

**Albert R. Anness**  
**Page, U.S. House of Representatives**

**President Truman's Inauguration: Part Two**

Albert R. Anness remembers watching President Truman's inauguration from the roof of the Capitol after being asked to leave the inaugural platform.

*Interview recorded April 9, 2013*

We arose from our seats when the Marine Band again struck up "Hail to the Chief," announcing the arrival of President Truman, his wife, Bess, and daughter, Margaret. Standing there, thrilled to be participating in inaugural ceremonies, Jim and I were thunderstruck when out into the middle aisle stepped "Fishbait" Miller looking straight up at us, and, unexpectedly, with great emphasis, gestured for Jim and I to leave the inaugural platform and to leave immediately! We looked at each other in utter disbelief! How could "Fishbait" in this huge throng of people have known Jim and I were on that platform? Considering the distance from where we were seated to where he was standing, it would just not seem possible. Congressman Breen, who had been observing the scene, turned to me and said, "Al, I guess you will have to go." With the sound of "Hail to the Chief" ringing in our ears, we quickly disappointed. I'd like to point out one other thing here with regard to that. The historical significance of President Truman's inauguration is greatly enhanced when you consider that of the Members of the 81st Congress sitting, attending his inauguration, four of them would someday themselves become President—i.e. John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, and Gerald R. Ford—three of whom—Johnson, Nixon, and Ford—would, like Truman, serve as first as Vice President, and they were all right down sitting in front of us. So, disappointed, but not ready to call it quits, Jim and I scurried up to the roof of the Capitol building, sharing a lofty vantage point with the Marines who were there en garde, but it was not the same. And while, after a while we came back down, and with several other House Pages viewed the remainder of President Truman's inauguration from one of the House windows. To mark the occasion, we opened the window panels and inscribed our names.