

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAGHS

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THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING: A CENTENNIAL OVERVIEW

Some Important Facts, Dates and Events Associated with the Seat of Government of the District of Columbia

- 1902 Congress enacts legislation acquiring Square 255 and authorizing construction of a permanent seat of government for the District of Columbia (June 6).
- 1908 District (Wilson) Building is dedicated. Speakers and guests include Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and Mayors of Baltimore and Richmond. Declaration of Independence is read by a member of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia. Thousands attend the ceremony and tour the building (July 4).
- 1909 Bust of Crosby Stuart Noyes is unveiled in District (Wilson) Building. Funds are privately raised to commission the bust. Noyes (1825-1908) had been the editor of The Washington Evening Star. In 1888, Noyes persuaded the U.S. Senate for the first time ever to draft and consider a proposal to give D.C. voting representation in both the U.S. House and Senate. Throughout his life, Noyes advocated voting rights for residents of the District of Columbia (February 25).
- 1909 The Statue of Governor Alexander Robey Shepherd (1835-1902), a D.C. native, is unveiled in front of the District (Wilson) Building (May 3). Until 2005, when a statue of D.C. native, John Phillip Sousa, was unveiled near the Marine Barracks on Capitol Hill, Shepherd's statue was the only one of a D.C. native anywhere in the Nation's Capital.
- 1920 Memorial sculpture honoring D.C. government employees who died in World War I is unveiled in memorial ceremony by Miss Margaret Wilson, daughter of President Woodrow Wilson. The marble memorial is the work of Jerome Conner and depicts a dying soldier (April 6).
- 1921 Oil portrait of District of Columbia Governor Alexander Robey Shepherd is hung in the Boardroom (Council Chamber) of the District (Wilson) Building. Shepherd's widow, Mary Young Shepherd, officially presents the portrait to be displayed in the seat of government during a ceremony (April 21). The portrait remained in the Chamber until about 1970.

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- 1928 The Federal Triangle Act mandated a major federal building program of imposing design. The demolition of the District (Wilson) Building in order to provide another site for a new Federal building or a park was anticipated under provisions of this Act.
- 1931 U.S. Senator Hiram Bingham (R-CT), chair of the Senate D.C. Appropriations Subcommittee, acts to avert demolition of the District (Wilson) Building. The Senator says he is moved to act by letters from students and the public.
- 1938 President of the Board of Commissioners, Melvin C. Hazen, announces selection of D.C. flag design and orders flag to be flown daily (except Sundays) at District (Wilson) Building (October 15).
- 1941 Commissioner Melvin C. Hazen dies suddenly at his desk (July 15). Hazen led the effort to give D. C. a flag.
- 1942 U.S. Army soldiers are quartered on ground floor of District (Wilson) Building. Troops are on duty to guard bridges and federal buildings.
- 1950 A replica of Liberty Bell cast in France is placed at main entrance of District (Wilson) Building. The bell was a duplicate of the original without the crack. All 48 States and the District of Columbia received a bell. The bells were to be prominently displayed to inspire patriotism and promote sale of U.S. Savings Bonds. By 1960, the bell was sited in a small street island in front of the District Building. It disappeared in 1979 during construction of Western (Freedom) Plaza.
- 1953 President Eisenhower appoints Samuel Spencer, a D.C. native, to the Board of Commissioners. As Board President, Spencer initiates an order directing all hiring and promotions in the D.C. government to be based solely on qualifications and merit without regard to "race, creed, or color."
- 1959 A portrait by Margaret Elliot of former Commissioner Louis Brownlow is presented to the D.C. Government and hung in Room 500 of the District (Wilson) Building (January 26). Brownlow, a pioneer of the public administration training movement, served as Commissioner from 1915 to 1921. He was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson.

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- 1961 John B. Duncan becomes the first African-American appointed a Commissioner. He was nominated by President John F. Kennedy and served until 1967, when the D.C. government was reorganized.
- 1964 A ceremony accepting a memorial tablet honoring D.C. native Stewart Holland to be placed in the vestibule of the District (Wilson) Building is held (May 22). On September 22, 1854, Holland fired a ship's cannon for four hours, trying to attract rescuers to the steamship Arctic, which was sinking off the Grand Banks. He went down with the ship.
- 1967 The nine-member appointed Council under the D.C. Government Reorganization Act meets for the first time in the District (Wilson) Building (November 7). John Hechinger is designated Chair, Walter E. Fauntroy, Vice-Chair. Three Republicans serve on this first appointed Council.
- 1970 A bronze bust of former Commissioner John B. Duncan is unveiled in a ceremony and placed on public display outside the Council Chamber. The sculpture is the work of Nathaniel P. Gillian. Duncan preferred a bust over customary oil portraits of Commissioners.
- 1970 Citizen meetings in District (Wilson) Building lead to organization of D.C. Statehood Party.
- 1975 Mayor Walter E. Washington is administered the oath of office in front of the District (Wilson) Building by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall (January 2). Washington is the first elected Mayor of the District of Columbia and assumes office with the first elected Council chaired by Sterling Tucker.
- 1976 John A. Nevius, Chair (1972-1975) of the Appointed Council, writes editor of the Washington Post, noting that the District (Wilson) Building is an outstanding example of a Palladian revival architecture design (May 29, 1976). Nevius further illustrates that our Seat of Government is, in fact, practically a replica of Palazzo da Porto Festa by Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1508-1580).
- 1977 Armed Hanafi Muslims take over District (Wilson) Building. Maurice Williams, a reporter for WHUR-FM, is fatally shot. Special police officer Mark Cantrell dies two days later from gunshot wounds. Councilmember Marion S. Barry recovers from a gunshot wound near his heart. The 40-hour siege ends after ambassadors from three Islamic nations negotiate a surrender to authorities (March 9).

