

Written by Kathy

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CLEVELAND, Ohio-The Carl Stokes Brigade will hold its 16th Annual Grave Site Commemoration services for the late Carl B. Stokes (pictured), the first Black mayor of a major metropolitan city, on Sun. April 22 from 3:00-5:00 pm at Lakeview Cemetery in Cleveland, 12316 Euclid Ave.

The event is free and open to the public, and the contact for the ceremony is Marva Patterson at 216-334-7013.

Led by David Patterson with other long term affiliates such as former Brigade president and prior Cleveland School Board Member Genevieve Mitchell, Bert Jennings, Donnie Pastard, Terri Tolefree, George Edwards and opera singer Clarence Marshall, the Brigade is a grassroots entity that says its mission is to fight for the little people of Cuyahoga County and elsewhere, and for changes in public policy for the betterment of the greater Cleveland community.

Stokes, who died in 1996 of cancer of the esophagus, grew up in a Cleveland housing project.

His father died when he was three years old and he and his brother Louis, who went on to become the first Black congressman from Ohio, were reared by their mother, who worked multiple jobs to make ends meet.

He was a state representative for three terms before his election to mayor in 1967 by a restless Cleveland community that was roughly 60 percent White at the time but is now majority Black.

Grave site ceremony for the late Carl B. Stokes as the first Black mayor of a major metropolitan city when

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After serving one term as mayor and deciding against seeking reelection, he was a New York anchorman, the first Black anchorman in New York history.

After a successful media career Stokes returned home and served as a Cleveland Municipal Court judge from 1983-1994.

In 1994, former president Bill Clinton appointed him as Ambassador to the Republic of Seychelles.

His journey to become the first Black mayor of a major American city is outlined in his book titled "Promises of Power."

Reach Editor and Journalist Kathy Wray Coleman at ktcoleman8@aol.com and phone number: 216-932-3114.