Blacks struggled fo

Continued from page 70

day for their labors.

Adults weren't paid much more — 90 cents for a full day's work. All the plowing was done with mules.

Some women worked on a picking belt at the Howard and Tuttle phosphate mine to pick out rocks from the phosphate as a belt moved it to the crusher, remembered Viola Greene, who moved to Inverness in 1915 when she was eight years old.

Deacon Henry Anderson, who came to South Carolina to Hernando in 1926 traveled to Ocala on a horse and buggy to work on a dragline.

But times got tough for both blacks and whites during the Great Depression. The phospate mines and other industies had closed, but most people stayed and found other work, such as with the WPA, said Johnson.

Money was scarcer than ever. "Yes, it really was tough," said Julia Williams of South Dunnellon. She said stamps, say for sugar or shoes, were available, but the stores' inventories were depleted. "The stores were empty," she said. "It was real bad."

But nobody starved. Johnson said people would fish and hunt wild berries for jam to tide them over.

"There was no welfare in the community," said Copeland.

Although Copeland said there always has been opportunity for black businessmen, that was not the case all over the county.

"The city has always been a fair city," he said. "Blacks have always had an opportunity for business in Crystal River."

But whites cornered the market in South Dunnellon. Although there were several businesses owned by whites in the black neighborhoods, only one black man, Joe Williams, owned a grocery store, said Johnson.

But when it came to the baby business, black midwives played a crucial role. "Most babies were born at home," said Williams, whose grandmother, Julia Williams, was a midwife. "Midwives were the only way babies were born in this section of South and West Dunnellon."

"They were very good," said Johnson. "They lost no cases."

While hard work has been the norm for blacks, most found solace in religion, and most lives centered around the church.

"Most of our lives were centered around the church, said Johnson, who has belonged to the Second Bethel Baptist Church all her life. "Even our entertainment was centered around the church."

"Church was one of the most important parts of our life," said Henry Anderson of Hernando in an 1981 interview.

The age of the churches in the black community is perhaps most telling of its cultural influence. In both Crystal River and South Dunnellon, the churches are the



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Many of the black families

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Collins remembers a radio
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The same was true in Cryst
"We never had extreme bigot
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But everything was separat

THE CENTENNIAL

Blacks struggled for jobs, education

By JORDIE WOODWARD
Staff Writer

Growing up black wasn't easy in turn-of-the-century Citrus County.

Life revolved around three things — work, church and the struggle for education, said several black citizens who were asked to recount their earliest memories.

"Things have always been tough for balck people in small places," said Annie Johnson, teacher, community leader and native of South Dunnellen.

At one time, blacks comprised the core of hard labor for the booming phosphate, rail, cypress sawmill and terpentine industries, forming a solid economic base for the county.

Some were bought in as privately-owned slaves, but most came on their own volition from all over the South to work in the various industries.

Their numbers swelled past 10,000 in early 1900, only to shrink to less than 2,000 in the 1970s. During the peak of the phospate mining in the county, Floral City's black population exceeded 9,000.

Although manual jobs were plentiful for blacks at that time, the wages were too low to support a family. Men worked for $3 a day in the phosphate mines, said Johnson, and women received half that salary. To make it, both parents had to work and the older childern had to stay at home and help raise the younger siblings.

Some men supplemented their jobs by working on the railroad, laying rails and cross ties. Collins said she remembers the men and the song they sang as they worked.

Although cash was scarce, food usually was plentiful from crops grown on small plots of land. Typical crops included peas, cotton, peanuts, okra and tomatoes.

"A typical day for us was mostly work — not play," she said.

While some women worked as pickers in the phospate mines, most took in laundry and performed domestic jobs to help make ends meet.

Marie Collins, another South Dunnellon native, remembered doing the wash at the community well. "It was right down the middle of the highway," she said, pointing in the direction of U.S. 41 and S.R. 488. "Oh, that was a pretty place, there were many oak trees."

And though doing laundry at a well was hard work, she smiled at the memory. That was where the women would meet, exchange news and generally brighten the workload.

Ironing also was done at the community well, using hot irons warmed by an outside fire, said Mrs. Johnson.

"We had to work if we wanted to get anything," said Nellie Watkins of Crystal River in an interview last year. "From the time I was old enough, I did household chores for white people. They'd pay me 50, maybe 75 cents, or something out of the kitchen for a day's work."

Watkins held a number of jobs in her long life, concluding her working years as an oyster shucker for a seafood house.

Frederick Copeland, prominent black leader, former school principal and accountant, started off shining shoes in the front of Alvin Allen's barber shop in downtown Crystal River. "I started out at 50 cents a week," he said. "After that my rent was free.

Copeland's parents, like many other blacks of the time, moved to work for the big cedar mill in Crystal River. He was born in an small box house with a tin roof in 1917, right where the Suncoast Plaza is now, he said. Then they moved to a home on N.E. Second Street a year later — a site where he still lives.

But times got tough for the large Copeland family after his father died. The parent and six childern had to exist on the $40 to $45 a month his mother earned as a teacher and whatever Copeland, 8, could earn in his shoeshine business — not much at 10 cents a shine.

He also earned money by catching crabs for fishing guides, he said. "As a boy, I felt I was responsible for my mother's well-being," he said.

But Copeland takes all the hard work in stride. "We had a very normal life," he said.

After the mills closed down, most blacks stayed in Crystal River and went into guiding and fishing, he said.

"Blacks, for the most part, were homebound," he said. "The success they achieved didn't come as easy. When they found success, that's where they stayed."

"That's why it's not unusual to find property in the same black family for 200 years, he said. In keeping with that pride of property, Copeland owns several historic homes and homesites in Crystal River. His own home is an enlarged version of the existing home he grew up in.

In Inverness, many black men worked at the One Mile Still, a turpentine plant one mile out of town. Others worked the cotton fields and other crops in farms outside the city. During a meeting of the Citrus County Historic Society, Reverend Leroy Bellamy said children used to pick cotton in the fields as young as five years old. They worked from sunup to sundown and were paid 50 cents a



THOSE SCHOOLGIRL DAYS— Three leaders of the black community in South Dunnellon recall what it was like to grow up in the days of segregation. Times were tough, they said, but education was the key to eventual success. Pictured from left are Annie Johnson, Marie Collins and Julia Williams. (Photo by Jordie Woodward)

Please see **Blacks**, page 71

The best days'

Black school alumni gather for reunion

By DANIEL LeDUC
Citrus Times Staff Writer

INVERNESS — Things have changed for the graduates of Booker T. Washington High School.