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- 1979 Mayor Marion S. Barry is administered oath of office in front of District (Wilson Building) by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall II (January 2).
- 1979 The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC) removes statue of Governor Shepherd from the park in front of the District (Wilson) Building. The Park is incorporated into Western (Freedom) Plaza. PADC officials never carry out a pledge to relocate statue on Pennsylvania Avenue. Shepherd goes into a 25-year exile near Blue Plains Sewage Treatment Plant.
- 1993 The Council of the District of Columbia enacts legislation designating the seat of government the “John A. Wilson Building” (October 6).
- 1997 Council Chair, David A. Clarke, becomes the first elected official of the District of Columbia to lie in state in the Wilson Building (April 3).
- 2002 Official re-opening of the John A. Wilson Building following renovation. Public is invited for a ceremony and tours of the renovated seat of government (June 29).
- 2003 Former Mayor Walter E. Washington lies in state in Wilson Building (October 31).
- 2005 Governor Shepherd’s statue is returned to Wilson Building. Council Chair Linda Cropp, Council members Jim Graham and Jack Evans, Mayor Anthony Williams, and DDOT Director Dan Tangherlini respond to campaign of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia to bring Shepherd home to our seat of government (January 29).
- 2007 A plaque honoring the life of Maurice Williams is placed outside the Press Room. A plaque placed earlier was lost during Wilson Building renovation (March 12).

Research by Nelson Rimensnyder
July 24, 2008

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Carriage and Wagon Building on future site of the District (Wilson) Building



District (Wilson) Building

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District (Wilson) Building



District (Wilson) Building

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Bell at entrance to District (Wilson) Building

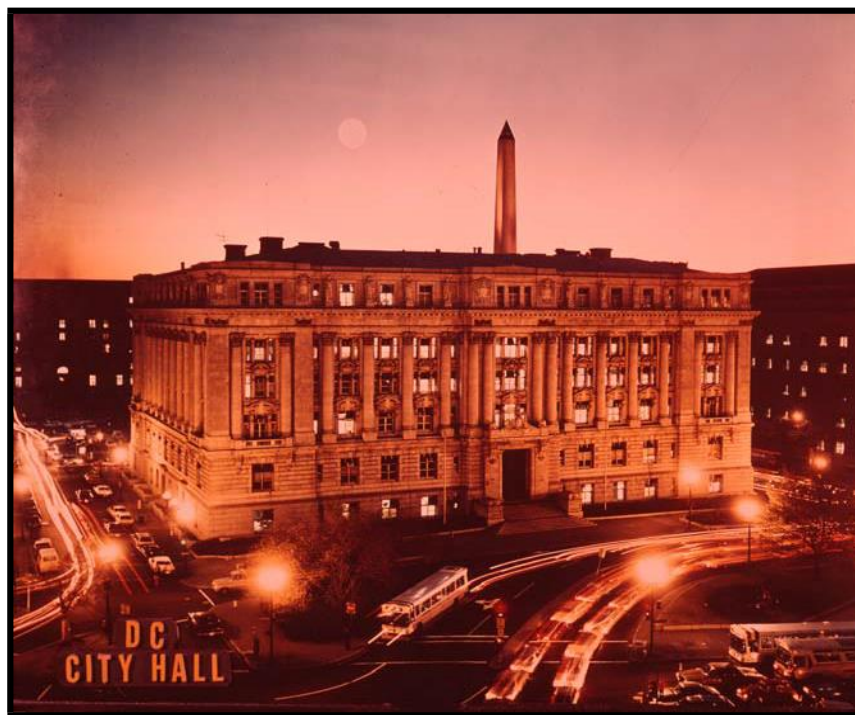


District (Wilson) Building

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District (Wilson) Building inaugural viewing stand



District (Wilson) Building 1974

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John A. Wilson Building

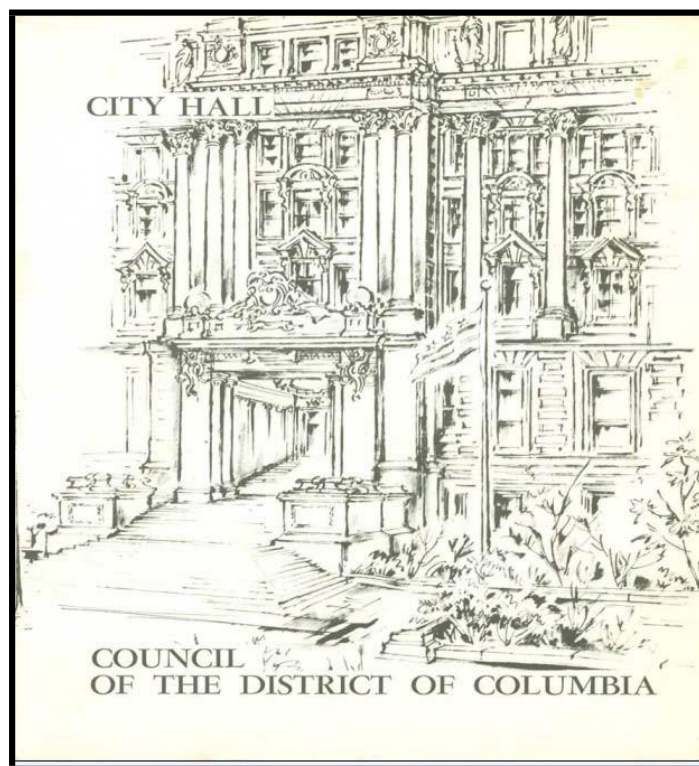


John A. Wilson Building

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John A. Wilson Building



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Mayor Walter E. Washington



Mayor Walter E. Washington

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Mayor Walter E. Washington and Benetta Washington
in front of home in LeDroit Park



Mayor Walter E. Washington Swearing- in Ceremony

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Mayor Walter E. Washington being sworn-in by
Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall



Mayor Walter E. Washington

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Sammy Davis, Jr. and Mayor Walter E. Washington



