legislation, and judicial appointments. Walter Washington is elected mayor; Sterling Tucker is elected D.C. Council chairman. The legislation creates a system of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.

1976  First Metrorail stations open; the system begins to encourage commercial and high-density residential development around neighborhood subway stops.

1978  Marion Barry is elected mayor for the first of four, often troubled and controversial, terms he would serve over the next twenty years.

1980s  A financial upturn fuels new building projects throughout the city.

1995–2001  A financial control board created by Congress takes responsibility for many city functions until the city can recover from a crisis of finances and congressional confidence.

1997  Opening of MCI (now Verizon) Center marks beginning of a downtown renaissance.

1998  Anthony A. Williams is elected mayor. Increased financial stability coinciding with a strengthened national economy restores confidence that will lead to an end of the financial control board in 2001.
late 1990s  Home prices begin dramatic rise as the nation experiences an economic boom at the same time as an interest in urban neighborhoods grows; revitalization is accompanied by demographic changes as gentrification affects many communities.

2001  Original Metrorail system is complete. Terrorists crash plane into the Pentagon on September 11, killing 189 people, as part of the same event that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York. The event would increase security measures and physical barriers across the city, particularly downtown and in federal buildings and monumental areas in the central city.

2003  The new Washington Convention Center opens between 7th and 9th streets on Mount Vernon Square, impacting both the revitalizing historic downtown to the south and the gentrifying Shaw neighborhood to the north.

2005  The Washington Nationals baseball team brings Major League Baseball back to Washington; the team plays its first season at RFK Stadium on the eastern edge of Capitol Hill.

2006  Adrian M. Fenty is elected mayor at the age of 35, winning all voting precincts in the city.

2007  D.C. Voting Rights Act, which would give the District one vote in the U.S. House of Representatives, passes the House but fails in the Senate. Citizen activism on this issue continues, led by the nonprofit organization DC VOTE.

2008  The Washington Nationals move to the new Nationals Park on the Anacostia River at South Capitol Street, spurring dramatic new developments at the eastern edge of the Southwest neighborhood and at the southern edge of the Capitol Hill neighborhood along M Street, SE. National economic downturn slows new construction and challenges rising home prices.

2009  The D.C. Council creates a committee to renew the drive for statehood for the District, which would provide full voting representation in Congress and complete control over the city’s budget and judicial system.