



Smithsonian

Anacostia Community Museum

Charles E. Qualls papers,
1899-1996, bulk 1960-1983

Vuanya T. Cyrus

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Anacostia Community Museum Archives
Title:	Charles E. Qualls papers
Date:	1899-1996 (bulk 1960-1983)
Identifier:	ACMA.06-013
Creator:	Qualls, Charles E., 1932-1984
Extent:	3.02 Linear feet (7 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Charles E. Qualls papers, which date from 1899 to 1988 and measure 3.02 linear feet, document the career of pharmacist and community organizer Charles E. Qualls. The papers are comprised of correspondence, documents from community organizations, magazines, newspaper clippings, photographs, and scrapbooks.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The Charles E. Qualls papers were donated to the Anacostia Community Museum in 1990 by the estate of Charles E. Qualls. Additional materials from his estate were donated by Dianne Dale in 2006.

Related Archival Materials

Anacostia Historical Society records located in Anacostia Community Museum Archives.

Alice Bell Finlayson papers located in Anacostia Community Museum Archives.

Ella B. Howard Pearis papers located in Anacostia Community Museum Archives.

Dale/Patterson family collection located in Anacostia Community Museum Archives.

Processing Information

The papers were processed in November 2009 by Vuanya T. Cyrus.

Preferred Citation

Charles E. Qualls papers, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution, gift of the estate of Charles E. Qualls.

Restrictions

The collection is open for unrestricted research. Use requires an appointment.

Ownership and Literary Rights

The Charles E. Qualls papers are the physical property of the Anacostia Community Museum. Literary and copyright belong to the author/creator or their legal heirs and assigns. Rights to work produced during the normal course of Museum business resides with the Anacostia Community

Museum. For further information, and to obtain permission to publish or reproduce, contact the Museum Archives.

Biographical Note

On May 23, 1912 Charles Edward Qualls was born in New Bern, Tennessee to Fred and Ary Watts Qualls. Shortly after his birth the family of fourteen moved to South Bend, Indiana. He graduated from high school there in 1932 with a dream of becoming a business owner. After a few diversions along the way, in 1941 he graduated from Howard University's School of Pharmacy. Mr. Qualls's determination to fulfill his dream proved quite strong; a few months after his graduation he opened his own drug store, the Anacostia Pharmacy. From that point on, he became "Doc Qualls" to all who knew him. Two years later he married Aleneitha Johnson of Conway, South Carolina and they had one son, Neal Frederic Qualls.

The Anacostia Pharmacy, located on Nichols Avenue – later renamed Martin Luther King Avenue – became a gathering place for the community. Young people socialized at the soda fountain while older people planned for the future of Anacostia. It was from these gatherings that the vision for a community business organization developed; a vision that was realized in 1949 with the establishment of Anacostia Business and Professional Association (ABPA).

The ABPA provided assistance to local businesses by garnering grants and loans, lobbying politicians, and, at times, enforcing business regulations. To maintain its presence in Anacostia, the Association sponsored awards for organizations throughout the community: schools, police precincts, and cultural organizations. Additionally, the organization contributed time and money to various politicians, serving as an intermediary between Anacostia and the city at-large.

His influence in Anacostia and District of Columbia extended beyond the interests of local businesses. His concern for the health of Anacostia's residents led him to found the Washington Pharmaceutical Association in 1947. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Southeast Unit of the D.C. Chapter of the National Cancer Society, which opened to great fanfare in 1968. Undoubtedly his most important contribution in the area of health was his tireless lobbying for a hospital in Ward 8. Eventually the city gave its approval, and Mr. Qualls got right to work conducting several fundraisers. The Morris Cafritz Memorial Hospital (Greater Southeast Community Hospital) opened in the spring of 1966 and Mr. Qualls served on its board.

