

WELCOME and PROGRAM OVERVIEW

GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME. THANKS FOR JOINING US TODAY. NANNIE CHARGED MARY ALICE DORSETT TO BRING HER TEACHINGS TO THE PEOPLE. AND SHE HAS DONE THAT FAITHFULLY SINCE MISS BURROUGHS DEATH IN 1961, SENDING BURROUGHS VIEWS AND TO MANY PEOPLE, INCLUDING RAP BROWN, STOKLEY CARMICHAEL, THE KU KLUX KLAN AND EVERY PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. MISS DORSETT HAS AUTHORED A BOOK, ENTITLED "WINGS", BECAUSE MISS BURROUGHS TOLD HER, "A RACE RIZES ON ITS OWN WINGS, OR IS HELD DOWN BY ITS OWN WEIGHT". UPON LEARNING THAT I HAD DEVELOPED THE NANNIE HELEN BURROUGHS PROJECT, SHE WROTE TO HER CHILDREN, TELLING THEM THAT SHE WANTED COLONEL WYATT TO GIVE HIS NANNIE HELEN BURROUGHS POWER POINT PRESENTATION AT HER BIRTHDAY AND HER FUNERAL. I WAS TRULY HONORED. HOWEVER, AS I TRAVELED TO TAMPA, FLORIDA IN FEBRUARY OF 2010 FOR HER 85TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION, I HOPED THE EVENTS WERE NOT ON CONSECUTIVE DAYS (SMILE). OF COURSE AND THANKFULLY THEY WERE NOT, AND MISS DORSETT IS NOW 89 YEARS OF AGE. BUT, UNFORTUNATELY SHE RECENTLY SUFFERED A STROKE. SHE IS RECOVERING WELL, AND I ASK THAT WE DEDICATE THIS PROGRAM TO HER AND PRAY FOR A SPEEDY AND COMPLETE RECOVERY.

TODAY WE ARE DEEPLY INDEBTED TO FORMER MAYOR WALTER WASHINGTON FOR HAVING THE WISDOM AND FORESIGHT TO PROCLAIM MAY 10 AS NANNIE HELEN BURROUGHS DAY IN WASHINGTON. ALTHOUGH HE TOOK THIS ACTION 40 YEARS AGO, IN 1975, LITTLE ATTENTION HAS BEEN ACCORDED TO HER AND SHE SEEMS TO BE VIRTUALLY LOST TO HISTORY. SO, WE ARE HERE TODAY TO CELEBRATE HER CONTRIBUTIONS AND TO START-UP THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HER LEGACY. I USE THE TERM "START-UP" INTENTIONALLY, BECAUSE IT BRINGS TO MIND THE SPEECH THAT LAUNCHED HER ONTO THE NATIONAL SCENE. AT THE 1900 NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, BURROUGHS GAVE A SPEECH ENTITLED, "**HOW THE SISTERS ARE HINDERED FROM HELPING.**" AT SOME POINT DURING THE PROCEEDING, A MAN IN THE AUDIENCE YELLED, "WHO'S THAT YOUNG GIRL? WHY DON'T SHE SIT DOWN AND STOP TALKING, SHE'S JUST AN UP-START". IT IS REPORTED THAT BURROUGHS RETORTED, "YES, I MAY BE AN UP-START, BUT I'M JUST STARTING-UP." SHE DID "START-UP" AND THE REST IS HISTORY.

THE MONTH OF MAY IS VERY CENTRAL IN THE LIFE OF NANNIE HELEN BURROUGHS. TOMORROW IS MOTHERS DAY; NANNIE WAS NEVER MARRIED, BUT SHE HAD MORE CHILDREN THAN ANY MOTHER. THEY WERE THE CHILDREN OF ALL RACES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, AS YOU SEE IN THE PROGRAM BOOKLET, PARTICULARLY OUR LITTLE GIRLS. ON LAST SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2015, YOU HEARD WASHINGTONIAN KATHY ENGLISH HOLT, SPEAK ABOUT CELEBRATING NANNIE'S 136TH BIRTHDAY, RAISING FUNDS FOR HER GIRLS PROGRAM, WHICH IS BASED ON BURROUGHS VIEWS AND VALUES. AND, INTERESTINGLY, SHE PASSED DURING THE MONTH OF MAY IN 1961.

DURING A 2013 PRESENTATION TO THE PRINCE GEORGES' COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN, ITS PRESIDENT SAID: "COLONEL, WE'VE HEARD ABOUT HER, BUT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT HER". OUR OBJECTIVE TODAY IS TO TELL YOU ABOUT HER. IN SPITE OF HER EXTENSIVE TRAVELS AND SPEECHES THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTRY AND THE WORLD, THERE IS NO RECORDED AUDIO OR VIDEO OF THIS REMARKABLE WOMAN. FOR EXAMPLE, IN 1902 SHE TRAVELED 32,350 MILES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, DOING THE WORK OF THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY TO THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, WITHOUT A SALARY. IN 1905, AT 26-YEARS OF AGE, SHE WAS THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER IN HYDE PARK, LONDON, AT THE FIRST BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE CONGRESS, THE OVERARCHING ORGANIZATION OF BAPTIST CHRISTIANS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND HEADQUARTERED HERE IN ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. USING THE ORATORICAL SKILLS SHE LEARNED AT WASHINGTON'S M STREET SCHOOL (NOW DUNBAR), SHE BECAME AN INTERNATIONAL PERSONALITY WITH HER SPEECH, AS SHE THUNDERED TO THE CROWD OF 18,000: **"IT IS USELESS TO TELEGRAPH TO HEAVEN A SHIPLOAD OF BLESSINGS, WHEN THERE IS NO ONE ON THE WHARF TO UNLOAD THE SHIPS."** FINALLY, AND VIRTUALLY UNPRECEDENTED, IN 1943 SHE WAS APPOINTED TO THE ADVISORY LISTENING PANEL OF THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY AND GAVE A 1943 NATIONAL RADIO ADDRESS TO OUR FIGHTING MEN ABROAD.

IN CONCLUSION, I BRING YOU THE WORDS OF **KELLY MILLER, HOWARD UNIVERSITY DEAN** FROM 1907 TO 1935 AND WASHINGTON JOURNALIST: "SHE WAS A DYNAMO OF FEMININE ENERGY. TRACKING HER WAS NO EASY TASK. IT WAS LIKE TRYING TO CAPTURE THE WINDS IN MY HANDS. SHE MOVED AT AN EXTRAORDINARY PACE, TOUCHING DOWN ON LITERALLY EVERY ASPECT OF NEGRO LIFE FOR OVER SIXTY YEARS....THERE IS NO SPEAKER ON THE AMERICAN PLATFORM WHO CAN EXCEL HER IN.....ORIGINAL, HOMELY POWERFUL PRESENTATION OF TRUTH THAT STRIKES HOME AND BRINGS RESPONSE..."

SO, LET'S OPEN OUR HEARTS AND MINDS TO NANNIE HELEN BURROUGHS WORDS AND CELEBRATE HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR RACE AND COUNTRY.