Mayor Walter E. Washington, Jesse Jackson and
Mary Burke Washington

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Mayor Walter E. Washington

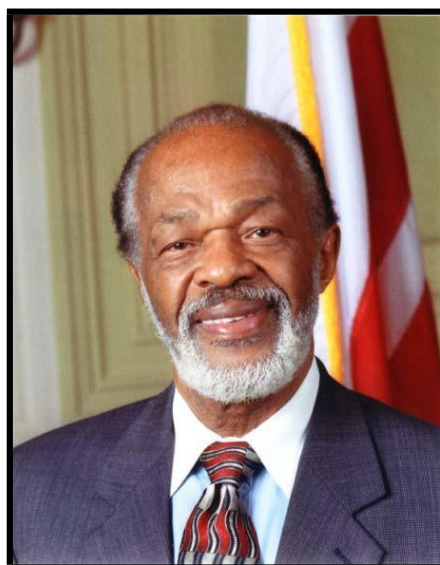


Mayor Walter E. Washington and Walter Fauntroy

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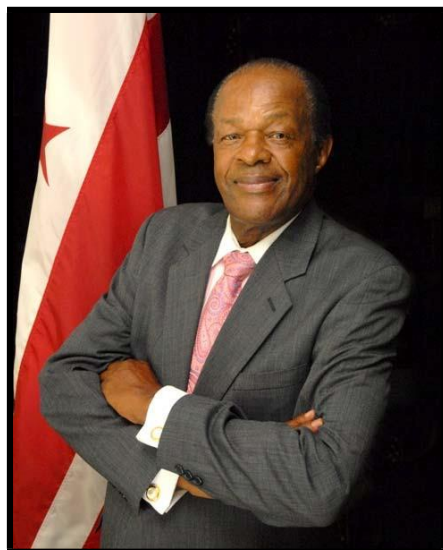


Mayor Walter E. Washington and Councilmember Willie J. Hardy



Marion S. Barry

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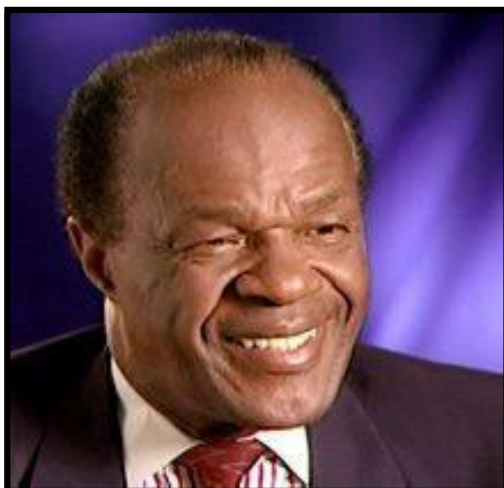


Marion S. Barry



Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly and James Nathanson

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Marion S. Barry



Mayor Anthony A. Williams

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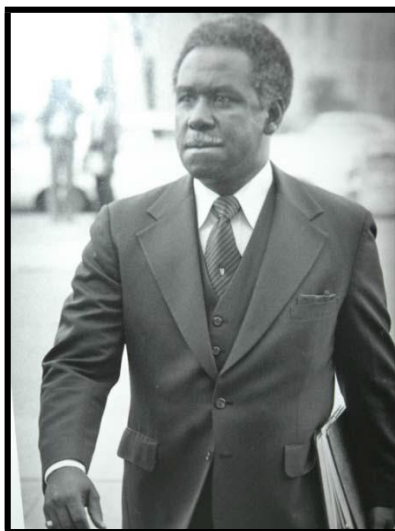


Mayor Adrian M. Fenty

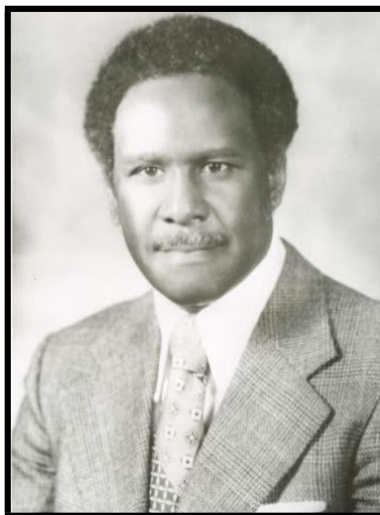


Phillip Daugherty

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Joseph P. Yeldell



Joseph P. Yeldell

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Judge Margaret Haywood



Judge Margaret Haywood with colleagues

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John W. Hechinger



Walter E. Fauntroy

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Walter E. Fauntroy



John Ray

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Stanley Anderson



Sterling Tucker

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Sterling Tucker, Aloyce Tucker, Justice Thurgood Marshall, Lauren Tucker, Shelly Tucker, Mayor Walter E. Washington



Sterling Tucker being sworn-in by Justice Thurgood Marshall

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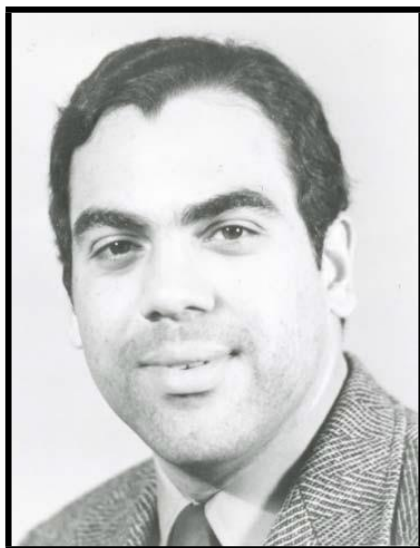


Sterling Tucker



Sterling Tucker

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Arrington L. Dixon



Arrington L. Dixon and Charlene Drew Jarvis

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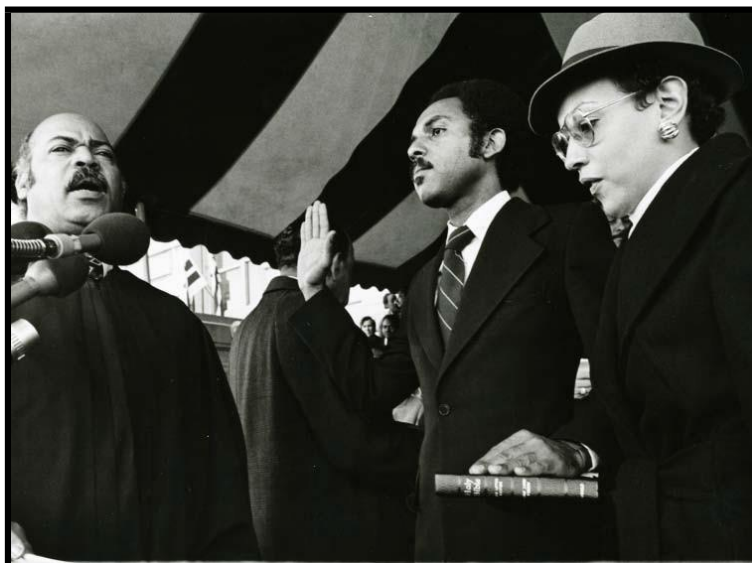


