

## Capitals in the Capitol

Do you know the correct use of the words Capital and Capitol?

The word **Capital** spelled with an **A** refers to the top part of a column or the city where the government works. Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States.

**Capitol** spelled with an **O** refers to the building, like this one, where men and women meet to discuss issues and laws that are important to the people and the nation.

Capitals and columns can be plain or very fancy. Three major styles of capitals come from the ancient Greeks and are called **Doric**, **Ionic**, and **Corinthian**. Four different Corinthian types are shown on this page, but you will see many styles on your tour.

**Right:** The capitals in the Old Senate Rotunda show the importance of tobacco farming to America in the 1700s and 1800s.



**Left:** You will find a traditional Corinthian type capital on the Crypt floor. The leaves are **acanthus**, a plant from the Mediterranean area of southern Europe.



**Left:** The most unusual capitals and columns in the Capitol are the six outside the Old Supreme Court Chamber. The picture at the left shows a capital decorated with corn.



**Right:** Located in the Hall of Columns, these columns with Corinthian capitals have the typical acanthus leaves on the bottom row. Tobacco leaves and thistles make up the upper area of the capitals.



### What would you design?

Using your imagination, create your own capital. Suggestions: state flowers and birds, leaves of important trees, things that are man-made.

Send the U.S. Capitol Historical Society your design of a Capital for the Capitol, and it will be posted on the Society's Website.