

They Came To See, to Be In History

By Marylou Tousignant
Washington Post Staff Writer

LaDonna Burdett celebrated Bill Clinton's inauguration yesterday by snuffing out her last cigarette just as he took the oath of office several minutes before noon.

"My friend quit the moment Bush conceded" in November, the Tacoma, Wash., kindergarten teacher said, "but I wanted to be able to say I quit the exact moment Bill Clinton became president."

Burdett, 46—the same age as the president, she proudly noted—had a bad view of the swearing-in. She then circumnavigated the Mall for 90 minutes but ended up in an even worse location for the parade. But that didn't matter, she said, as she sat resting on 15th Street NW, a half block from where Clinton and the parade soon would pass. "I'll just be here when he goes by," she said.

"Being there," in some way, was where it was at yesterday for thousands of tour-

ists and locals alike, nearly all eager to share this moment in history.

T. Christian Zimirowski's brush with fame came early, when Clinton's motorcade passed him at 10 a.m., heading down 15th Street NW to the White House. Zimirowski, a 19-year-old from Fitchburg, Mass., had his video camera ready.

"He waved to me. I got him," he told his traveling companions. And then, to prove it, he played back the tape: "See, here's the street. Here comes the first police car, the second, the third. Now here comes the limo; no, that's the wrong limo. THERE! There he is! That's him right there!"

There they were at Sixth Street NW and Pennsylvania Avenue—two sisters from North Little Rock, Ark., and a longtime friend who recently had moved to Fairfax Station—waiting to see the president.

But the crowds were so thick that they couldn't see a thing.

"You know what gets me?" said Kay Taylor, 45, of Fairfax Station. "We stand on line to get on the Metro to get here. We stand on line to get out. We spend all day out here. And everybody's crowded around this guy and his two-inch television set."

It was a scene repeated up and down
See SNAPSHOTS, A30, Col. 2

SNAPSHOTS, From A25

Pennsylvania Avenue: *My kingdom for a television set.*

Kitty Chabra brought two television sets to the parade along with her two sisters and two nephews.

Talk about being prepared. "We've got apples and oranges so we can get liquids but we won't have to go to the potty," said Chabra, 47, a secretary from Falls Church. The group, which set up camp on a blanket on 15th Street, also had cookies and potato chips, and was ready to break out a game of cards or Yahtzee if things got desperate.

Having staked out a fair parade-viewing spot, Chabra moved quickly when a modestly better vantage point opened up next to them. "Grab that space!" she barked at her sister, Gerri Miklowic of Chester Springs, Pa. "You snooze, you lose."

There were few people more eye-catching along the parade route than the red-headed Daniels twins from Dallas.

"This is Ina, and I'm Nina, and it's your pleasure to meet us," is the way Nina Daniels Wheeler introduces herself and her identical twin, Ina Daniels McGee.

The twins, who give their age as 39-plus, were standing at the corner of 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, dressed identically from head-to-toe, including their gold-spangled cowboy hats, gold-fringed buckskin jackets and glittery gold cowboy boots. They carried Texas and American flags and—just in case—gold umbrellas.

"We're the gold twins from the South," said Ina, a school guidance counselor. "Tonight we'll be at the Texas ball and we'll be wearing gold gowns."

The twins claim to have been among the first to predict Clinton's victory, way back in August 1991—three months before he even declared his candidacy. A prediction based on "his aura," Ina said.

And the last shall be first: New Jerseyites Carmella Ulrich and Patricia Strumer were looking for a ladies room in the Capitol yesterday morning when they came across Al Gore's old Senate office. On an impulse, they walked in and asked for tickets to the swearing-in. Not only did they get prime spots on the Capitol lawn, they got breakfast: croissants, strawberries and coffee. "We have a lot of nerve," said Strumer, 55, of Parsippany, N.J.

Clinton's walk up Pennsylvania Avenue was shown on the large screen of the 1720 Club, one of the District's strip bars, as Emily, 26, finished taking off her black veil. As Clinton waved to the crowd, Emily waved back.