David A. Clarke



David A. Clarke

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Judge Harry Alexander swearing- in John A. Wilson



John A. Wilson meeting constituent

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John A. Wilson listening to a senior



John A. Wilson congratulating students

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John A. Wilson and Marion S. Barry having a chat

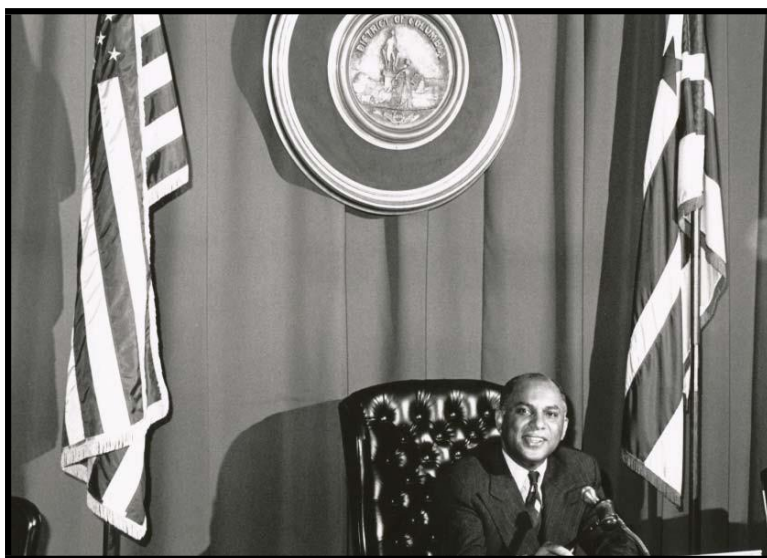


John A. Wilson

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John A. Wilson and wife, Bonnie



John A. Wilson

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John A. Wilson meeting with businessmen



John A. Wilson and Marion S. Barry

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John A. Wilson and Marion S. Barry



Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA), Warren Graves and
John A. Wilson

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John A. Wilson receiving honorary doctorate



John A. Wilson

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John A. Wilson being sworn-in by Judge Judith W. Rogers



William P. Spaulding, John A. Wilson, Jerry A. Moore, Jr.,
Polly Shackleton, Willie J. Hardy, Sterling Tucker

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John A. Wilson



Linda W. Cropp

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Douglas Moore



Linda W. Cropp

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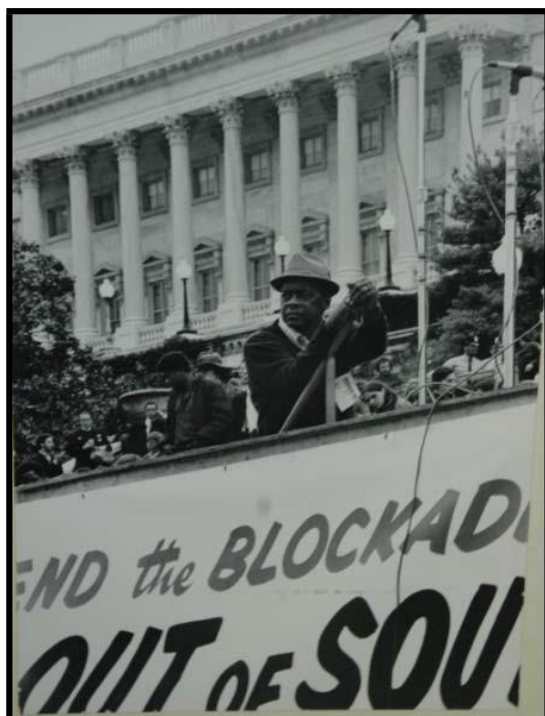


