

KENILWORTH HISTORY AND STORIES

Kenilworth is a neighborhood in the far northeast section of Washington, DC. Located east of the Anacostia River, it started as a white suburb in the late 1800's but is now a largely African-American community dominated by Kenilworth Courts, a sixties-era, orange-brick, "garden apartment" government housing complex.

Within the neighborhood, the Douglas Street area is an exception to both the former characteristics. Formed in the early 1900's as a safe space for blacks to build single-family homes, it today retains the essence of its residential, front-porches-and-gardens community.

I was born in Kenilworth, into the family of a white, Mennonite pastor who moved to the area in the 1960s and started a church. In 2003 I returned to my childhood street. For the next three years I lived in Kenilworth, researching the history of the neighborhood, writing stories about my family, and occasionally taking on the mantle of 'community activist.'

My years there resulted in my publishing a 32-page booklet of Kenilworth neighborhood history and completing an extensive oral history project that is now archived in the DC public library system. You can learn more about both these projects below, as well as find other stories from Kenilworth's past.

Please contact me if you have questions, feedback, or a story of your own to share!

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