

## **Paul R. Williams Chronology**

### **1884**

- 1884-1893 Memphis city directories list Chester Stanley Williams as a waiter at the Peabody Hotel.

### **1887**

- Chester S. Williams listed in Memphis city directories as partner in a Beale Street confectionary.
- Marriage of Chester Stanley & Lila A. Wright Williams in Avery Chapel, AME Church, Memphis.

### **1893**

- Chester and Lila Williams and their son, Chester Stanley Williams, Jr., move to Los Angeles.

### **1894**

- LA city directory lists Chester S. Williams, waiter, at 842 Santee St.
- Paul R. Williams born February 18 at 842 Santee St, Los Angeles.

### **1896**

- Chester S. Williams dies.

### **1898**

- LA city directory lists Lila A. Williams as a dressmaker at 1405 Silver Street.
- Lila A. Williams dies.

### **1900**

- Attends Sentous Avenue Grammer School on Pico Boulevard with diverse student body, including European, Asian and Mexican children. According to Williams' own statement, he was the only black student.

### **1910**

- U.S. census shows Paul Williams living with Emily P. Clarkson (guardian or foster mother), 784 E. 15th Street, Los Angeles.

### **1912**

- Graduates from Polytechnic High School in Los Angeles
- 1912-1916 attends LA School of Art.

### **1913**

- Works in office of Wilbur D. Cook, Jr. landscape designer and planner. Projects include gardens for Irving Gill's Dodge House.
- 1913-1916 attended Society of Beaux-Arts Architects, Los Angeles Architectural Club. (AIA Directory, Second Edition, 1962, pg 765)

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### **1914**

- 1914-1917 works with Reginald D. Johnson. Exact dates for work in Johnson office unclear. One of the most sought after residential designers, Johnson specialized in the California Mission/Spanish revival style.
- Award for Pasadena Four Corners shopping area intersection design. John C. Austin, one of LA's most prominent architects, was a juror. Williams later works for Austin.

### **1915**

- Williams certified as building contractor.
- Wins Honorable Mention at the Chicago Emancipation Celebration.

### **1916**

- Studies architectural engineering at University of Southern California 1916-1919.
- Designed senior home for Western Baptist Association.
- As a member of the Los Angeles Architectural Club, receives an award from the [national] Society of Beaux-Arts Architects. (AIA Journal, April 1916, pg 171.)

### **1917**

- June 5, draft registration: unmarried, living at 1530 E. 31st Street, Los Angeles, arch/draftsman for Reginald Johnson.
- Marries Della Mae Givens, June 27, 1917.
- 1917-1921 Williams works with Arthur F. Kelly.

### **1919**

- Wins Hollow Tile House Competition.

### **1920**

- Appointed to 1st Los Angeles City Planning Commission. Serves until 1928.
- U.S. census, living with godmother (or foster mother) and wife at 784 E.15<sup>th</sup>, Los Angeles.

### **1921**

- Received certificate to practice architecture in California (Southwest Builder & Contractor, 6/10/1921)
- 1921-1924 worked in John C. Austin office. Williams listed as head designer in Austin's office, Who's Who in Colored Los Angeles (1930-31) pg. 76. Austin's office was known for large public and commercial projects including the Shrine Civic Auditorium and Hollywood Masonic Temple.

### **1922**

- Opens Paul R. Williams and Associates in Stock Exchange Building.
- Designs Louis Cass residence, Flintridge.

### **1923**

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- 1st recorded African American member of AIA. Elected to membership on May 14, 1923 (letter from AIA Executive Secretary dated May 25, 1923).

### **1924**

- 2nd Baptist Church, one of the two oldest African American churches in Los Angeles, designed with Norman F. Marsh.

### **1925**

- Designed 28th St. YMCA. In addition to serving African American youth, the 28<sup>th</sup> St. YMCA was an important meeting place for African American leaders in Los Angeles.

### **1926**

- Baird House, Glendale in a Mediterranean Revival style. Williams designed every detail from the landscape to the hardware and drapery.

### **1927**

- Designs Hollywood YMCA.
- PRW moves offices to Wilshire Arts Building at Wilshire Blvd and Manhattan Place

### **1929**

- Appointed to National Memorial Commission (1929-1932) by Calvin Coolidge.
- Designs Atkins House, Pasadena—used in film *Topper* and *Batman or Stately Wayne Manor* and many other movies and television programs.

### **1930**

- Received commission for E. L. Cord Home, 32,000 square foot home in Beverly Hills.

### **1931**

- An exhibit of Paul R. Williams' residential designs is held in September at the Building Materials Exhibit in Los Angeles.
- Williams' designs for the Cord Home were featured in the Architects Building Materials Exhibit in Los Angeles. The Cord Home was said to be an unusually large example of Southern Colonial style of architecture. (Architect and Engineer)
- Samples of Williams' architectural drawings were included in an exhibition Maya to Monterey sponsored by the May Co. The exhibition displayed a series of colored architectural drawings of Maya civilization and its influence on modern California architecture to the present times (LA Times).

