



## Birth of a Memorial, Washington, D.C.

*The national memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the 31st President of the United States, was dedicated on May 2, 1997, 51 years after Congress introduced a Resolution to create an FDR Memorial Commission. Though resolved in 1946, the commission was not appointed until 1955. The Tidal Basin site for the memorial*

*was one of three sites picked by L'Enfant for presidential memorials in his extensive blueprint for Washington. The location was approved by Congress in 1959 and the first design competition winner was announced in 1960. In 1962, however, the design was rejected and a second design was discarded in 1965 because of public criticism. Yet another design was rejected in 1967.*

*In May 1974, Lawrence Halprin was selected to design the monument and in 1977 sculptors were selected to create individual parts of the design. Not without its own problems, though, Halprin's design was modified at the request of the Commission on Fine Arts. In 1989, the memorial was still in the conceptual stages, lacking the necessary Congressional appropriation to begin the project. On April 5, 1989, a Congressional Hearing was held at which Representative Claude Pepper made an emotional plea for the construction of the Roosevelt monument and the initial \$5.8 million was approved.*

*Once construction began in October 1994, the memorial was completed quickly. President Clinton was joined by Mike Wallace, of CBS News; co-chairs of the FDR Commission, Sens. Daniel K. Inouye and Mark O. Hatfield; David B. Roosevelt; Princess Margriet of the Netherlands; and opera singer Denyce Graves to dedicate the memorial. The Roosevelt Memorial is the third presidential memorial dedicated in the United States this century. The*





Jefferson Memorial was dedicated in 1943, a ceremony at which Roosevelt himself presided. The site is made up of 7.5 acres in a landscape of four outdoor rooms with granite walls, statuary, inscriptions, waterfalls and thousands of plants, shrubs and trees. The outdoor rooms symbolize each of Roosevelt's four terms in office from 1933 to 1945. The memorial is located along the cherry tree walk on the Tidal Basin.

Five sculptors were assembled by designer Halprin to create bronze sculptures placed throughout the memorial, Leonard Baskin, Neil Estern, Robert Graham, Tom Hardy and George Segal. Master stone carver John Benson inscribed the enduring words of FDR on the memorial's 800 feet of granite walls. In addition to the unique qualities of the memorial, the FDR Memorial honors a first lady officially for the first time in a presidential memorial. The memorial includes a bronze statue of Eleanor Roosevelt standing before the logo of the United Nations, for which she served as America's first delegate after the president's death.

The sculptures and other images contained in the memorial are intended to evoke the events of Roosevelt's terms of office. Ordinary people are portrayed. The unemployed are standing in breadlines. Some are listening to the President's Fireside Chats on the radio. A farm couple is portrayed. The FDR Memorial is maintained by the National Park Service and is staffed 8 a.m. to midnight every day except Christmas. Admission is free.

Photographs were taken by DDSP photographer Jim Krepps on a recent trip to Washington, D.C. Mr. Krepps has been the DDC photographer for several years and enjoys trips to the Capital to capture both the physical beauty of the city as well as the enthusiasm of its visitors. Thanks to Mr. Krepps for his support and creativity.

