



ArchivesSpace

# **Campbell (Beatrice Murphy) Papers**

## **An inventory of Beatrice Murphy Papers Collection at DC Public Library**

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on May 05, 2021.

English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

People's Archive, MLK Library

901 G Street NW

Washington, DC

[peoples.archive@dc.gov](mailto:peoples.archive@dc.gov)

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	People's Archive, MLK Library
<b>Creator:</b>	Murphy, Beatrice M., 1908-1992
<b>Title:</b>	Beatrice Murphy Campbell Papers
<b>ID:</b>	123
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1979-1989, undated
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.25 Linear feet
<b>Physical Description:</b>	1 Boxes
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English

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## Biographical / Historical

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Beatrice Murphy Campbell (born June 25, 1908), also known as "Beatrice M. Murphy," was a poet, bibliographer, community volunteer, and advocate for people with disabilities. Born in Monessen, Pennsylvania, she moved to Washington, D.C. at the age of six and lived the rest of her life in the District. After graduating from Dunbar High School, Campbell worked for the Office of Price Administration and the Veterans Administration. While working for the VA, she was suspended on national security grounds; however, after four months, she was able to disprove the allegations against her and was reinstated in her position. In total, she spent 18 years with the Veterans Administration, retiring in 1959 for health-related reasons. Additionally, Campbell published seven poetry books (three with her own poetry and four featuring poetry by African American poets). She also helped establish the Negro Bibliographic and Research Center (later renamed the Minority Research Center), serving as Director and the Managing Editor for its publication, *Bibliographic Survey: The Negro in Print*. Campbell's friends established the Beatrice M. Murphy Foundation in her honor, with the aim to encourage the collection and dissemination of books by and about African Americans. Campbell spent much of her retirement as a community volunteer and was formally recognized for her service with a number of nominations and awards. She served on the Mayor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities, as well as the advisory committees of the American Foundation for the Blind, the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, the D.C. Commission on Aging, and Iona House. Campbell also organized a volunteer counseling service for the blind. Throughout her life, Campbell coped with numerous health issues, underwent extensive medical treatments, and had repeated hospitalizations. In her 30s, she was diagnosed

with an arthritic and inoperable curvature of the spine. In the late 1960s, Campbell became legally blind. She died on May 12, 1993 due to heart ailments.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection consists of Beatrice Murphy Campbell's biographical information; correspondence; photographs; documents related to her community involvement and service with organizations and government agencies; and speeches and testimonies. The collection is divided into eight series: 1. Biographical, 2. Correspondence, 3. Organizations, 4. Speeches and testimony, 5. Clippings and newsletters, 6. Awards, 7. Miscellaneous, and 8. Photographs. Series 3 is divided into four sub-series: 1. District of Columbia Commission on Aging, 2. District of Columbia Statewide Health Coordinating Council (SHCC), 3. The Beatrice M. Murphy Foundation, and 4. Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

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## Arrangement

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Series 1: Biographical (1987-1988, undated): This series consists of Beatrice Murphy Campbell's biographical information in various forms. Most of the documents are type-written, though there is also some handwritten material. Included in this series are chronologies of Campbell's literary activity, a draft of an entry that was published in the Dictionary of Literary Biography, and a photocopy of the actual published entry. Series 2: Correspondence (1978-1985, undated): This series is divided into incoming and outgoing correspondence. The incoming correspondence consists of letters, many of them responses to Beatrice Campbell's written inquiries and comments to hospital and city officials and agency executives. The outgoing correspondence consists of letters, memoranda, and notes, both typed and handwritten. Other notable documents include correspondence to Mayor Marion Barry, Jr., City Council, ANC members, and city agency and department executives and officials. Series 3: Organizations (1980-1989, undated): This series documents a small portion of Beatrice Campbell's service to the District of Columbia, her volunteer work, and her commitment to African American authors. Series 4: Speeches and testimony (1979-1984 and undated): This series consists of speeches and testimony that Campbell delivered before various commissions and district hearings, the majority of which dealt with issues related to District of Columbia citizens who were elderly and/or physically or visually impaired. Series 5: Clippings and newsletters (1955-1986, undated): This series consists of clippings, most of which are photocopies. The photocopies include a Washington Post article and chapter of a book, both written by Beatrice Murphy Campbell, in which she described her efforts to clear her name and reputation following her suspension from the Veterans Administration. Other notable clippings include an obituary for her son, Alvin Murphy; an article about the District of Columbia's Women's

Hall of Fame call for nominees; and a piece about the DC Public Library bookmobile that mentions Campbell. A Catholic Church Parish newsletter naming Campbell as Handicapped Person of the Year is also included. Series 6: Awards (1981-1989, undated): This series consists of items that document a few of Beatrice Campbell's awards and nominations, including a self-produced "album" pertaining to her recognition as Handicapped Person of the Year. Series 7: Miscellaneous (1980-1985 and undated): This series consists of items that cannot be integrated with any of the other series, most of which are undated. Series 8: Photographs (undated): This series consists of one photograph.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

People's Archive, MLK Library

901 G Street NW  
Washington, DC  
[peoples.archive@dc.gov](mailto:peoples.archive@dc.gov)

### Revision Description

Finding aid revised to be more evergreen. 2020-11-06

### Custodial History

Donor unknown. Collection donated in 2005.