Vincent C. Gray



Douglas Moore

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Julius Hobson



Judge Luke Moore swearing- in Julius Hobson

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Julius Hobson

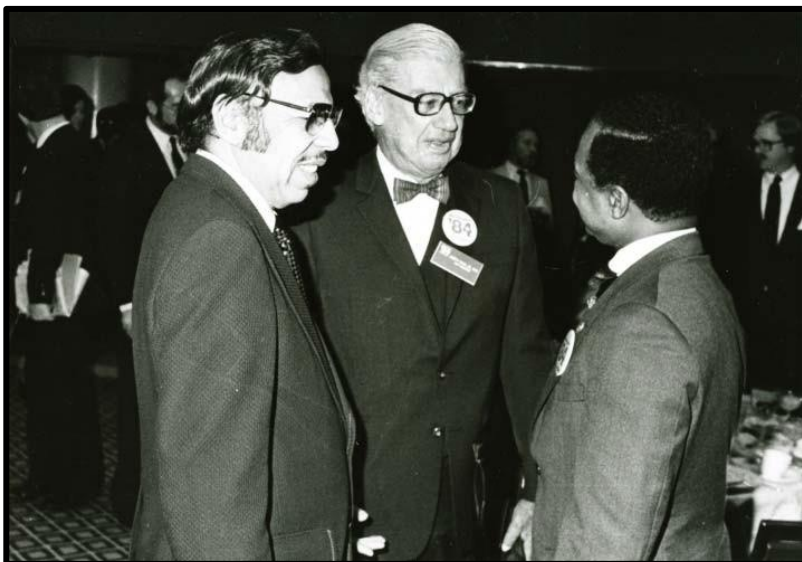


The appointed Council at work

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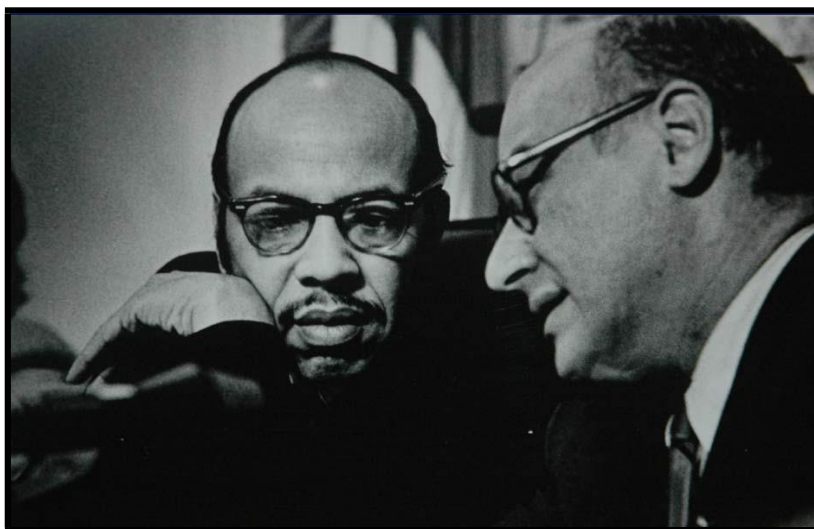


Reverend Jerry A. Moore, Jr.



Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr., Joe Rauh and Walter Fauntroy

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Reverend Jerry A. Moore, Jr.



John Ray, Betty Anne Kane and Nadine P. Winter

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John Ray



John Ray

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Betty Anne Kane with students



Betty Anne Kane

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Hilda H.M. Mason



Carol Schwartz

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Harold Brazil



David A. Catania

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Phil Mendelson



Kwame R. Brown

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David A. Clarke, Arrington L. Dixon, Lawrence H. Mirel



John A. Wilson, Bruce French, Arrington L. Dixon,
Vivian Cunningham and Lawrence Mirel

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Chairman Dixon's Office



Marion S. Barry and girl scouts

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Councilmembers with students in chamber



Polly Shackleton, Nadine P. Winter, Arrington L. Dixon, Hilda H.M. Mason,
John Ray, David A. Clarke, William R. Spaulding and Betty Anne Kane

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Wilhelmina J. Rolark, Nadine P. Winter, Arrington L. Dixon, Hilda H.M. Mason,
Polly Shackleton, Marion Wright Eldeman – Children Defense Fund



Council in action

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Frank Smith, Jr.



Jim Graham

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Hilda H.M. Mason presenting a ceremonial resolution



Betty Anne Kane, John Ray, Hilda H.M. Mason

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John Ray, Arrington L. Dixon, David A. Clarke, Hilda H.M. Mason,
William R. Spaulding, H.R. Crawford, Betty Ann Kane



Jack Evans

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Polly Shackleton in action



Polly Shackleton with Marion S. Barry signing legislation benefitting
seniors and persons with disabilities

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Polly Shackelton and Marion S. Barry

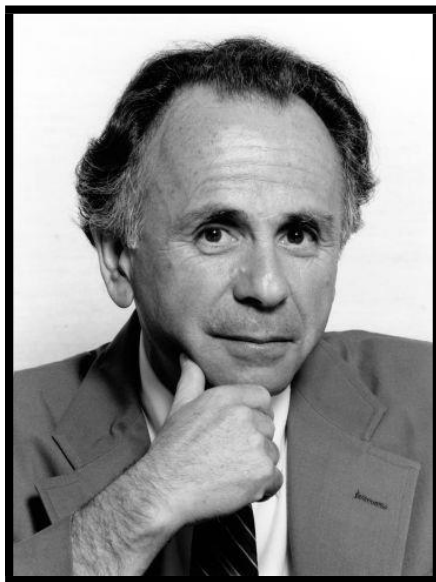


H.R. Crawford, Polly Shackelton, and Marion S. Barry

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Polly Shackleton campaigning



James Nathanson

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Kathleen Patterson



Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr., H.R. Crawford, Charlene Drew Jarvis,
Polly Shackleton, John A. Wilson

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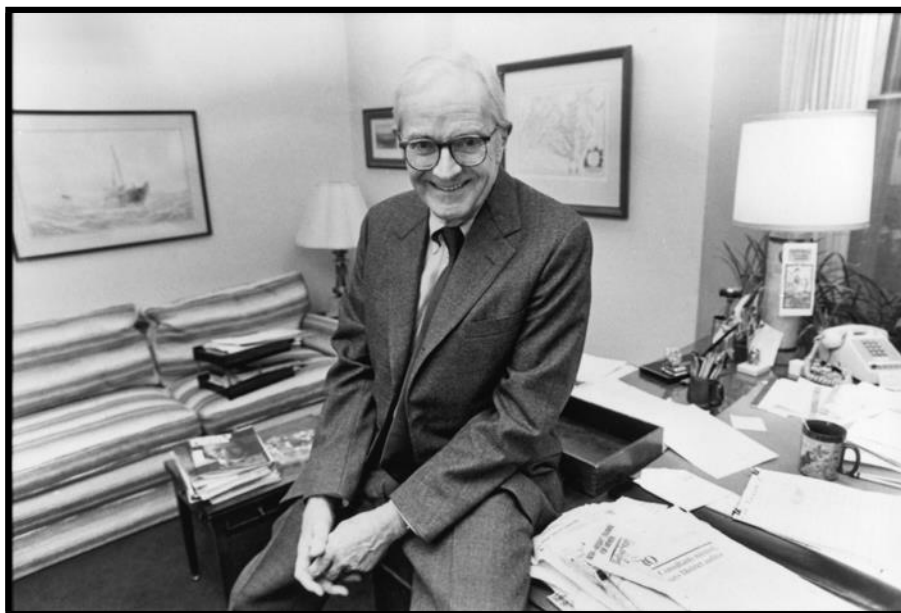


Muriel Bowser



John Hechinger

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Jack Nevius



Council in action

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Phillip J. Daugherty



Phillip J. Daugherty

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Cherry Blossom Girls



Council in session

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Council Swearing-in at the White House



Swearing- in Ceremony with Mayor Walter E. Washington

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Council swearing- in at the White House



School Group in the Chambers

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New Council meeting with Mayor Walter E. Washington



Welcoming Delegation from Mainz, Germany

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Councilmember Joseph Yeldell meeting with visiting dignitaries



