



Morrison-Clark

HISTORY OF THE MORRISON-CLARK INN

In 1864, two of Washington, D.C.'s leading families built their homes just off fashionable Massachusetts Avenue, near Mount Vernon Square. Today, these homes are the heart of a distinctive historic inn with a nationally acclaimed restaurant.

The Morrison-Clark Inn owes much of its charm – and its place as the only Washington inn listed on the National Register of Historic Places – to the Morrison and Clark families who built these houses, the Ruppert family who added distinctive features to the Morrison's home, and to the Women's Army and Navy League, who owned the property for half a century.

David L. Morrison was a developer who made his fortune selling flour and feed to the U. S. Government during the Civil War. Reuben B. Clark became wealthy through land investments, owning a grocery store, and serving as Washington, D. C.'s jail commissioner. M. Frank Ruppert owned a hardware store and real estate office on 7th Street, N. W. The Rupperts bought the Morrison property in 1917. Influenced by a trip to the Orient in 1905, the Rupperts made changes to the exterior that give the property much of its charm – the Chinese Chippendale Porch with its graceful Shanghai Roof. They also brought oriental furnishings and details to the interior of their home.

The Women's Army and Navy League bought the Morrison home in 1923 and converted it into an inexpensive place for America's enlisted men to stay while in Washington, D. C. During its 57-year history the facility grew to include the Clark home, underwent name changes to accommodate airmen, and, in 1972, expanded its mission to serve the women members of the armed forces. The property was known as the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmens Club after 1954.

First Ladies traditionally presided over the club, with help from the members. Together, they held teas and fund-raisers to maintain the club's operations. In 1943, at the peak of World War II, the efforts of these women provided beds for more than 45,000 visitors, and nearly 85,000 meals. Grace Coolidge headed the receiving line when the facility opened in 1923, and Mamie Eisenhower and Jacqueline Kennedy were active in the organization.

In 1987, renovations were completed bringing the Morrison-Clark Inn into existence. William Adair, who supervised renovations of the White House, oversaw the Inn's restoration. He preserved the historic exterior and many of the interior details of the building, including four pier mirrors and Italian Carrara marble fireplaces.

Today, the Morrison-Clark Inn is part of the Classic Collection, a group of six hotels and restaurants in the Washington, D. C. area. The Inn features individually decorated rooms, distinctive meeting and conference facilities, and a location convenient to the Washington, D. C. Convention Center, Chinatown, Capitol Hill, and many museums and cultural attractions in the Nation's Capital. The Morrison-Clark Restaurant, under the culinary supervision of Chef Janis McLean, is recognized as one of the finest in the region.