### **1933**

- Appointed to first Los Angeles Municipal Housing Commission. Serves until 1941.
- Appointed to National Board of Municipal Housing.

### **1934**

## **Paul R. Williams Chronology**

- Jay Paley Estate, Holmby Hills. Williams also designed a weekend house for Paley in Lake Arrowhead and, with Gordon Kaufmann, designed the plush Arrowhead Springs Hotel for Paley and wealthy Hollywood investors.
- Angelus Funeral Home.
- Paul R. Williams displays his furniture designs at UCLA. The furniture was designed and created in his own shop for Bullock's Wilshire and the Hollander Shops, New York. "His aims are, one judges, simplicity of construction, lightness and economy, and his style is free of any jazzy tendency. He uses his materials frankly and pleasingly." (LA Times)
- Williams a judge in the TEMPO ROOMS context. (LA Times)
- Williams completes first project in Reno, Nevada—Garvey House

### **1935**

- Knickerbocker Hotel, Los Angeles, extensive renovations.
- Sunset Plaza Apartments, Los Angeles.
- Williams completes Rancho San Rafael in Reno, Nevada.

### **1936**

- YMCA Board of Directors for Metropolitan Los Angeles YMCA. Serves until 1954.
- Barbara Stanwyck House, Beverly Hills.
- Obtains license to practice in Washington, DC, begins work in collaboration with modernist architect Hilyard Robinson on Langston Terrace, the first federally funded public housing project.
- Presented complete model house in California House and Garden Exhibition. Other participants who presented a model house in the exhibition included, Neutra, Risley, Byers, Kelley, Muir and Estep.

### **1937**

- Williams designed first phase Music Corporation of America, Beverly Hills.
- Tyrone Power purchased a Williams' designed residence, Brentwood.
- William "Bojangles" Robinson residence, Los Angeles. 1194 36<sup>th</sup> Place, Late 1930s
- Eddie "Rochester" Anderson residence, Los Angeles. 3700 Cimarron St.
- Listed in newspaper article (LA Times) with Los Angeles business and civic leaders.

### **1938**

- Williams working on elevation renderings for First Church of Christ, Scientist, Reno, Nevada. Rendering published 1938,
- Member of California delegation to 16<sup>th</sup> International Housing and Town Planning Congress in Mexico City. (LA Times)
- Citizens of Los Angeles Award for service in local and national affairs and inspiration of youth.
- Member of Arts & Crafts Committee for 5<sup>th</sup> annual art contest for Southern California Festival of Allied Arts
- Williams completes Loomis Manor, Reno, NV

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### **1939**

- Saks Fifth Avenue renovations, Beverly Hills.
- Williams completes El Reno Apartments and First Church of Christ, Scientist in Reno, Nevada.
- Men's Dormitory, Howard University, with Hilyard Robinson.
- AIA Award of Merit, Southern California Chapter, for Music Corporation of America.

### **1940**

- Roosevelt Naval Base, Long Beach, 1940s
- President Franklin Delano Roosevelt appoints Williams to State Selective Service Board. Period of service 1940-45.
- Chief architect of Pueblo del Rio in collaboration with Adrian Wilson; Gordon Kaufmann; Becket and Wurdeman; and Richard Neutra. A City of Los Angeles project, this 400-apartment complex was the only one of 15 public housing sites designed to be available to African Americans.
- Arrowhead Springs Hotel, Arrowhead Springs, California opens. The 1940s version was designed with Gordon Kaufmann for Hollywood moguls, Jay Paley, Joseph Schenck, with celebrities Constant Bennett, Claudette Colbert, Daryl Zanuck and Al Jolson, the resort was to be a luxury retreat for the rich and famous.

### **1941**

- Appointed by Gov. Earl Warren to California Housing Commission.
- Leslie Lumley residence, San Marino, California.
- Represented LA Housing Authority on panel "Theory and Practice Regarding the Negro in the Public Housing Program."
- Contributed to the display "Architecture under the Sun" with Neutra, Schindler, Kirby, Cliff May, Wright, and Lee.
- Receives Honorary Doctor of Science Degree from Lincoln University, Missouri.
- Opens office in Bogota, Columbia.

### **1944**

- Mr. and Mrs. Paul R. Williams attended a cocktail party in honor of House Beautiful editors Elizabeth Gordon and Frances Heard at the home of interior designer Paul Granard.
- Publishes *The Small Home of Tomorrow*.
- Bogotá Country Club, Bogotá, Colombia.
- Serves as a re-employment committeeman for State Selective Service Commission.
- Wins Distinguished Service Award from U.S. Treasury Dept.
- Member of Citizen's Revenue and Taxation Committee for LA

### **1946**

- Renovations for Beverly Wilshire Hotel begin.
- Hotel Granada, Bogotá, Colombia opens.