As if addressing Anacostia's economic and health concerns were not enough, Mr. Qualls found time to work on the cultural front. He was a founding member of the Anacostia Historical Society whose mission was to preserve and promote the history and culture of Anacostia. The Society operated under the auspices of the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, and together the two organizations created an exhibit, Anacostia Story: 1608–1930. The show opened in 1977. On the historical front, Mr. Qualls and the ABPA lobbied the federal government – the National Park Service, in particular – to take ownership of Frederick Douglass's home. He, along with many others in the community, believed that only the stewardship of the government could save the house from ruin. His efforts paid off and he had a front row seat at the dedication ceremony for the newly established National Park Service historic site, Cedar Hill.

This pillar of the community died in 1984 at the age of 72. The official cause of death was cancer. But his family and friends would argue that point; many felt that he died of a broken heart. In late November 1983, the venerable Anacostia Pharmacy was robbed at gunpoint and then ransacked; all of this while Doc Qualls was undergoing what would be successful cancer surgery at his alma mater, Howard University. When he returned to his beloved pharmacy a few weeks later, he was absolutely devastated, so much so that he all but stopped working with the community organizations to which he had been dedicated. With his store padlocked and boarded up, his family and friends watched helplessly as his health declined. He was eventually readmitted to the hospital in late March of 1984 where, except for a few days in May, he remained for the rest of his life.

Charles Edward Qualls died on June 21, 1984.

Scope and Contents

This collection documents the professional life of Charles E. Qualls between 1960 and 1983. It contains materials related to Mr. Qualls's education, community involvement, and pharmacy business. Included in the collection are awards and citations, certificates, correspondence, financial records, photographic albums and prints, printed materials, and scrapbooks.

Arrangement

The papers are organized into six series. The content of each series is arranged alphabetically. There are oversize materials in the Biographical, Photographs and Miscellaneous series. The oversize materials in the Biographical and Miscellaneous series contain scrapbooks. The series are arranged as follows:

- Series 1: Biographical
- Series 2: Community Organizations
- Series 3: Correspondence
- Series 4: Photographs
- Series 5: Printed Materials
- Series 6: Miscellaneous

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

African American neighborhoods
African Americans
Community organization

Types of Materials:

Awards
Broadsides (notices)
Certificates
Clippings
Correspondence
Diplomas
Financial records
Journals (periodicals)
Photograph albums
Photographic prints
Scrapbooks

Names:

American Cancer Society
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum
Barry, Marion, 1936-
Greater Southeast Community Hospital (Washington, D.C.)
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Cancer Society
National Pharmaceutical Association

Patterson, Frederick D. (Frederick Douglass), 1901-1988
Qualls, Charles E., 1932-1984

Places:

Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical, 1941-1984

0.58 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series contains materials related to Mr. Qualls's commendations and education. Included are materials pertaining to his pharmaceutical activities with the Washington Pharmaceutical Association (WPA) and the National Pharmaceutical Association (NPA). The documents consist of awards and certificates, business records, diplomas, and obituaries.

Box 1, Folder 1	Anacostia Pharmacy artifacts, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Anacostia Pharmacy administrative materials, 1941, 1948-1950
Box 1, Folder 3	Anacostia Pharmacy financial records, 1948-1956
Box 1, Folder 4	Certificates, diploma and letters of appreciation, (bulk 1932; 1956-1983)
Box 1, Folder 5	Obituaries, 1984-06/1984-07
Box 1, Folder 6	Pharmacy certifications and awards, circa 1941-1983
Box 1, Folder 7	WPA and NPA activities, 1947-1980
	Oversize
Box 7	Pharmacy certifications and awards, circa 1941–1983

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Series 2: Community Organizations, 1921-1985

1.33 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series contains materials related to Mr. Qualls's involvement with various local and national civic organizations. The materials provide information about these organizations' administration, events, finances, fund raising, membership, and regulations. The documents in this series include awards and citations, correspondence, event programs, financial records, and printed materials.

