



THE WHITE HOUSE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The White House and World War II

White House History Quarterly marks the 80th anniversary
of the end of World War II

May 7, 2025 (Washington, D.C.) – The White House Historical Association has released the 77th issue of its award-winning magazine, *White House History Quarterly*: "The White House and World War II." With this issue, as the eightieth anniversary of V-E Day approaches on May 8, 2025, and V-J Day on August 14, 2025, the *Quarterly* turns to the topic of the White House during World War II.

"Joyful crowds surged toward the White House on the hot and cloudy summer day, now nearly eighty years ago, when World War II finally came to an end. The nation's attention had been steadily fixed on the White House since the U.S. entered the war following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The war years brought suffering, loss, and sacrifice to every American, but everything changed on August 14, 1945, when President Harry S. Truman announced the news of the Japanese surrender. Memories of this day would last their lifetimes and the history of the war itself would forever be a part of White House history," writes *Quarterly* editor Marcia Anderson.

Our articles take us to the Oval Office for a glimpse of the two presidents who served during the war and one who miraculously survived to serve later, inside the White House to the Map Room, outside to the Victory Garden, across the street to the Stage Door Canteen, and part way around the world to Casablanca. We look at the White House visits of diplomats, a holocaust survivor, and a beloved war correspondent, and end with a trip to Pearl Harbor.



Features in this issue include:

- **From the War in the Pacific to the White** — **Barbara A. Perry** recounts how a famous SOS carved into the husk of a coconut in the Pacific Theater ultimately gave America its thirty-fifth president, John F. Kennedy.
- **The First Lady and the G.I.'s Best Friend** — **Mary Jo Binker** tells the story of a wartime invitation to tea at the White House, when Ernie Pyle, one of America's favorite war correspondents, met his biggest fan, fellow columnist, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.
- **Diplomats and Dictators: Names Preserved in the White House Visitor Logs of World War II** — **Joel Kemelhor** reminds us that not all White House visits were friendly, as he recalls the diplomats who made their way to the Oval Office in the era of World War II.
- **Diana Hopkins Plants the White House Victory Garden** — **Jonathan Pliska** explains how ten-year old Diana Hopkins came to join Americans across the nation in creating a Victory Garden to aide in the war effort. But the 20 square foot parcel where she tended radishes, carrots, beets, cabbage, and more was the only one planted on the grounds of the White House itself.
- **The Casablanca Conference Guest Book, January 1943** — **Jessie Kratz** focuses on the signatures of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, now preserved on a document in the National Archives, to reveal the story of secret strategy meeting in Casablanca, Morocco.
- **Franklin D. Roosevelt's Map Room** — **Alan Capps** explains that it was Churchill's London War Rooms that inspired Roosevelt's creation of the White House Map Room, where maps remain stored and displayed today.
- **Celebrity Square: Politics and Performance at Washington's Stage Door Canteen** — **Cindy Gueli** reminds us of the Belasco Theater on Lafayette Square, which housed the Stage Door Canteen during the war. Their shows, music, dancing, and refreshments welcomed service members for brief interludes of rest and relaxation.
- **"The Very Greatest Privilege an American Could Have"** — **David Marthy** presents President Franklin Roosevelt's death from the unexpected perspective of the young West Point Cadets who heard the news as they prepared to go to war, and who would participate in his funeral at Spring Hill.
- **Riding the Tiger** — **Randy L. Sowell** picks up the narrative with the dramatic opening months of Harry Truman's presidency, during which he announced the end of the war.

- **Martin Greenfield: A Holocaust Survivor Becomes a Presidential Tailor** — **Christina Clare Ewald** explains how the end of the war was the beginning of a very different life for Martin Greenfield. Liberated from Buchenwald by troops under the command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Greenfield went on to tailor fine clothing for six presidents, including his hero, President Eisenhower.
- **The Truman Line and the USS *Missouri*** — **Lauren McGwin** concludes the issue with a visit to the Battleship Missouri Memorial at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, where she discovers this issue's presidential site, the Truman Line.

This 112-page issue of *White House History Quarterly* retails for \$12.95. To purchase a single issue, visit shop.whitehousehistory.org.

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To request a review copy of *White House History Quarterly* #77, or interview the contributors, contact press@whha.org.

About The White House Historical Association

First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy envisioned a restored White House that conveyed a sense of history through its decorative and fine arts. She sought to inspire Americans, especially children, to explore and engage with American history and its presidents. In 1961, the nonprofit, nonpartisan White House Historical Association was established to support her vision to preserve and share the Executive Mansion's legacy for generations to come. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association's mission is to assist in the preservation of the state and public rooms, fund acquisitions for the White House permanent collection, and educate the public on the history of the White House. Since its founding, the Association has given more than \$115 million to the White House in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit WhiteHouseHistory.org.