For one thing, their alma mater is no longer around. Inverness Middle School now sits where the black high school used to.

But for the graduates, their school still exists in memories of homecoming parades, football games and lasting friendships.

"It was a lot of fun," Alida Vickers Langley, Class of '59, says simply.

SHE AND OTHER graduates of Booker T. Washington gathered this weekend for their first annual reunion. Graduates and old teachers traveled from as far away as California for the festivities that included a picnic, dance and worship service.

They have a lot to remember.

> Friday night, in the cafeteria of Inverness Middle School, the Booker T. Washington grads from 1950 to 1968 were too busy remembering good things — like trips to watch their Hornets take on the Dade City Wildcats in basketball — to dwell on the bad.

In 1950, all the black schools except one for grade-schoolers were consolidated into one. According to a history of the high school the graduates prepared, all the wooden school buildings from South Dunnellon, Hernando, Floral City and Inverness were moved to an uncleared, undeveloped site and were placed between the tree stumps where the middle school is now.

Originally it was called Inverness High, but then one day someone used red paint on the sign with the school's name. "N----r school," they wrote. Soon after, the name was changed to Booker T. Washington.

CONDITIONS WEREN'T exactly the same for the black school as they were for the white schools.

There were two "furnaces" for Booker Washington — "pot belly stoves they were called at that time," recalled Archie Dabney, a coach back then.

Physical education teacher Ruth Miller Mills also taught science and eighth-grade math.

Most of the equipment was secondhand and the typewriters wrote only capital letters.

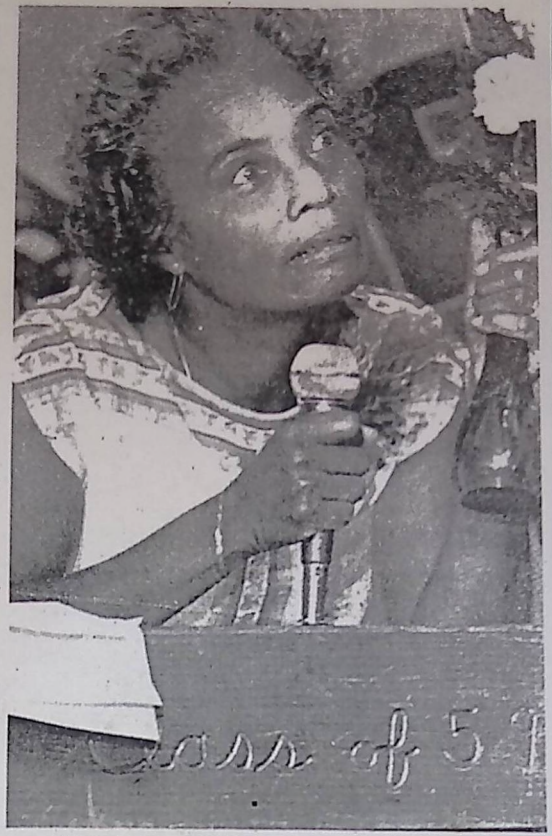
But things changed. In 1968 the county's schools were integrated. And this year, Dabney will become the new principal of the new Lecanto High School.

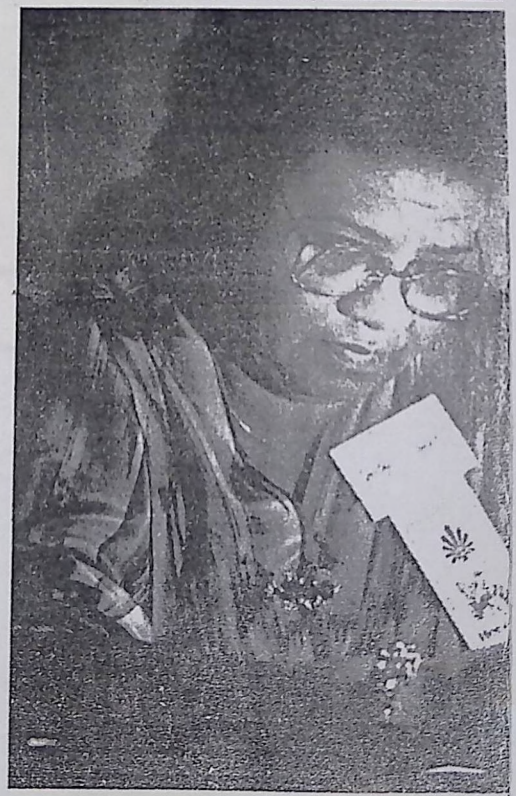
And, Friday night, in the cafeteria of the middle school the graduates from 1950 to 1968 were too busy remembering good things to dwell on the bad.

THEY WERE TOO busy remembering trips to Dade City for basketball games — the Hornets in their maroon and gray taking on the Dade City Wildcats.

They sang their school songs, remembering them 30 years later without printed music.

You remember the good things, Mrs. Langley says. "Those were the best days."





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About the Author



Gail Cassandra Copeland currently lives in Tallahassee, Florida. She is the mother of four children: Nichole Jeneen Green, Azure Dee Minott, Carmen Christina Hargrett and Christoper Copeland Hargrett; mother-in-law of Bryan Contejean Green; and the grandmother of DeVante Javan Green. She is operations manager for the Florida Governor's Alliance for Employment of Disabled Citizens.

KNEE HIGH

CHRONICLES OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 1923 - 1968

WRITTEN & PRODUCED BY:
Gail Cassandra Copeland
Class of 1971
June 1995

THE CLASS OF 1971

Vera Hopkins Baker
Mt. Vernon, New York

Minnie B. Hall Clarke
Jacksonville, Florida

Charles Coleman
Silver City, New Mexico

Gail C. Copeland
Tallahassee, Florida

Prime DeVaughn
Homasassa Springs, Florida

Bonita Brooks Faigin
Brooksville, Florida

Melissa DeVaughn Faigin
Brooksville, Florida

Gertha M. Hopkins
St. Petersburg, Florida

Nelson Hopkins
Tampa, Florida

Arelia Hopkins Parker
St. Petersburg, Florida

Cornell Parker
Des Monies, Iowa

Guy T. Patterson
Crystal River, Florida

Brenda Rogers
Crystal River, Florida

Saleem Sawyer
Kitchner Ontario Canada

Debra Joyner Stevens
Orlando, Florida

Melvin Scrivens
Crystal River, Florida

Geraldine Haywood Walker
Crystal River, Florida

Dedicated in loving memory of
Tomisene Jackson Washington

A life is like a song we write
In our own tone and key,
Each life we touch reflects a note
That forms the melody.
We choose the theme and chorus
Of the song to bear our name,
And each will have a special sound,
No two can be the same.
So when someone we love departs,
In memory we find
Their song plays on within the hearts
Of those they leave behind.



