

## The Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial



Highsmith, C. M., photographer. Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from the Library of Congress.

Washington, DC, has many monuments. Until 40 years ago, they were all for white men. There were none for black people. There were none for women. In 1974, a special monument was built. It was for a black woman. Her name was Mary McLeod Bethune.

The National Council of Negro Women paid for the monument. Bethune began this organization in 1935. The council made the monument to honor her.

Bethune's monument is located in Lincoln Park. Lincoln Park is near the Capitol Building. It is 12 blocks away.

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Bethune's monument faces a monument of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln's monument is on the other side of the park. President Lincoln gave the order to free all the slaves. It was called the Emancipation Proclamation. It was written down on a piece of paper. The monument shows Lincoln standing. He is holding the Emancipation Proclamation. A black man is next to him. His hands were in chains. But the chains were broken. He holds his up his freed hands.

The monument of Bethune is large. It is made out of brass. It shows three people. It shows Bethune. It



shows her as an old lady. She holds a cane in her right hand. President Roosevelt gave her that cane. She holds a scroll in her other hand.

The scroll is her legacy. A legacy is a gift. Bethune's gift is education. She wanted every black child to

have an education. The other two people are black children. One is a girl. The other is a boy. Bethune is passing her legacy to these children.

The memorial was supposed to be unveiled in 1963. This year was the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. The artists building the memorial were black. In 1963, they were busy fighting for civil rights. They didn't have time to work on the memorial. The completed monument was finally unveiled on July 10th, 1974. This date was Bethune's birthday. She would have been 99 years old. Eighteen thousand people came to see the memorial.