Box 1, Folder 8	American Cancer Society correspondence and documents, circa 1960-1985
Box 1, Folder 9	Anacostia Business & Professional Association (ABPA) administrative records, circa 1967-1983
Box 1, Folder 10-11	ABPA--Ceremonies, 1963-1981 2 Folders ([oversize])
Box 1, Folder 12	ABPA--Correspondence, 1967-1983
Box 1, Folder 13-14	Anacostia Economic Development Corporation, 1969-1983, undated Notes: [2 folders]
Box 1, Folder 15-16	Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, 1968-1983, undated
Box 1, Folder 17	Committee of Concern, 1967-1974
Box 1, Folder 18-19	Greater Southeast Community Hospital, 1956-1977, undated 2 Folders ([oversize])
Box 1, Folder 20	Greater Southeast Community Hospital printed materials, 1964, undated
Box 2, Folder 1	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, circa 1921-1976
Box 2, Folder 2	Southeast Neighborhood House, 1954-1981
	Oversize
Box 5	ABPA--Ceremonies, 1963-1981
Box 6	Greater Southeast Community Hospital, 1956-1977

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Series 3: Correspondence, 1964-1983

0.06 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series contains correspondence related to Mr. Qualls's personal and his civic and political activities. As such, the documents consist of correspondence from civic groups, cultural institutions, local and national politicians, and municipal agencies. Of particular note is Mr. Qualls's correspondence with Mayor Marion S. Barry.

Box 2, Folder 3	Civic, 1964-1982
Box 2, Folder 4	Personal, 1972, 1981-1983, undated
Box 2, Folder 5	Political, 1975-1983

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Series 4: Photographs, 1918-1982

0.71 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: In his capacity as a founding member of the Anacostia Business and Professional Association and the Coordinating Committee of Anacostia and Vicinity Mr. Qualls participated in many ceremonies and community events. The majority of the photographs in this series document these events.

Box 3, Folder 1	American Cancer Society, 1978, 1967
Box 3, Folder 2-3	Anacostia Business & Professional Association [oversize], 1951-1979 Notes: [2 folders]
Box 3, Folder 4	Anacostia Economic Development Corporation, circa 1960-1982
Box 3, Folder 5	Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, 1979, undated
Box 3, Folder 6	Anacostia Pharmacy, 1966, 1945-1947, undated
Box 3, Folder 7	Ceremonies [oversize], 1947-1980
Box 3, Folder 8	Coordinating Committee of Anacostia and Vicinity, 1951-1960
Box 3, Folder 9	Fashion show and raffle, 1971
Box 3, Folder 10	Gatherings, circa 1918-1982
Box 3, Folder 11	Greater Southeast Community Hospital, 1964, 1973, undated
Box 3, Folder 12	Parkchester Housing Cooperative, 1969, 1978
Box 3, Folder 13	General photographs [oversize], 1953, 1971, undated
Oversize	
Box 4, Folder 1	Anacostia Business & Professional Association, 1951-1979
Box 4, Folder 2	Ceremonies, 1947-1980
Box 4, Folder 4	General photographs, 1971, 1953, undated
Box 4, Folder 5	General photographs, 1953, 1971, undated
Box 4, Folder 3	General photographs, 1953, 1971, undated
Cabinet 10, Drawer 1, Folder 2	Folder 2

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Series 5: Printed Materials, 1946-1985

0.13 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series contains printed materials related to political and cultural issues in Anacostia and Washington, DC. The materials also address national political concerns as they relate to African Americans.

Box 2, Folder 6	Newsletters, newspapers, and newspaper clippings, circa 1955-1985
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Box 2, Folder 7	Programs and magazines, circa 1946-1985
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Series 6: Miscellaneous, 1899-1988

0.21 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series contains documents related to Mr. Qualls various interests. It includes a scrapbook of "Negro Current Events" and programs from District of Columbia Public Schools events.

Box 2, Folder 8 District of Columbia Public Schools, 1967-1982, 1948

Box 2, Folder 9 Elzie S. Hoffman Music Festival, circa 1945-1977, 1899-1903

Box 2, Folder 10 General documents, circa 1967-1982

Box 2, Folder 11 Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, 1988-06-10

Box 2, Folder 12 Scrapbook, undated

Oversize

Box 6 Scrapbook, undated

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