TOMISENE JACKSON WASHINGTON

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The language of the teachers at Carver was often laced with pearls of wisdom and satire. Through the windows of hindsight, their peppered speech brings warm delight to the soul of those who had to suffer through one of their tirades. To say that the teachers knew how to "work" a phrase is an understatement.

One such phrase frequently used by Mrs. Annie M. McCray in the midst of scolding a student was "...and you're not even knee high to a duck." Since this is about the days of our youth, I thought it appropriate to entitle this account "Knee High".

I wish to thank the many contributors to this written record. You were most patient with me. Your endurance serves to strengthen and preserve the overall presentation of this chronicle. I am very grateful for your assistance with this project.

Please send your memories to add depth and personality to this register. I will accept all materials, however, I do reserve the right to edit the information. If you wish to contribute a story please contact Gail C. Copeland at

Gail C. Copeland
2109 Loyal Lane, Apt. 1
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ee, Florida 32303 or call

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Those interviewed for this document include: Mr. Frederick W. Copeland and Mrs. Marjorie J. Copeland; Mrs. Mildred Freeman; Mr. O. H. Hopkins and Mrs. Hazel Hopkins; Mrs. Willie Lee Jenkins; Mrs. Ethel Joyner; and Mrs. Annie M. McCray.

I thank those who assisted me in editing, proofreading, and making comments and suggestions for improving the format and layout of this material. These dear friends are: Dr. Carol Ann Breyer, Mrs. Clydie C. Hubbard, Mrs. Phyllis H. Wrench, and Mrs. Sharon White.

We appreciate the financial contributions of Colonel Charles Hobbs and Mrs. Marjorie J. Copeland for the printing of this booklet. Your gifts made the impossible, possible. We are thankful for your most generous support.

Gail C. Copeland

PREFACE

The principals, teachers, and parents of our community knew well the meaning of perseverance. Their fervor was solidified in body, mind and spirit. They were resolute in achieving the ultimate goal of educating their offspring. While reading this book, consider the word "perseverance", what does it mean to you? Consider whether or not you possess its qualities. Please keep these qualities in mind, and while you read this chronicle, continue to reflect on the principle of perseverance.

Our forefathers persisted in adapting to a new way of life. To this end, we honor those who exemplified these traditions. This book focuses on our childhood trainers who served our community by demonstrating the importance of striving for goals.

People in this history were not always united in their ideas, but I think you will find a common ground among them. They are and were the "drum majors" for social change in Crystal River. Through their efforts, they attended to the needs of our community and the growth and development of its progress in an exemplary manner. These citizens of Crystal River, Florida knew the value of concerted efforts, and made a commitment to follow standards set down by God. They were instrumental in developing in us a firm foundation based

upon principles and morals that we find useful as guideposts in our lives. These standards enabled us to move through the time zone of change, from segregation to integration.

It is important for us to know our heroes and heroines who live among us. We, the seed of their combined energy, are the beneficiaries of their blood, sweat and tears. Moreover, this acknowledgement benefits our children, as we pay homage to those who have caused this town to flourish. This makes this collection of stories special and worthy of preserving.

Vera Baker
Chair, 1971 Class Reunion



MRS. ANNIE W. JOHNSON

INTRODUCTION

The legacy of the George Washington Carver Junior High School is rich and full in its service to the African-American community of Crystal River, Florida, and the Citrus County educational system.

In the tradition of our ancestors, much of Carver's heritage has been passed orally from generation to generation. This is the first written account of George Washington Carver's history. As with most things in their infancy, this chronicle is not as comprehensive in scope and content as we would like it to be. Additional information is necessary to further describe life at this school and its contributions to the Crystal River African-American community.

Carver was an institution that breathed life into the souls of all who entered its hallowed walls. As an unknown poet once said,

"Hope is listening to the melody;
Faith is dancing to the music."

Carver was an attitude in perpetual motion and evolution, undaunted by the ugly sting of racism and separatism. It seared our consciousness with knowledge and power. Its dreams and visions took on the fabric of

reality whenever the professors of Carver were anywhere within arm-reach of a child. Enveloped within those arms were love, discipline, security, and respect. There were no orphans in Crystal River.

Integration in the minds of people in our community was initially likened to a tossed salad - where the mixture of the ingredients was combined to create a richer, fuller, and tastier dish. Yet each ingredient was free to maintain its own distinct flavor, color, and texture.

Integration, instead, became a nightmare and took on the characteristics of a fondue - a melting pot. The once exciting flavors of the different ingredients were tossed into a pot and blended to become of like consistency. This blending produced a bland and nondescript taste to the palate of the body and to a society with a diverse population.

George Washington Carver Junior High School is more than a memory to those who were fortunate to be touched by its guiding spirit. It lives in the hearts and minds of those who were privileged to share a portion of their lives during its existence. This booklet describes the combined strands of the thread that wove the history of George Washington Carver Junior High School and the individuals who were endowed with virtue that was imparted by our beloved school.

The name of our beloved school was changed. By renaming Carver, an attempt was made to erase our history as if we never existed. As a result, succeeding generations are in conflict both within and without. Our society mirrors what is inside each of us. Thus, chaos prevails, because at present, the record of our history is broken and fragmented.

It is imperative that a process of healing begin. Healing must begin with each of us by seeking peace within, in an effort to restore wholeness in our lives. We ask that those of you who were partakers of life at this school let your light shine wherever you may be. Let your life reflect that brilliant ray of love and hope that brings about harmony in our race, in our homes, our schools, our communities, our state, our nation, and our world.

ADJACENT AREA SCHOOLS

In the 1920s, schools in the surrounding towns had an impact upon the student body population at George Washington Carver Junior High School. They were the Rock Crusher School, the Citronelle School, and the Red Level School known as the "Country School." The "Country School" was opened in the 1800s. This school had a first grade and no kindergarten. The Superintendent was **Mr. Bob Robinson. Mrs. Mayme Mobley** was the only teacher, she taught all grades.