Welcoming Delegation from Mainz, Germany

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Chairman John Hechinger meeting with constituents



New Council with Mayor Walter E. Washington

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New Council with Mayor Walter E. Washington



Marion S. Barry with students and families

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Marion S. Barry with visiting dignitaries



Marion S. Barry with girl scouts

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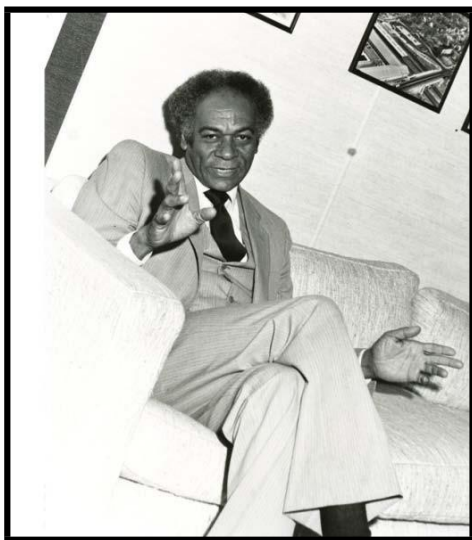


H.R. Crawford, Charlene Drew Jarvis and Betty Ann Kane

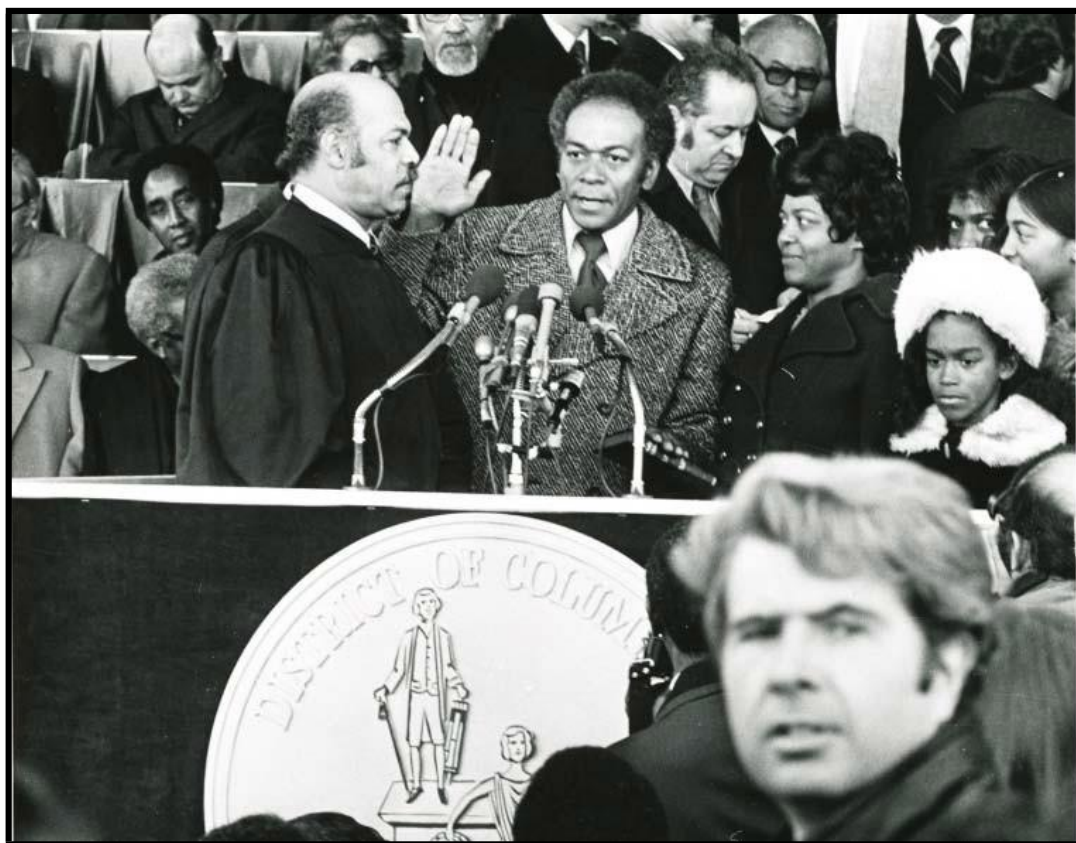


Police Chief Maurice Turner

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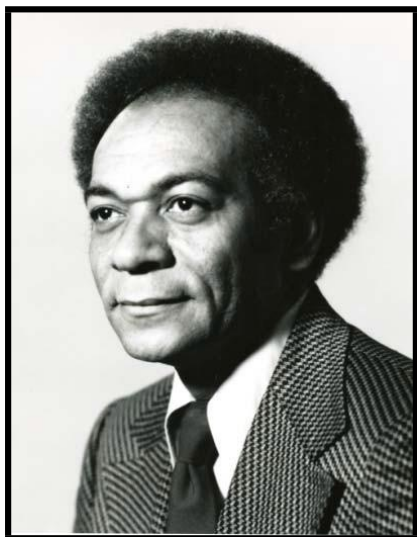


William R. Spaulding

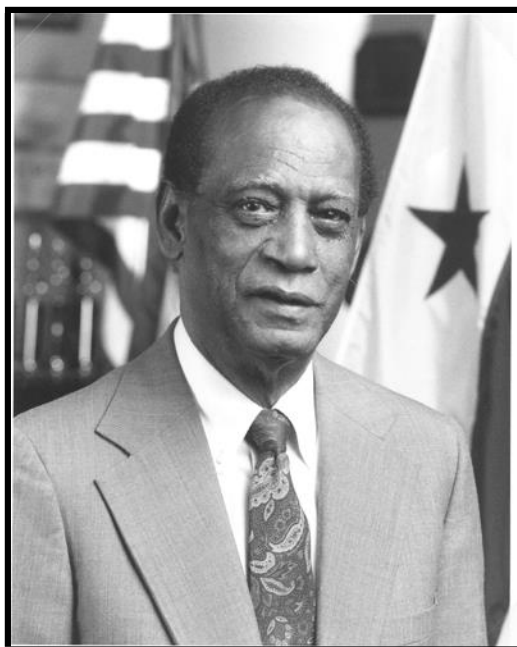


Judge Harry T. Alexander and William R. Spaulding

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William R. Spaulding



Harry Thomas, Sr.