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- Publishes *New Homes for Today*.
- Architectural drawings included in American Negro in the Fine Arts presented by the Interfaith Council of the University Religious Conference (Westwood Village)
- Williams completes plans for Tharpe/Brinkerhoff house in Lovelock, NV

### **1947**

- Beverly Hills Hotel—extensive renovations and additions created a new identity for the property including the iconic logo script, the Polo Lounge, Fountain Coffee Shop and Crescent Lounge. Additional renovations and additions by Williams in the late 50s amplified his signature designs.
- Palm Springs Tennis Club additions and renovations completed, with A. Quincy Jones.
- Helps found and serves as vice president and director of Broadway Federal Savings and Loan, the oldest federal African-American savings and loan west of the Mississippi. After retirement and until his death acts as director emeritus.
- Selected to design three-million-dollar Psychopathic Unit of the Los Angeles County Hospital; it is the first time an African-American has been chosen to design a large public building in Los Angeles.
- Appointed to the California Redevelopment Commission by Governor Earl Warren. 1947-49.

### **1948**

- Wins Distinguished Service Award from U.S. Treasury Dept.
- Pres. Harry Truman presents Doctor of Architecture from Howard University.
- Serves as delegate to Republican National Convention.
- W & J Sloan Department Store, Beverly Hills. The store provided every choice for residential interior design in 100,000 sq. ft. with room vignettes and a full-scale model home.
- Town & Country Restaurant, Palm Springs. (An epic historic preservation battle surrounds this building in 2010.)
- Received Veterans of Foreign Wars Award of Merit, Civil Architecture.
- Construction begins on Lovelock Inn, Lovelock, NV. Designed by Williams. Opens in Spring 1949.
- Licensed to practice in New York.

### **1949**

- Extensive renovations and new bungalow addition to the Ambassador Hotel, including iconic design of the Coconut Grove nightclub, the coffee shop and grand entry.
- Appointed by Governor Earl Warren to the California State Housing Commission 1949-1955.
- Lovelock Inn, Lovelock, NV opens in spring.

### **1950**

- Pres. Eisenhower appoints to National Housing Commission and Advisory Committee on Government Housing Policies and Programs.

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- Al Jolson Memorial, Hillside Memorial Park, Culver City, California.
- March of Dimes Foundation Treasurer, 1950-1956.

### **1951**

- Awarded contract for LA County Courthouse in collaboration with four other architects.
- National Conference of Christians and Jews Distinguished Citizen Award, 1951.
- Honored by Builders and Allied Trades Committee of National Conference of Christians and Jews with three others for promoting brotherhood among men.
- Offers free design to Danny Thomas for an integrated 1000-bed hospital in the South.
- Circa 1951, moves offices to 3757 Wilshire Boulevard

### **1952**

- Roberts Ranch House
- Designs Engineering and Architecture Building, Howard University, with Hilyard Robinson.
- Remodeled El Mirador Hotel, Palm Springs.
- Receives honorary Doctor of Architecture degree from Howard University, Washington, D.C.; degree presented by President Truman.
- Selected as a delegate pledged to Earl Warren, Republican National Convention.
- Proposes design for Memorial to the Unknown Sailor and helps begin campaign to raise money.

### **1953**

- Designs Dave Chasen Residence, Los Angeles. The dramatic modern home was designed to encompass 360-degree views from a high plateau overlooking the city. Williams also designed "Chasen's," the popular restaurant.
- Receives NAACP Spingarn Medal, an annual award given to one person for exceptional achievement. Other recipients of the time include: Paul Robeson (1945); Ralph Bunche (1949); Martin Thurgood Marshall (1954); Jack R. Robinson (1956); Luther King, Jr. (1957); J. Langston Hughes (1960).
- Los Angeles Municipal Art Commission, President 1953 – (1956)
- Member of Citizen's Committee for Major League Baseball chaired by Conrad Hilton.
- Appointed to Housing Advisory Commission by President Eisenhower Advisory Committee on government Housing Policies and Programs.

### **1954**

- Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz House, Palm Springs.
- Awarded honorary Doctor of Fine Arts, Tuskegee University.
- Designed Mercedes Benz Showroom in Los Angeles.
- Designs, at no charge, the Washington, D.C. shrine for the Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

### **1955**

- Dental School, Howard University, with Hilyard Robinson.
- Served on AIA Materials Research Committee.

## **Paul R. Williams Chronology**

- Appointed to special study commission on California Correctional Facilities and Services by Governor Goodwin Knight.
- Designs additions and alterations to Knickerbocker Hotel in LA.
- American Red Cross, Board of Directors, Los Angeles Chapter.
- United Service Organization [USO] Board of Directors.
- Big Brothers of Los Angeles Board of Directors.