In 1926 **Mr. O. H. Hopkins** attended the Red Level School and recalls the following story.

In 1929, the principal of the Red Level School, **Mr. Robinson***, had two sons. These boys wanted to go to "the School" in town. When their father said no, the boys burned down "the Country School". Mr. Robinson searched the area for a place to house "the Country School" and found a dwelling left vacant by the death of its owner. He moved the school to this dwelling.

In 1930, Mr. Robinson's sons still wanted to go to "the School" in town, and again, burned down "the Country School". This time the boys were sent to jail. Mr. Robinson mortgaged his home to pay for the release of his sons from jail. The Robinsons later moved to Tampa, Florida. The students of the Red Level community travelled into Crystal River to attend school, which was then headquartered at the Community Center. Hence, George Washington Carver's student body was comprised of other area children.

FROM THESE ROOTS

The predecessor of the George Washington Carver Junior High School was a school which bore no name; it was known locally as "the School." Later "the School" was named the Crystal River Negro Elementary School. It was later renamed to the Lincoln Junior High

***First Name Unknown**

School. The reason "the School" had so many names, is with the change in each administration, the name of "the School" changed. It is widely believed that Mrs. Mobley imparted the name George Washington Carver Junior High School, because she had connections to Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama, where George Washington Carver was a faculty member. To date, it is fondly remembered by people in the community as "Carver."

The original school was built in 1923. It was located off of what is now U. S. Highway 19 near the Bethel A.M.E. Church. It was a building that housed the Masonic Hall and a church which provided additional space, when needed, for use by "the School".

Later, "the School" was moved from the original site to the location across from the current Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church. It became known as the "Community Center." Plant improvements to the school were minor. However, one major improvement included the installation of a water fountain by **Mr. Archie Ferguson** under **Mr. Emanual Stewart's** direction. One sore point was that the outdoor toilets remained steadfast.

In 1955, "the School" was officially named the George Washington Carver Junior High School and was moved from the "Community Center" location to its current

site, at 947 N.E. 6th Street. This structure had indoor toilets, and a cafeteria. Playground equipment came much later. The school yard had an asphalt basketball court as its main recreational outlet for the children. **Mrs. Annie M. McCray** supervised the Class of 1971 as we painted a hopscotch diagram on the rear rock driveway. This was an extra activity during recess.

In the 1965-66 school term, Citrus County became one of the first counties in Florida to integrate. The desegregation plan adopted by the school board was a two phase plan. In the first year of operation, the plan called for integration of all odd numbered grades (grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11). In the second phase, in the 1966-67 school year, the even grades followed. In 1968, as a result of integration, Carver was renamed the Crystal River Primary School.

This chronicle of Carver from its earliest stages of existence to 1968 is an intentional and self-preserving act to defy the powers that sought to ignore and obliterate the life-altering effects of our beloved school. With this record the Class of 1971 continues the principle of perseverance as inculcated in our minds by our progenitors.

SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL SCHOOLS

Before integration all furnishings, materials and textbooks used by Carver came from the discards of white schools. Carver received nothing new from the Citrus County School Board. African-Americans were taxed the same as whites, but were treated as inferior citizens. This was the time of segregation. The laws of Jim Crow were in full force. Separate schools, separate entrances to restaurants, separate waiting rooms in bus and train depots, and doctors offices, separate lakes for swimming, and separate seating areas in movie theaters. Legally, there was no mixing of the races.

In such an environment, the students at Carver attended school four months out of the year - two months before January and two months after January. Later, the school year increased from four to six months. Still later, the duration was increased from six to eight months. However, during the same time, white children went to school a full eight months.

The school board only paid the teacher for four months. Although the school year increased in time, community fund raisers were necessary to secure funds to pay the teacher. After a number of years passed, the school board agreed to pay the teacher for eight months of instruction.

Mr. Hopkins remembers moving benches from the white school in the area to Carver with assistance from **Mr. C. H. Smith.** The books received from the white schools were often damaged or had pages missing. Teachers were creative and taught the pupils to exchange books in order to complete their homework assignments. White schools obtained new furnishings and textbooks.

Teachers rarely were absent from the classroom. On those rare occasions when a substitute was called, teachers paid the substitute out of their own pockets. White teachers were paid for their days absent from the classroom, and the school board paid their substitutes.

To ease the disparity in the Citrus County school system, a plan developed by the community, called for "the School" to become a Rosenwald School. A Rosenwald School was named for a philanthropist who lived in the South. There several Rosenwald Schools situated in various cities throughout the South. One was located in Ocala, Florida. It permitted Blacks to have separate facilities for educational purposes, but allowed for new furnishings and textbooks. It called for 1/3 contribution from the community, 1/3 contribution from the school board, and 1/3 matching funds from Sears

and Roebuck Company. When the parents and teachers were able to raise the money to pay for the land, the Citrus County Board of Public Instruction withdrew its proposed donation, and stated it "did not want a Rosenwald School in the community."

THE SAGES OF CARVER

Mrs. Mayme Mobley was the first principal of "the School". In 1932 "the School" graduated two students: **Mr. A. V. Timmons** (deceased) and the former **Miss Willie Lee Ferguson (Bill Jenkins).**

Mr. Emanuel Stewart served as principal from the school term of 1937-38 to 1940-41. **Mr. I. R. Nolan** was Superintendent of the School Board. Under Mr. Stewart's leadership, the eighth grade class had a total of four students, all boys, who were: **Messrs. Walter Dixon, Leonard White, J.T. Williams and Chester Scrivens.** The Citrus County School Board granted permission to add a tenth grade class. This class had two students: **Miss Hattie Wooden and Mr. W. C. Balloon.** A year later, the tenth grade was dropped for a lack of students.

Organized basketball teams for both boys and girls made its debut under Mr. Stewart's term. The teams played as far north as Bronson. This sport kept the boys in

school, because it kept them active, eager for victory. Carver's basketball team won some games and lost some games.

Mrs. Mobley transferred her organ to the building. Carver's choral group was one of the finest. Under Mrs. Mobley's tutelage, they inspired the hearts of many.

Teachers under Mr. Stewart's administration included: **Mrs. Willie Pearl Pittman,** who taught the first and second grades; **Mrs. Estelle Bellamy Jones,** who taught the third and fifth grades; and, **Mrs. Elsie McCoy.** Mr. Stewart shared the tenth grade with **Mrs. Jones .** Mrs. Jones left and Mrs. Mobley returned to the school. Mr. Stewart left Carver on a Friday evening headed for service in the armed forces by the following Saturday.

