

Washington, D.C.

The states of Maryland and Virginia each donated land to form the federal district, which included the preexisting settlements of Georgetown and Alexandria. Named in honor of George Washington, the City of Washington was founded in 1791 to serve as the new national capital. In 1846, Congress returned the land originally ceded by Virginia and created a single municipal government for the remaining portion of the District in 1871.

Washington, D.C., had an estimated population of 646,449 in 2013, the 23rd most populous city in the United States. Commuters from the surrounding Maryland and Virginia suburbs raise the city's population to more than one million during the workweek. The Washington metropolitan area, of which the District is a part, has a population of 5.8 million, the seventh-largest metropolitan statistical area in the country.

The centers of all three branches of the federal government of the United States are in the District, including the Congress, president, and Supreme Court. Washington is home to many national monuments and museums, which are primarily situated on or around the National Mall. The city hosts 176 foreign embassies as well as the headquarters of many international organizations, trade unions, non-profit organizations, lobbying groups, and professional associations.

Since Washington is the capital, I've always been somewhat surprised that more collectors don't collect it as a distinct category. In all my years of trading, I've only come across a couple of collectors who had the city of Washington on their want lists. Marie Harbison, PA, reported having 860 different covers in her collection back in April 1993.