Emily said she didn't vote in November but likes Clinton. For one thing, she said, the inauguration has brought new customers to 1720 I St. NW.

Asked if she thought Clinton would jog into the bar, she said, "Hillary won't let him."

Barbara Senior Harkins, 45, of Homestead, Fla., was a winter-coat-wrapped bundle of energy as she waited for her hometown's high school band to march down Pennsylvania Avenue. "The school was knocked down, everything lost" in Hurricane Andrew in August, she said. "There were appeals on the radio begging for money. . . . And here they are today."



BY JUANA ARIAS—THE WASHINGTON POST



BY MARY LOU FOY—THE WASHINGTON POST

When the Marching Broncos finally arrived, Harkins ducked under the yellow restraining rope and screamed encouragement. "Yeah, Homestead! Let go! Let's see a smile, girl! You got it! You're the one!"

Several band members looked her way and beamed.

It was her mom's bright idea, but Casey Papa, her sisters and friends kind of liked having their faces painted red, white and blue like the American flag. It got them a lot of attention along the parade route.

"We want to see Chelsea and Bill and what's her name—Hillary," said Casey, 11, who lives in Bowie.

"And we want to see Socks," said Jeff Simmons, 11, also of Bowie. Asked for their political views, Casey said Bill Clinton is "awesome."

Awesome was not the word that came to Jeff Holmstead's mind. Until noon yesterday, Holmstead, 32, was a lawyer in the Office of the White House Counsel.

"We're not enjoying the parade very much at all," he said as he hoisted daughter Emily, 3, onto his shoulders for a better view. "But we wanted to come out and see what was going on."

"She's enjoying herself," Jeff's wife, Lisa, said of their daughter. "She's having a great time out here. She's not particularly partisan. She did say that she would miss President Bush, and she knows that Daddy's not going to have his nice office anymore."

Ron Catzva complained in print that the surging crowd at Bush's swearing-in four years ago had endangered his family. He said he wanted tickets this year that would put them in a safe viewing area. Rep. Constance A. Morella (R-Md.) told Catzva she would send him four tickets.

Later, he said her staff told him only two tickets were available. By Saturday they had not arrived, and Catzva said he expected to be watching Clinton become president on TV.

On Sunday, Morella called Catzva and arranged for four tickets to be given directly to him. "We really appreciate the effort she made," Catzva said. "But you know, after I hung up the phone from talking with her, I realized that I am not even in her district. I can't vote for her."

In the strange-way-to-greet-a-president department, the Washington Times took the honors yesterday with an above-the-logo headline that read: "Woooooouooo, Pig! Soooooie!"

Was this the calling card of a newspaper that repeatedly attacked Clinton during the campaign? A Page 1 raspberry from editor in chief Wesley Pruden, a seventh-generation Arkansan?

Not at all, Pruden said. "It was a light-hearted salute to an Arkansan on his big day. Arkansas is my religion, almost. This is the biggest day that Arkansas has ever had in the nation's capital."

Pruden said the hog-calling shout, originally a victory cheer for the University of Arkansas Razorbacks, has transcended football and "is kind of the war cry of the state. I don't want anyone to think that it was in any way disrespectful to Bill Clinton or the state."

But apparently some callers to the newspaper thought just that.

Soooooie, Mr. President. Welcome to Washington.