In 1946 **Mr. Brown Dumas**, Citrus County Veterans Service Officer, recommended to the county school board **Mr. Frederick W. Copeland** for appointment as principal. The school board approved Mr. Copeland's appointment as principal from 1946 to 1948.

Mr. Mathew Bryant became principal in 1948. He achieved the first and only 12th grade graduation. The following year, in 1949, the seniors were bussed to Booker T. Washington High School in Inverness,

Florida. **Mrs. Marjorie J. Copeland** recalls being disappointed as a junior at "the School" when the 12th grade was dropped. She and **Mr. Samuel Joyner** were the seniors when consolidation occurred.

However, consolidation of the schools created a better opportunity for African-American students to receive a high school diploma within the county. Previously, if a student desired to better himself or herself, they left the county to attend Howard Academy in Ocala, Florida, or other preferred high schools. From 1948 to 1949 **Mr. Amos Bealyer** was the first African-American bus driver. **Mr. W. T. "Don" Watkins, Sr.** assisted him from 1949 to 1950. When the African-American schools were consolidated, Booker T. Washington High School consisted of grades Kindergarten through 12th; Carver consisted of grades first through eighth. A kindergarten was added to Carver in 1961.

Mr. Bryant's staff included teachers such as: Mr. Frederick W. Copeland, **Mrs. Mamie McNeal, Mrs. Essie Waters, Mrs. Collins*, and Mrs. Wright***. Mr. Copeland took a leave of absence from 1949 to 1951 to attend Florida A & M University.

Mrs. Mamie McNeal served as principal from 1951 to 1952. Mr. Copeland returned from Florida A & M University under her direction and was reappointed

***First name unknown**

principal in 1952. He served in this capacity until November 1961.

Mr. Copeland successfully fought the double-standard system with regard to treatment of Black teachers and students. Carver no longer received hand-me-downs from the white schools. Carver obtained a new bus for transportation from Crystal River to Inverness. Teachers no longer paid substitutes out of their wages.

The faculty under Mr. Copeland included: **Mrs. Annie M. McCray,** first grade; **Mrs. Annie W. Johnson,** second and third grades; **Mrs. Essie Waters,** third, fourth, and fifth grades, and **Mrs. Mamie McNeal,** seventh grade.

Mr. Hill* was principal in 1961 until his untimely death in a car accident. Mrs. Annie M. McCray succeeded him in management of Carver from 1961 to 1965. In 1965, **Mr. William L. Robinson** continued to walk in the path of the masters at George Washington Carver Junior High School. A variety of faculty members were in and out of Carver during this period. Among them included: **Mrs. Eugenia Johnson, Mrs. Patricia Sanchez, Mrs. Raye Frances Jones, Willie P. Smith, and Mrs. Ines Gaines.**

Carver has always had a very active Parent-Teacher Association. Parents were very supportive of the educators. Among the presidents were **Mrs. Mary Wims** and **Mrs. Hazel Hopkins.** They sponsored an annual school picnic. In later years, this picnic was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. O. H. Hopkins at their home located off U.S. 19. Sock hops were sponsored in order to raise funds for the school. At these events, coolpops made from Kool-Aid and frozen in paper cups were sold; as well as, corn dogs posted on a cut palmetto stick.

SCHOOL DAYS

A typical school day started with lunchroom reports at 8:30 a.m. and ended at 3:30 p.m. The cost of a half pint of milk was three cents; lunch for students who could afford it was 20 cents.

Instructors supplemented textbooks by copying materials using the hectograph which was the forerunner to the mimeograph machine. In addition, teachers were responsible for the intellectual, social, physical well-being, spiritual development, and behavioral training of their charges. It was routine for an instructor to cook lunch. The menu often consisted of greens and rice, or beans and rice and a bit of meat, which might have been stew beef. While in the process of teaching, a student was sent to look in on the food.

A long time passed before cooks were added to support the faculty. **Mrs. Annie Joyner** was the first cook at Carver and later was joined by **Mrs. Jessie Wooden.** Sometime afterwards, Mrs. Joyner left and Miss Jessie asked **Mrs. Alice Lewis** to join her in the kitchen.

REMEMBER WHEN...

Fridays were Chapel and fish days at Carver. A dress code was strictly enforced. Girls wore ribbons in their hair and boys wore neckties. If either were missing, the girls were sent to the bathroom to make ribbons out of toilet tissue; the boys learned how to make bow ties out of toilet tissue. As time passed, crepe paper replaced toilet tissue for such uses.

At Chapel students were taught the fine art of making a presentation before an audience. One of the techniques demonstrated by Mrs. McNeal to overcome anxiety and shyness, was to place the hands behind the back and interlock the fingers. This produced a calming effect so that the presenter gained confidence to control the task at hand.

Whatever talent or skill a student possessed was a basis for performance in Chapel. Speaking, singing, and playing a musical instrument were popular reasons for showcasing a student before a crowd.

Students were encouraged always to be and do their best. One illustration of this point is told by **Mr. Matthew Charles "M.C." Jackson.** One day, Mr. Copeland came in and said they were going to study geography. As Mr. Copeland held the pointer to the globe, the class gradually became unruly. Mr. Copeland told them "Its either map time or strap time - you can choose the time." The class understood Mr. Copeland's point and decided upon the map.

Highlights of Mr. Copeland's administration also included Carver's participation in a countywide May Day Parade held in Inverness, Florida. There were many days of preparation for this event. Carver had a float pulled by a truck, which had an international theme. Students were dressed to represent various countries around the world. A trailer was brought in, a wooden frame built around it, and chicken wire surrounded the frame. Plenty of napkins were used to stuff the chicken wire. Mrs. Annie W. Johnson rehearsed the students daily teaching them how to march in military style. We even had a drummer to help us keep time.

Carver had many outstanding students. One who especially stands out is **Barbara Jean Joyner Hobbs.** Barbara Jean held the respect of both teachers and students. She was often put in charge of the classroom

Citrus County (FL) Chronicle Sunday, February 14, 1999

Mama's love means more than Poro curls

By Helen Rushing
Special to the Chronicle

The entire Sunday school class, youngsters and adults alike, always made big plans for Easter Sunday services. That was the day that we had our Resurrection Play.