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Vincent B. Orange, Sr.



Harry Thomas, Jr.

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Nadine P. Winter



Antoinette Ford

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Nadine P. Winter



Nadine P. Winter with former Police Chief Ike Fullwood

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Sharon Ambrose



Tommy Wells

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Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr., Sterling Tucker, Willie J. Hardy,
Douglas Moore, Hilda H.M. Mason and Nadine P. Winter



Willie J. Hardy

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Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Julius Hobson, Willie J. Hardy, Douglas Moore and
Arrington L. Dixon presenting a ceremonial resolution



Willie J. Hardy at street renaming in Ward 7

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Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Willie J. Hardy and William R. Spaulding



Willie J. Hardy with young constituent

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H. R. Crawford



Kevin P. Chavous

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Vincent C. Gray



Yvette M. Alexander

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Reverend James Coates



Wilhelmina J. Rolark

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Eydie D. Whittington



Sandy (Sandra) Allen

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Marion S. Barry and Flaxie Pinkett



Councilmembers with former First Lady Rosslyn Carter

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Wilhelmina J. Rolark and William P. Lightfoot



Betty Anne Kane, Arrington L. Dixon,
David A. Clarke, Wilhelmina J. Rolark and John Ray

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Appointed Council in action



Audience during Council meeting

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Chairman Dixon and Council in session



Arrington L. Dixon, Wilhelmina J. Rolark
and the General Counsel, Larry Mirel

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Appointed Council testifying before U.S. Congress



Helping a constituent

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A Council hearing



New Washington City Government

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Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Polly Shackleton and Stanley Anderson



Marion S. Barry and Polly Shackleton

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A hearing in the Council Chamber



Visiting the White House

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Judge Theodore Newman swearing-in Hilda H.M. Mason



Marion S. Barry, Willie J. Hardy, Nadine P. Winter,
unidentified man, John A. Wilson, Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr.

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Walter Fauntroy and his wife and son at a press conference



Stanley Anderson being sworn in for a 2nd term

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Celebrating Home Rule



Council Period One

Standing (l to r) William R. Spaulding, Arrington L. Dixon,
Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr., Marion S. Barry, Rev. James Coates, John A. Wilson,
Douglas Moore. Sitting (l to r) Nadine P. Winter, Polly Shackleton,
Mayor Walter E. Washington, Sterling Tucker, Willie J. Hardy.
(Julius Hobson not shown)

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Council Period Two

Standing (l to r) Nadine P. Winter, Arrington L. Dixon, Marion S. Barry, Jr.
David A. Clarke, William R. Spaulding, Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr., John A. Wilson,
Wilhelmina J. Rolark. Sitting (l to r) Polly Shackleton, Willie J. Hardy,
Sterling Tucker, Douglas Moore, Julius Hobson



Council Period Three

Standing (l to r) William R. Spaulding, Wilhelmina J. Rolark,
Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr. Betty Ann Kane, David A. Clarke, Charlene Drew Jarvis,
John Ray, John A. Wilson. Sitting (l to r) Hilda H.M. Mason, Nadine P. Winter,
Arrington L. Dixon, Willie J. Hardy, Polly Shackleton

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Council Period Four

Standing (l to r) Wilhelmina J. Rolark, Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr. John Ray, Charlene Drew Jarvis, David A. Clarke, Betty Ann Kane, William R. Spaulding, H.R. Crawford. Sitting (l to r) Hilda H.M. Mason, Nadine P. Winter, Arrington L. Dixon, John A. Wilson, Polly Shackleton



Council Period Five

Standing (l to r) John A. Wilson, H.R. Crawford, William R. Spaulding, Charlene Drew Jarvis, Rev. Jerry A. Moore, Jr., Betty Ann Kane, Frank Smith, Jr., John Ray. Sitting (l to r) Hilda H.M. Mason, Wilhelmina J. Rolark, David A. Clarke, Nadine P. Winter, Polly Shackleton

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Council Period Six

Standing (l to r) Carol Schwartz, John A. Wilson, H.R. Crawford, Charlene Drew Jarvis, John Ray, Betty Anne Kane, William R. Spaulding, Hilda H.M. Mason. Sitting (l to r) Wilhelmina J. Rolark, Frank Smith, Jr., David A. Clarke. Nadine P. Winter, Polly Shackleton



Council Period Eight

Standing (l to r) William P. Lightfoot, Harry Thomas, Sr., John Ray, Charlene Drew Jarvis, Betty Ann Kane, H.R. Crawford, John A. Wilson. Sitting (l to r) Frank Smith, Jr., Wilhelmina Rolark, David A. Clarke, Nadine P. Winter, Hilda H.M. Mason (James E. Nathanson, Not Shown)

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Council Period Nine

Standing (l to r) Harry Thomas, Sr., John Ray, H.R. Crawford,
Charlene Drew Jarvis, Jack Evans, Linda W. Cropp, Harold Brazil,
Frank Smith, Jr. Sitting (l to r) James E. Nathanson, Wilhelmina J. Rolark,
John A. Wilson, Hilda H.M. Mason, William P. Lightfoot



Council Period Thirteen

Kevin P. Chavous, Sandy (Sandra) Allen, Adrian M. Fenty, Kathleen Patterson,
Phil Mendelson, Harold Brazil, Jim Graham, Sharon Ambrose, Linda W. Cropp,
Carol Schwartz, David A. Catania, Vincent B. Orange, Sr.