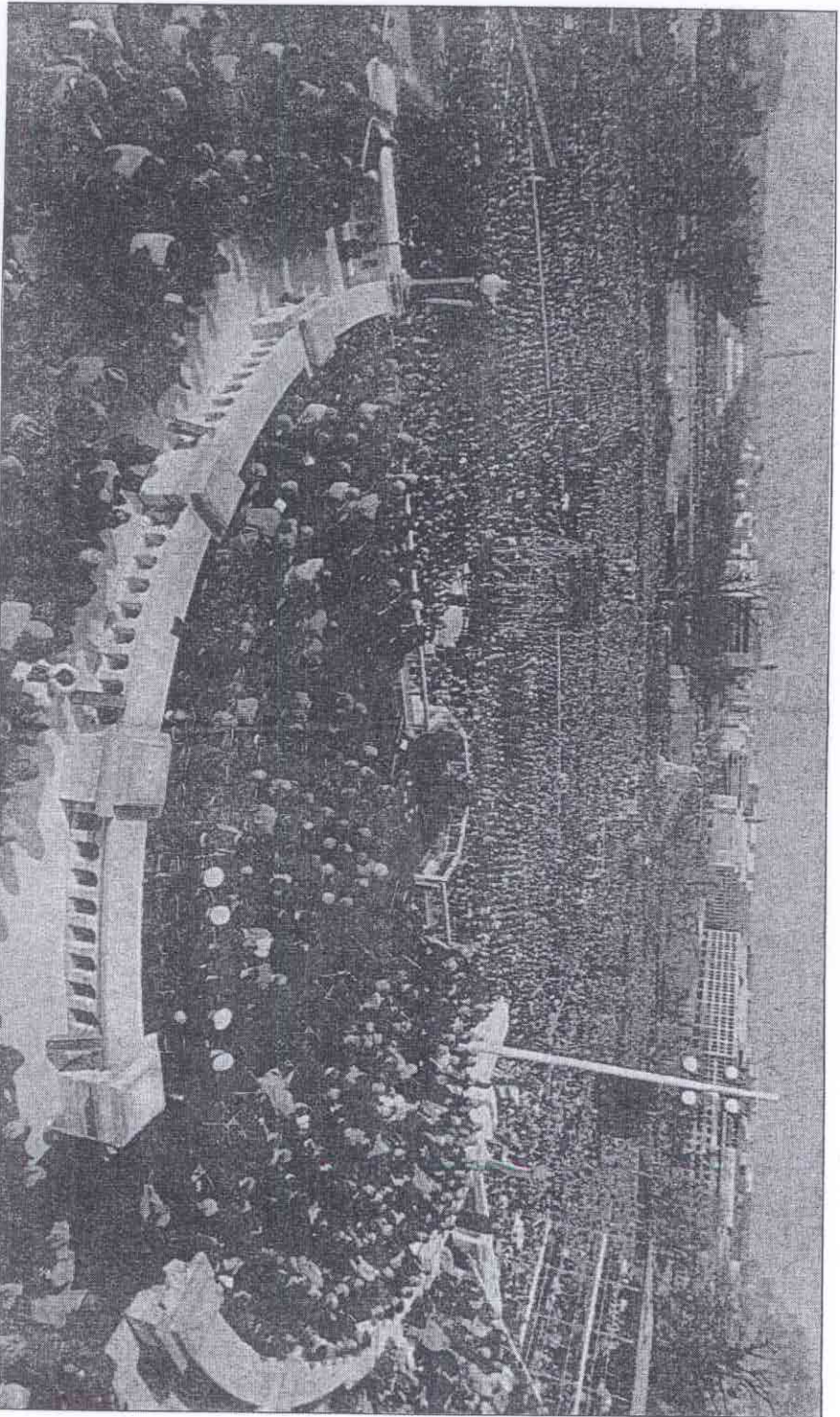
BY RAY LUSTIG—THE WASHINGTON POST

'So help me God':

At noon on the 20th day of January, as prescribed in the Constitution, the new president takes the oath of office administered by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, back to camera. Hillary Clinton holds the Bible as daughter, Chelsea, watches. The presidential oath followed the swearing in of Vice President Gore by Supreme Court Justice Byron R. White.



THE INAUGURATION



The inaugural address: As a sea of onlookers spreads out before him, the newly sworn President Clinton speaks from the Capitol's West Front with dignitaries arrayed behind him.

I, William Jefferson Clinton, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of the president of the United States and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.