

The u.s. capitol: a virtual tour



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The U. S. Capitol: A Virtual Tour The United s Capitol, located in Washington, D. C., has been a site for many important historical events that has shaped American history over the decades. The U. S. Capitol Virtual Tour provides a magnificent online tour of the United States Capital with beautiful panning pictures and a description of five unique rooms within the capitol. The Old Supreme Court Chamber, the Old Senate Chamber, the Senate Chamber, the President's Room, and the National Statuary Hall are rich with American history and captivating style.

The Old Supreme Court Chamber was the site of the first inauguration, which Thomas Jefferson took the oath of office in Washington. John Marshall and other important Chief Justices made history in this Chamber after its reconstruction in 1808 by architect Benjamin Latrobe. Historic events that occurred in the Old Supreme Court Chamber were the February 1819 case of Dartmouth College v. Woodward, March 9, 1841 case of the United States v. the Amistad, Telegraph test by Samuel Morse, and February 11, 1856 case of Dred Scott v. Sandford. Marble bust of John Jay, John Rutledge, Oliver Ellsworth, John Marshall, and Roger B. Taney, the first five Supreme Court Justices', are in the chamber.

The Old Senate Chamber is where the Senate met between 1810 until 1859 and later the Supreme Court convened here from 1860 until 1935. In this Chamber, Senator Jesse B. Thomas settled the Missouri Compromise Debate in 1820 by proposing that Missouri enter the Union as a slave state and the remaining Louisiana Purchase land remain free of slaves. This room displays a bronze sculpture of Senator Henry Clay sculpted by Henry Kirke Brown shortly after the death of Senator Henry Clay in 1952. The Old Senate Chamber also displays a depiction of the first president, George Washington,

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by artist Rembrandt Peale, painted in 1832. Above the Vice Presidents chair is a carved eagle and shield that represents strength and unity created by architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe specifically for the chamber.

The Senate Chamber is where the Senate now deliberates on important issues that affect the American government. This room gave refuge to Andrew Johnson's impeachment trial and the first women senators. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 debated and passed in this chamber brought an end to racial discrimination and segregation in public places and in federal legislation. The Senate Chamber also holds a collection of bust of the vice presidents to honor the former heads of the Senate.

The President's room is where presidents sign legislation at the close of Congress until 1933. Currently, Senators use the room used for interviews and press conferences. Although the practice of signing legislation in this room stopped after 1933, President Lyndon B. Johnson used the President's Room to sign the 1965 Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965 and Ronald Regan signed nominations to the cabinet in this room.

The National Statuary Hall displays commemorative statutes to each state. The first statute displayed in the hall was Rhode Island's Nathaniel Greene, a general in the revolution. Above the south entrance of the room is a statute of Liberty and an Eagle, which was place there between 1817-1819. A commemorative edition of the Declaration of Independence hangs above the fireplace on the east wall of the National Statuary Hall. The Hall, beautifully decorated with chandeliers, sconces, and drapes, also displays a clock carved by Simon Willard of Clio, the Muse in a winged car of Time seated on a globe carved with the zodiac signs.

The Capital is full of rich history and beautiful architecture and artwork. This

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online tour brings the Capitol and its history alive for those unable to visit in person.

References

The United States Government. The U. S. Capitol Virtual Tour: A " Capitol" Experience. Retrieved April 1, 2006. <http://www.senate.gov/vtour/>