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Council Period Fourteen

Standing (l to r) Adrian M. Fenty, Phil Mendelson, Jim Graham, Harold Brazil, Carol Schwartz, Vincent B. Orange, Sr., Sharon Ambrose, Kathleen Patterson.
Sitting (l to r) Kevin P. Chavous, Jack Evans, Linda W. Cropp, Sandra (Sandy) Allen, David A. Catania



Council Period Sixteen

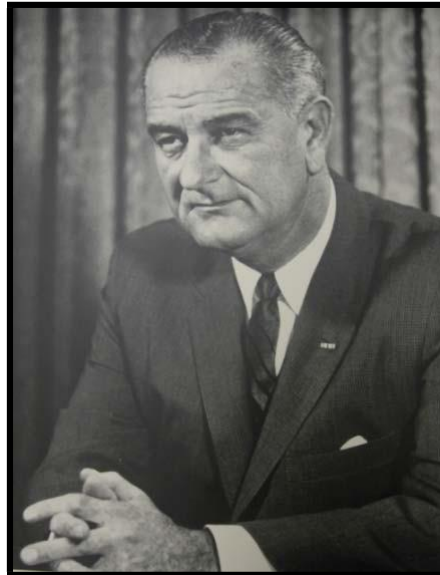
Standing (l to r) Adrian M. Fenty, Kathleen Patterson, Marion S. Barry, Jim Graham, Carol Schwartz, Phil Mendelson, Vincent C. Gray, David A. Catania. Sitting (l to r) Kwame R. Brown, Jack Evans, Linda W. Cropp, Sharon Ambrose, Vincent B. Orange, Sr.

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Council Period Seventeen

Standing (l to r) Jim Graham, Muriel Bowser, Harry Thomas, Jr.,
Yvette Alexander, Marion S. Barry, Phil Mendelson, Mary Cheh.
Sitting (l to r) David A. Catania, Carol Schwartz, Vincent C. Gray,
Jack Evans, Kwame R. Brown



President Lyndon B. Johnson

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
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D.C. Native Duke Ellington



A young Pearl Bailey and her husband
Louie Belson a famous Jazz singer

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary

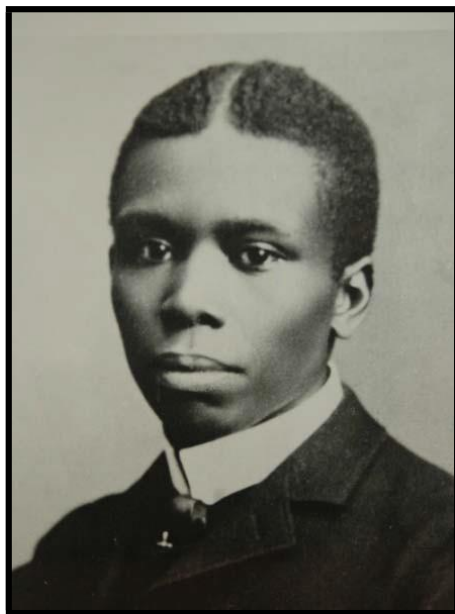


Nannie H. Burroughs



D.C. Native Senator Ed Brooke (R-MA)

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Paul Lawrence Dunbar



Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois Educator, Writer

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Patricia Roberts Harris
(Ran for Mayor – Named School in South East after her)



A. Shepherd

A VISIT THROUGH HISTORY: HISTORICAL COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS
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Judith Rogers – Corporation Counsel



John Ray and John A. Wilson

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Linda Cropp with husband, Dwight



Harry Thomas, Sr., H.R. Crawford, and
John Ray at diplomatic reception

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Council of the District of Columbia – Office of the Secretary



Frank Smith, Jr., Jim Nathanson and Hilda Mason at Diplomatic reception



Betty Anne Kane, Hilda H. M. Mason, Jim Nathanson, Nadine P. Winter, Walter Fauntroy, Marion S. Barry, David A. Clarke, Harry Thomas, Sr., John A. Wilson, and Sharon Pratt Kelly

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Harry Thomas, Sr. and wife Romaine Thomas



Wilhelmina Rolark with husband, Calvin

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Councilmember Yvette Alexander with young constituents



David A. Catania testifying on DC Voting Rights

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Kwame Brown, Harry Thomas, Jr., Carol Schwartz, Adrian M. Fenty, Vincent C. Gray, Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Paul Strauss
Fighting for DC Voting Rights

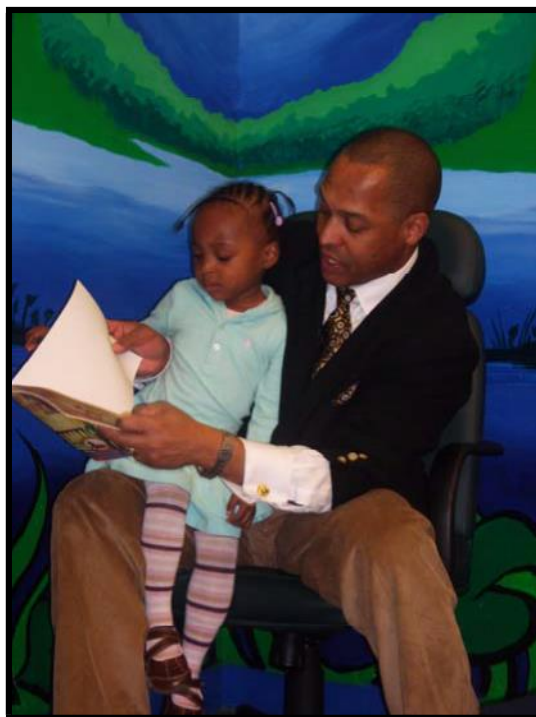


Jack Evans, Adrian M. Fenty, Phil Mendelson speaking on Voting Rights

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Phil Mendelson, Adrian M. Fenty, Jack Evans speaking on Voting Rights



Reading time with Harry Thomas, Jr.

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The Cat in the Hat! Harry Thomas, Jr. with students



Kwame Brown opening doors in education

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Kwame Brown fighting for DC Voting Rights



Trip to Denver

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Marion S. Barry and colleagues at ribbon cutting ceremony



Cleaning up the neighborhood with Muriel Bowser

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Mary Cheh



Muriel Bowser – a role model for youth

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Phil Mendelson with daughter Addie in China Town



Phil Mendelson supporting "Bike to Work Day"

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Carol Schwartz on the front lines for DC Voting Rights



Mary Cheh, Jim Graham, Vincent C. Gray, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Harry Thomas, Jr., Kwame Brown and Carol Schwartz marching for DC Voting Rights

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Jim Graham with Ward 1 Constituents