### Processing Information

General processing procedures consisted of discarding duplicates and retaining a minimum of two copies. Metal staples and paper clips were removed and replaced with plastic archival clips. Documents were arranged in chronological order with undated items filed in the back of dated material. All documents were then placed into archival, acid free folders. A single loose photograph was placed into an archival mylar sleeve.

### Conditions Governing Use

There are no restrictions to this collection.

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## Controlled Access Headings

- Women
- African Americans
- Poets
- Authors and publishers
- People with disabilities
- Social advocacy

## Collection Inventory

### Series 1: Biographical, 1987-1988, undated

box 1

#### Scope and Contents

This series consists of Beatrice Murphy Campbell's biographical information in various forms. Most of the documents are type-written, though there is also some handwritten material. Included in this series are chronologies of Campbell's literary activity, a draft of an entry that was published in the Dictionary of Literary Biography, and a photocopy of the actual published entry.

Title/Description	Instances	
Biographical, 1987-1988	box 1	folder 1

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### Series 2: Correspondence, 1978-1985, undated

box 1

#### Scope and Contents

This series is divided into incoming and outgoing correspondence. The incoming correspondence consists of letters, many of them responses to Beatrice Campbell's written inquiries and comments to hospital and city officials and agency executives. The outgoing correspondence consists of letters, memoranda, and notes, both typed and handwritten. Other notable documents include correspondence to Mayor Marion Barry, Jr., City Council, ANC members, and city agency and department executives and officials.

Title/Description	Instances	
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Incoming Correspondence, 1980-1983	box 1	folder 2
Outgoing Correspondence, 1978-1985	box 1	folder 3

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### Series 3: Organizations, 1980-1989, undated

box 1

#### Scope and Contents

This series documents a small portion of Beatrice Campbell's service to the District of Columbia, her volunteer work, and her commitment to African American authors.

Title/Description	Instances	
District of Columbia Commission on Aging, 1978-1979	box 1	folder 4
District of Columbia Statewide Health Coordinating Council (SHCC), 1980-1982	box 1	folder 5
Beatrice M. Murphy Foundation, undated	box 1	folder 6
Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), undated	box 1	folder 7

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### Series 4: Speeches and testimony, 1979-1984, undated

box 1

#### Scope and Contents

This series consists of speeches and testimony that Campbell delivered before various commissions and district hearings, the majority of which dealt with issues related to District of Columbia citizens who were elderly and/or physically or visually impaired.

Title/Description	Instances	
Speeches and Testimony, 1979-1984	box 1	folder 8
Speeches and Testimony, 1979-1984	box 1	folder 9

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### Series 5: Clippings and newsletters, 1955-1986, undated

box 1

## Scope and Contents

This series consists of clippings, most of which are photocopies. The photocopies include a Washington Post article and chapter of a book, both written by Beatrice Murphy Campbell, in which she described her efforts to clear her name and reputation following her suspension from the Veterans Administration. Other notable clippings include an obituary for her son, Alvin Murphy; an article about the District of Columbia's Women's Hall of Fame call for nominees; and a piece about the DC Public Library bookmobile that mentions Campbell. A Catholic Church Parish newsletter naming Campbell as Handicapped Person of the Year is also included.

Title/Description	Instances	
Clippings and Newsletters, 1955-1986	box 1	folder 10

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## Series 6: Awards, 1981-1989, undated

box 1

### Scope and Contents

This series consists of items that document a few of Beatrice Campbell's awards and nominations, including a self-produced "album" pertaining to her recognition as Handicapped Person of the Year.

Title/Description	Instances	
Handicapped Person of the Year, undated	box 1	folder 11
Handicapped Person of the Year, undated	box 1	folder 12
Women's Hall of Fame, D.C. Commission for Women, 1988-1989	box 1	folder 13

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## Series 7: Miscellaneous, 1980-1985, undated

box 1

### Scope and Contents

This series consists of items that cannot be integrated with any of the other series, most of which are undated.

Title/Description	Instances	
Miscellaneous, 1980-1985	box 1	folder 14

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**Series 8: Photograph, undated**

box 1

**Scope and Contents**

This series consists of one photograph.

Title/Description	Instances
Photograph, undated	box 1      folder 15

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