Some people said they liked the Christmas plays better but I always preferred Easter. Maybe it was the dresses that Mama made for me and her younger sister.

Aunt Teddie, as everyone called her, was nine years older than me, and seemed more like a big sister to me. I guess that was because after their mother died, my mother and father asked her to come and live with us.

So I shared my room and my bed with my aunt. She called me "the baby," and on cold winter nights, she'd iron our bedsheet so that the bed

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CURLS

continued from Page 1C

wouldn't be so cold.

My mother was a seamstress and she made all of our school clothes. But the Easter dresses, well, they were really special. She must have started weeks before that special Sunday because there was hand-embroidery on the collars and sleeves and lots of lace and pleated eyelets at the hemlines. I especially loved the pale, billowy fabric. Mama said it was voile.

The one thing that Mama would not allow me to have was the Poro curls that most of my friends would wear underneath their pastel straw hats.

We called Mrs. Lizzie, who lived next door, the Poro Lady because she was the one person in town who specialized in Madam C.J. Walker's method of curling.

She pressed and curled all the ladies' and young girls hair in our community. Sometimes Mama would let me go next door and watch Mrs. Lizzie work.

She'd dip the big heavy Poro irons in a vat of fragrant oil and painstakingly press a few strands of hair, starting near the scalp and slowly descending to the end of each strip. The customers were always draped in a sheet of bright-colored oil-cloth to keep the hot oil from dripping on their arms and clothes.

After the ordeal, those ladies would emerge one by one from Mrs. Lizzie's with beautiful shiny curls that would spring with each step they took. Most of my friends would come to church on Easter Sunday morning swinging those beautiful, black, shiny curls with their pastel straws perched on top.

But Mama said, "No," *her* little sandy-haired baby girl didn't need those Poro curls because — she kissed me — "My baby's got *good* hair."

I felt like a princess.

Citrus County (FL) Chronicle Sunday, February 14, 1999

Saturdays of childhood years warmly recalled

By Helen Rushing
Special to the Chronicle

Cecil was my very best friend in all the world. Her folks lived across the street from my folks in a tiny fishing village on the gulf coast of northwest Florida, a town called Crystal River.

Cecil spent about as many overnight sleep-ins at our house as she did at her own. Mr. Jim, Cecil's dad, was a buckrah, but Mama said he was a real good carpenter when he wasn't drinking and her mom, Mrs. Bert, was the prettiest little woman I had ever seen. She always wore high heels shoes. Even her houseslippers were high-heeled with little fur puffs across the top.

"When I am grown up, I'm going to wear high heels all the time like Mrs. Bert."

I was an only child and was so glad when Cecil's family took the house across the street. At age 5 we became close friends right away. I think we both

Please see **RECALL,** *Page* **6C**

RECALL

continued from Page 1C

felt like we were really sisters.

We enjoyed reading the funnies on quiet Sunday afternoons. Cecil liked "Ella Cinders" and "Buck Rogers"; I liked "Tillie, the Toiler," and "Flash Gordon." We both liked "Gasoline Alley" and "Dagwood and Blondie."

On school evenings, we'd jump double-dutch and play hop-scotch and jacks with soda water tops until it got too dark outside to see. We played across the ditch from our house.

Lorene and Louise were our other two friends who played with us regularly on the dusky Florida evenings. Soon we'd hear Mrs. James calling Weezie, "You better come in. It's time for you to get to bed!" Louise lived next door with her mother and grandmother. Lorene would cut through our back yard and go to her home. Cecil crossed the street to Mr. Jim and Mrs. Bert, her father and stepmother.

Saturdays, we played "Little Sally Walker" on the school grounds a little way down the street. The boys had a baseball team and they played there on Saturdays, too.

Some Saturdays we'd go to our favorite spot on the vacant lot next to Mrs. Beelyers. There was tall saw-grass. We'd clear a space between the gently waving blades of grass, then lying on our stomachs, Cecil, Louise and Lorene would produce the brown paper bags and from their skirt pockets — bags that contained lumps of Argo starch which they all shared with me. We giggled and ate pieces of starch which they'd raided their mothers' laundry cabinets to get.

My mother used Faultless starch so I never had the good Argo that we liked so much. Sometimes, I would bring a little bag with Rumford Baking Powder in it and after all the starch was gone we'd blow baking powder bubbles.

That was a lot of fun.

When we went home, everybody's mouth was white all around. We probably looked like we'd all had convulsions or something, but nobody seemed to mind. It was so much fun!

Once in a while, Grandma Lockley would let Cecil and me sit on her front porch in the special swing that was the only one of its kind in town. The swing was made like this: there were two seats across from each other, a slatted platform and a curved roof that covered the top. The seats would rock gently back and forth. Sometimes, the chain-gang people would be working on the railroad that ran right along the outside of the picket fence that enclosed Grandma's property. Even though their legs were shackled with leg irons as they wielded the heavy iron picks, the guard was always there with his shotgun at his side. Cecil and I watched as the men worked in the hot tropical sun, their striped "chain-gang" uniforms sticking with perspiration to their backs and legs. Sweat ran down their faces and dripped from their chins.

"Let's ask Grandma if we can give them some water," Cecil said.

Grandma let us pump cool water from the backyard pump into a bucket and take the big old gourd dipper that she kept on a hook near the pump. Cecil ran ahead with the bucket of water, sloshing it as she ran. She was a heavy biscuit-colored girl with straight brown hair growing thickly on her arms and legs. I ran along behind with my little brown stick arms, bringing the dipper. We went through the gate, as Grandma watched for us and the guard allowed us to give the men cool water which they all took turns drinking thirstily from the old gourd dipper. The two white convicts even poured a dipperful of water over their heads.

As we went back to our front porch swing Cecil and I felt pretty good.

Marion County Historical Society

NEWS

February, 1999

Volume XV, No. 10

In honor of Black History Month

THIS MONTH FEATURING...

Josiah T. Walls:

Florida's Outstanding Black Achiever



He rose from slavery to become Florida's first black politician of national prominence at a time when it was risky business for a black man to be in politics.

Born to slave parents in Virginia on December 30, 1842, Walls was later pressed into Confederate service. Captured and freed by Union forces in '63, he joined the first black U.S. infantry regiment, serving through the war until his discharge as a sergeant major at Jacksonville in 1865. Moving to the fertile farmland area of Alachua County near Gainesville, he met and married Helen Ferguson. Some early schooling, plus an intense self-tutoring program in the war years, enabled him to get a job teaching in nearby Archer.

