FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coordinator: Felix Grant
(202) 554-5776

UNVEILING AND DEDICATION OF A
COMMENORATIVE PLAQUE AT DUKE ELLINGTON'S BIRTH SITE
2129 WARD PLACE, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1989 --10:00 a.m.


All Ellington Society Chapters and residents of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area are extremely proud to honor this elegant American composer, orchestrator, and musical genius on the 90th anniversary of his birth.

The first Duke Ellington International Festival and month-long activities began in April 1987, as a result of painstaking research by Felix Grant, a well-known jazz broadcaster, in locating Duke's birthplace and eventually his birth certificate. A Ceremonial Resolution was adopted by The City Council declaring April as "Duke Ellington Month". Felix Grant and Barbara Nicholson, Executive Director of the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities served as co-chairpersons.

more...more...
The commemorative plaque could not be put in place until this year due to area construction. The building on the birth site is owned by Ulysses G. "Blackie" Auger. He agreed to affix the plaque to the building -- and to name it -- The Duke Ellington Building. The exact site -- 2129 Ward Place, N.W. -- is immediately behind "Blackie's House of Beef", 22nd and M Streets, N.W. We applaud Mr. Auger for this significant civic and historical event.

The open-air ceremony will include the unveiling of the plaque by Duke's son, Mercer Ellington, music by the University of the District of Columbia School of Music, comments by former members of the Ellington organization, and other jazz aficionados.

The International Duke Ellington Society is pleased to announce that this dedication ceremony is the first of what promises to be an annual celebration at this site.