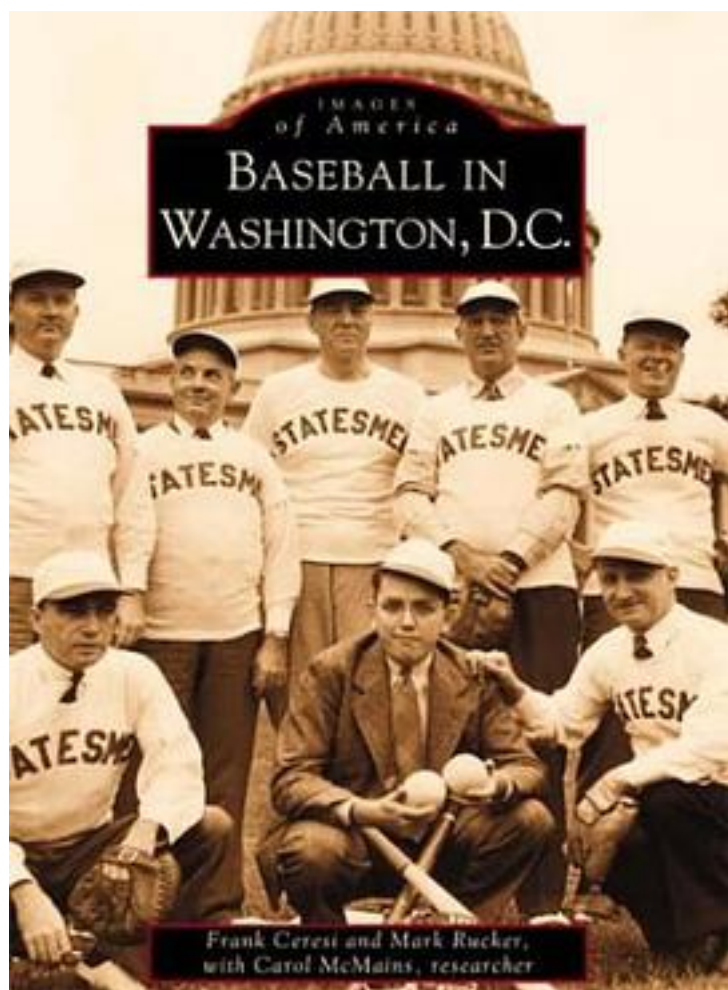# Baseball in Washington, D.C.

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Dubbed "America's Game" by Walt Whitman, baseball has been enjoyed in our nation's capital by everyone from young boys playing street stickball to Presidents throwing out

the inaugural first pitch of the season. Just 13 years after Alexander Cartwright codified baseball's rules, the Washington Nationals Baseball Club formed and in 1867 toured the country spreading the "baseball gospel." By 1901 the team became one of the first eight major league teams in the newly formed American League. Players such as Walter Johnson, probably the greatest pitcher of all time, and other Senators under the stewardship of owner Clark Griffith successfully led the club in 1924 to what many consider to be the most exciting World Series in baseball history. Later, the Homestead Grays played at Griffith Stadium and fielded a team featuring legendary Negro League greats such as Josh Gibson and Buck Leonard. The powerhouse Grays, during a ten-year span, won nine Negro League World Championships, a record that may never be equaled in any team sport again. When the Grays disbanded, the original Senators left for Minnesota in 1960, and the expansion Senators of the 1960s relocated, the city was left without a professional baseball team. While many feared that baseball in D.C. was over, a spirit remained on the diamond and is still felt today as children and adults team up in one way or another to play the national pastime in the nation's capital. Hopes for a new professional team linger, and those remembering baseball's heyday will enjoy this extensive and unusual collection ofhistoric photos that celebrate a time when the crowds roared and Washingtonians believed that the summer game would never end.

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