With the beginning of military Reconstruction in March 1867, the newly enfranchised free men flocked to the Florida Republican party (Lincoln's party). In some counties, like Alachua, black voters far outnumbered white voters. Many conservative whites, resenting the dominance of the military-civilian Northerners whom they dubbed "carpetbaggers," refused to sponsor candidates or to vote.

Walls was elected a delegate to the convention, and although he aligned himself with the radical Republican "mule team" faction, he voted for the somewhat moderate state constitution which was finally adopted. Walls foresaw only negative results from a rigid radical stance. He felt it more important to keep a continuous black presence within the mainly white political structure as well

as to seek future alliances with moderate whites.

Returning home, he discovered he had a solid political base in Alachua among whites and blacks, and he easily won election as a legislator in the lower state assembly (the House) in 1868. Later that year, he won a state senate seat, but he and other blacks found it increasingly frustrating to secure civil rights measures, such as the right to use public hotels "without distinction," or, more critically, protection against terrorist activities by the Ku Klux Klan and fanatics in the Young Men's Democratic Clubs. These groups were conducting a campaign of terror against blacks and white Republicans across the state with intimidation, beatings, burnouts, murders, vote frauds, and armed blockades of roads leading to voting precincts. Some Southern historians have presented a contrived portrayal of the state as being "ravaged" by radical "carpetbaggers" and "illiterate" blacks. To a great extent, a reverse "ravaging" actually prevailed.

Bound and limited at the state level, Walls decided to run for higher office. In 1870, he squared off against Conservative candidate Silas L. Niblack, a Confederate veteran and former slave owner, in a race for Congress. Niblack made an issue of Walls's self-educated, ex-slave background.

In an election marked by fraud, ballot-stuffing, and sporadic fighting, Walls won by a 627-vote margin. Niblack contested the election and the U.S. House Committee on Elections held lengthy witness hearings. They finally decided in Niblack's favor in January 1873; there were only two months left in the contested term. Walls ran against Niblack for a second term and won by 1,662 votes. The Conservatives did not contest this outcome.

During these years, Walls was also busy in other pursuits. He had studied, passed exams, and was admitted to the Florida bar. With two other blacks, he formed a law firm. He had also served brief terms as Gainesville mayor and as a county commissioner and was named a brigadier general in the Florida State Militia. Most of his savings he invested in a large, 1,175 acre farm, and he became one of the state's most successful truck farmers. He also parceled out small plots to poor black families who, if able to pay, were charged only a token rental. Another venture was his purchase of the Gainesville-based *New Era* with basic aims of promoting harmonious race relations. He said, "we have nothing to gain by an issue with the white race" and development of the county's resources through "education, temperance, thrift, economy and industry." To this end, after he appointed Thomas Gibbs, son of distinguished black Florida Secretary of State Jonathan Gibbs, to West Point, he named Acton Walker, son of the strict Conservative and former Governor David Walker, to the U.S. Naval Academy.

In 1874 Walls won his third congressional term against former Confederate General Jesse Finley by 371 votes. Finley contested the outcome. The House committee found "irregularities" in one black precinct sufficient to void its returns (including 588 votes given Walls), and Walls was unseated in March 1876.

While he was in the legislature, Walls sought to be responsive to all the state's needs. He boosted Florida's appeal to new settlers and investors; secured railroad, waterway, and other internal improvements; improved the state's mail system; and, above all, fought for educational opportunities for his people. In one of the few times he alluded to the race question, he argued that Southern lawmakers used "states' rights" as a subterfuge to deny both blacks and poor whites education. Arguing for the first federal education aid bill, he declared prophetically that if education were left solely to the states, blacks would suffer. He successfully secured ninety thousand acres of public land at Tallahassee for Florida Normal College (now Florida A&M). As a public servant, Walls was termed in one Tallahassee newspaper as "able, clearheaded, honest".

With the return to power of the Democrats in the 1880s, Walls gradually withdrew from "ineffective" political activity. The death of his wife, his own failing health, and financial ruin after his citrus groves were wiped out in the disastrous 1895 freeze prompted Walls to move to Tallahassee where he became director of the Florida Normal College farm until his death there in May 1905.

From FLORIDA'S PAST, Volume 2: People And Events That Shaped The State, by Gene M. Burnett, Pineapple Press, 1988.

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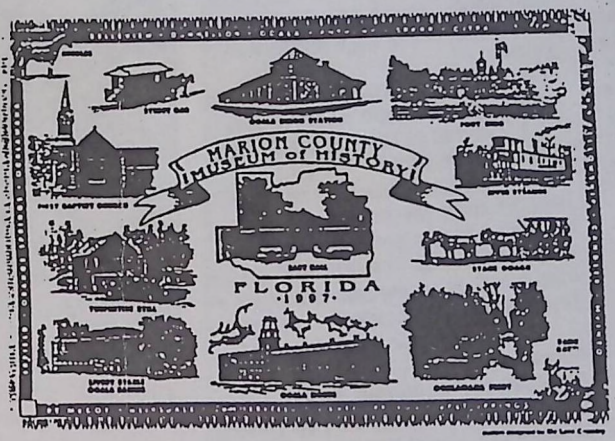


Blacks made headway in 1915

Black leaders in Tampa organized their efforts that year to improve life in the community.

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA

The year 1915 was a time of yearning, striving and frustration for Tampa's black populace, still struggling to make a little progress educationally and financially.

Learning what happened in that era can be difficult, for sources are scarce. Few if any copies remain of The Tampa Bulletin, the first successful black weekly, founded that year by the Rev. M.D. Potter.

But several pages in a "progress" edition of The Tampa Daily Times provide some clues through articles and advertising related to black community organizations.

And historians Walter T. and Virginia M. Howard have found material in the files of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) telling of the beginnings of a West Tampa unit that year.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

What emerges from available materials are the names of community leaders, willing to band together for betterment in church, fraternal and interest groups.

The Jan. 28, 1915, edition of The Tampa Daily Times shows the strong role occupied by Tampa's black letter carriers at that time, probably because they were among the most upwardly mobile in the working class.

Preachers, teachers, doctors and lawyers traditionally had been the most prominent community figures, but their numbers were relatively few.

Republican patronage had rewarded another handful of educated blacks with federal jobs in the early 1900s. But Woodrow Wilson's administration, beholden to Southern Democrats, had eliminated blacks from those positions in 1913.