### **1956**

- Frank Sinatra Residence, Trousdale Estates, Beverly Hills.
- Receives honorary Doctor of Fine Arts, Tuskegee Institute.
- Williams suggests placing a golden crown on the LA City Hall to show the city's rank "as a monarch among cities."
- Appointed by Mayor Poulson to the UN Day Committee.
- Honored by *Wisdom Magazine* for "significant contributions to knowledge and distinguished service to mankind."
- Nominated for Fellowship AIA by Southern California Chapter on September 24, 1956. FAIA awarded October 22, 1956 from AIA archives official form. From same document: Firm name is Paul R. Williams, Architect and Consultant at 3757 Wilshire Blvd. Licensed to practice architecture by California, New York, Washington, D.C.
- American Renewal Foundation, Board of Directors.
- Outdoor Life and Health Association Trustee.
- Board for Fundamental Education.
- Regional Planning and Development Section of Town Hall, Member.
- 33<sup>rd</sup> Degree Masonic National Gold Metal Award.

### **1957**

- Commissioned to design UCLA Botany Building.
- Proposed a design for a resort hotel for African Americans in Las Vegas with singer Billy Daniels.
- Met with other black leaders to form an insurance company to be owned and operated by African Americans, proposed name National Equity Life.
- Receives Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce for Creative Planning.

### **1958**

- President, Advisory Committee of State of California, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.
- Board member, Catholic Big Brothers and Jewish Big Brothers of Los Angeles (LA Times)
- Named to design team for Los Angeles International Airport, with Pereira & Luckman Associates and Welton Becket & Associates.
- National Equity Life (1957) was renamed International Opportunity Life Insurance Company. Martin Luther King, Jr. endorses the insurance company as the 1<sup>st</sup> integrated life insurance company.

### **1959**

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- Named by the Republican Party to a 43-member committee on programs and progress. Only African American and one of four from California, including Mayor of San Francisco, the committee was charged with formulating a long range GOP program for “the people.”
- Made Chairman of the Board of the Community Service Center in LA, the Center found housing and jobs for newly arrived African Americans in Los Angeles.

### **1960**

- Delegate to Republican National Convention for Nixon.
- Williams and Joe Lewis endorsed Nixon/Lodge ticket for president.
- Licensed to practice in Tennessee.
- Founder’s Church of Religious Science dedicated, Los Angeles.
- Marina del Rey Junior High School opens, Marina del Rey.
- Master Plan of Meharry Medical College, Fisk University, Nashville.

### **1961**

- Paul R. Williams’s portrait presented to Howard University on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the School of Engineering and Architecture.

### **1962**

- LAX Theme building opens to public.
- St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital dedicated in Memphis. Williams donated his designs for hospital.
- Listed in *Ebony* as one of “America’s 100 Richest Negroes.”
- Williams designed the City of Los Angeles float for the Rose Bowl Parade.
- Received Institute Mexicano Silver Award.
- Paul R. Williams & Associates, one of 6 state firms, to win an Architectural Award of Excellence from American Institute of Steel Construction in recognition of outstanding use of structural steel (LA Times)
- Donates plans for a new \$1 million First AME Church addition/expansion.

### **1963**

- Fellow of *Chicago Defender* Roundtable.
- Published the essay as part of a series “If I Were Young Today” in *Ebony*.
- Guardian Angel Cathedral, Las Vegas.

### **1964**

- Designed Beverly-Sunset Medical Center, West Hollywood.
- First African American to design a municipal project, P.S. 154, in New York City since Vertner Tandy.
- Named to advisory board for the International Design Center.
- Received honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree, Atlanta University.

### **1965**

## **Paul R. Williams Chronology**

- Receives National Society of Interior Designers Design Award.
- Williams architectural renderings and Gordon Parks photographs displayed at Rockford College, Illinois, as part of a five-day festival “Creativity and the Negro.”

### **1966**

- USC Alumni Merit Award.
- Submits designs for buildings at Fisk.

### **1967**

- Included in a list of African American philanthropists. Also notes that Williams and 6 other members of his family are Life Members of NAACP.

### **1968**

- Chasen’s Restaurant, alterations and additions.

### **1969**

- Woodrow Wilson High School, LA.
- Mr. and Mrs. Paul R. Williams attended a State Dinner in Los Angeles (the first not held in the White House) in honor of Apollo 11 astronauts. Hosted by President and Mrs. Nixon, over 1000 guests were invited to this State Dinner. Only 40 guests were African American.

### **1973**

- Williams retires from practice. He is honored by his colleagues.

### **1974**

- AIA elects Williams to Emeritus status.

### **1977**

- Awarded City Council Commendation for Artistic Contribution to Los Angeles.

### **1980**

- Dies on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.