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## Book Review - A President in Our Midst: Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Georgia

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## Off the SHELF

**A President in Our Midst: Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Georgia** by Kaye Lanning Minchew (University of Georgia Press, 2016: 978-0-8203-4918-3, \$34.95)

For Georgians of a certain age, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's (FDR) connection with the state was a constant, but as time has passed, many may have forgotten the time he spent in Georgia. In *A President in Our Midst: Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Georgia*, Kaye Lanning Minchew brings FDR and his twenty-one years of visits to Georgia back to the forefront.

Minchew's thirty-year tenure as executive director of the Troup County Historical Society and Archives provides her with a special insight into the Roosevelt's time in Georgia. She also writes of her own family's longtime admiration of President Roosevelt as part of the reason for putting together this informative chronicle of FDR in the state.

Minchew opens the book with a recounting of Roosevelt's first (and very brief) visit to the state in 1913 while an assistant secretary of the navy. Here the reader has a first glimpse of the book's format. Each page spread features photographs, some rarely seen, with accompanying text. This format is effectively used throughout as Minchew leads the reader through the different eras of FDR's time in Georgia.

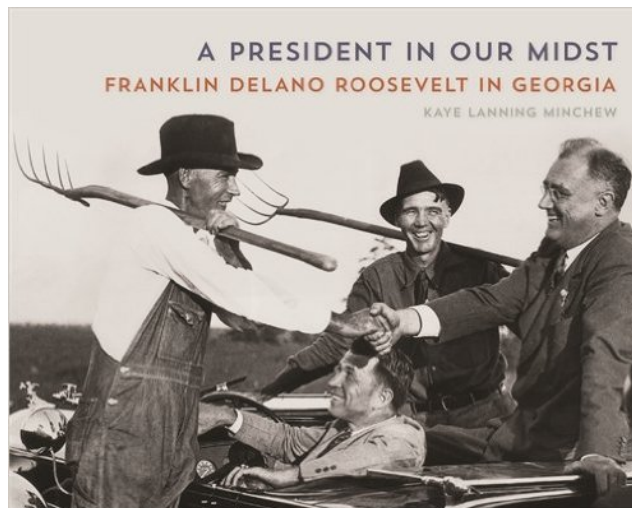
In the first chapter, the reader learns of Roosevelt's bout with polio and his efforts to

recover from the paralysis that left him unable to walk without aid. His efforts at recovery led him to discover the benefits of Warm Springs after his friend, George Foster Peabody, suggested FDR visit the area. This chapter also gives interesting background on the area and the springs. Minchew effectively divides the following chapters into different periods of FDR's life and career. From the beginnings of his

fight against polio, the reader is led into the time period in which FDR worked to show he was "fit" for office. It is here that one gains insight into how the press portrayed him, in stark contrast to today's media coverage of candidates. The chapters go on to cover Roosevelt's leadership out of the Great

Depression and into World War II. Due to the commitment of leading during the war, his visits to the Little White House in Warm Springs dropped sharply. Many were probably caught off guard when he died at the Little White House as he had rarely visited in the preceding years. Minchew, of course, includes the events surrounding his death but wisely chooses to not conclude with this. Instead, she writes of FDR's lasting legacy in Georgia: the work that continued in regards to polio, the economy, and the many memorials.

Within this volume, there are many things that even the casual historian would know about Roosevelt, but the added value is that these things, along with many others, are placed within the context of his time in Georgia and his relationship with the people of the state. The



work could possibly be more effective if it were compiled in strictly chronological order, but with that said, it is still a valuable work that would be useful in public and academic libraries alike. As it is well footnoted and contains a good

index, it would also be helpful to historians and scholars.

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