The Times ran a special feature on Edwin D. Moore, a postal carrier who had passed his civil service examination in 1902. He was the first black to crack the color barrier in the Tampa post office.

Although Moore had encountered some resistance initially from white patrons along his route, the Times article noted, "He now serves a route composed entirely of white people who are among the wealthiest and most prominent in the city."

As founding president of the Afro-American Civic League, formed in 1912, Moore had crusaded against "the red-light district" of prostitution that he said had intruded too close to area churches.

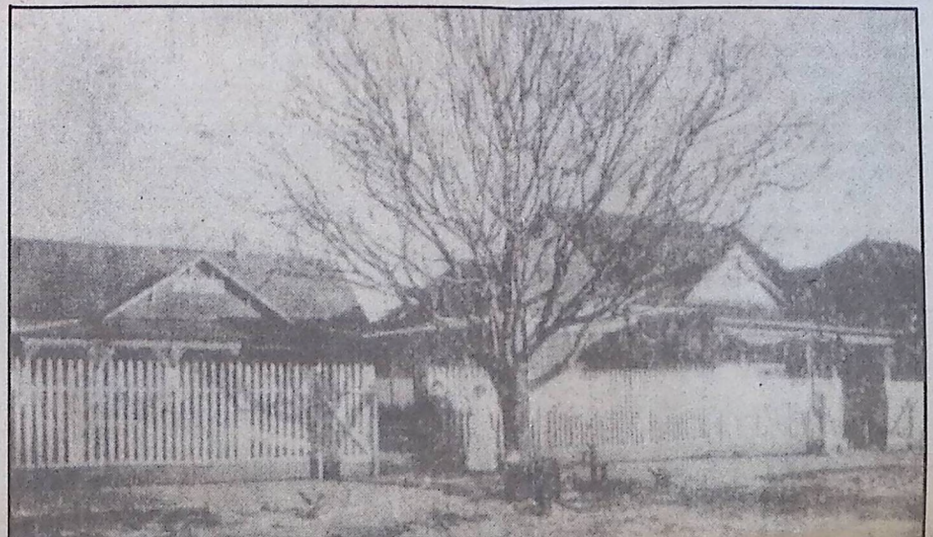
Moore's letters to newspapers had "created a sensation," and it was implied that the problem had abated somewhat.

"It is doubtful that any young man spends more time within the confines of his library than does Moore," the



Photo from Tampa/Hillsborough County Public Library

This photograph accompanied a 1915 ad for William Mims' transfer firm. He moved everything from pianos to safes in horse-drawn wagons.





A high picket fence surrounded Clara Frye's hospital for

article continued. "The click of his typewriter may be heard long after others have betaken themselves to slumberland."

Literary society

Moore liked to compose poetry, and among the titles he had written was "Tampa's the Town for Me." This carried over into another area: Membership in the Paul Laurence Dunbar Literary Society of Tampa.

Moore had been the first president of the group, founded by black letter carriers in 1910. The society was named for the black poet who had given a recitation at the St. Paul A.M.E. Church in Tampa before his death.

The son of a slave, Dunbar died in 1906. He's listed in "The Reader's Encyclopedia" as being "noted for highly skilled use of Negro themes and dialect." He would be memorialized further in Tampa at West Tampa's Dunbar School.

The literary society had interests beyond books. Its speakers included Tampa Mayor D.B. McKay on the need for a public hospital and J.M. Graham, of the YMCA, on the need for extending YMCA work into the black community.

Other speakers included Joseph N. Clinton, the black Internal Revenue deputy collector in Tampa until 1913, and Henry W. Chandler, a former Customs inspector who had been a state senator and city clerk of Ocala.

The Dunbar Society had thrown a "book shower" to provide the basis of a library for the Harlem Academy, the major black school, and it had presented an American flag to the school.

President of the society in 1915 was Herbert E. Lester, a letter carrier who wrote to national NAACP headquarters expressing interest in forming a branch in Tampa.

Lester wrote: "We have been trying to look at conditions as they really are in the South and especially in our locality. After due deliberations, we have decided that we will try to organize a local."

According to the Howards' article in the magazine Tampa Bay History, Lester and other organizers worked for more than a year, then submitted a constitution/bylaws to the national office.

The historians credit a "strong, energetic leader," Daniel Webster Perkins, with pushing through the chartering process. Coincidentally, Perkins was the first husband of Blanche Armwood, who would become known as a leader, too.

Perkins recruited 107 members for the Tampa branch. Official authorization came April 11, 1917. But United States entry into World War I intruded. Perkins, first president of the Tampa NAACP unit, joined the Army that year.

The branch vice president, Jacob A. White, a doctor; and secretary, Christina Meacham, later the Harlem Academy principal, were asked to take over the reins in Perkins' absence. But the momentum was lost.

According to the Howards, the Tampa branch "declined ... and disappeared altogether" until it was revived in 1929.

Among the reasons was the emergence of the Tampa Urban League in the 1920s. Blanche Armwood, by then remarried, was the first executive director. Perkins practiced law in Jacksonville after the war.

According to Robert Saunders, field secretary for the NAACP in the 1950s and '60s, unhappiness with school and hospital support by the city helped prod initial organization of the NAACP in Tampa.

Community ties

Clara Frye, the nurse who had single-handedly started taking care of patients in her home, wrote an article in the 1915 Times edition telling of her struggle to keep the makeshift hospital going.

It was then $3,000 in debt after the addition of a new wing. And city support for indigent patients — as she said almost all of them were — had been chopped. The city had been paying her $10 a week to care for each indigent patient.

Frye indicated that only the indulgence of creditors permitted the hospital to continue.

All-black Masonic lodges carried weight in the community in 1915. Charles H. Alston, chaplain of the Peno City Lodge in West Tampa, had been a delegate to Progressive Party conventions when Theodore Roosevelt sought another presidential term.

Alston, reputedly Tampa's first black lawyer, died in the early 1920s, but his wife Inez and daughter Clara were involved in founding the Helping Hand Day Nursery for black youngsters.

A prominent member of the B.W. Wiley Lodge was John R. Hall, who started as a stevedore and became a construction foreman. Hall gained renown as an expert in laying foundations for such structures as the Lafayette Street and Garcia Avenue bridges and for the Citizens Bank Building.

George S. Middleton, a letter carrier in 1915, went on to have a high school named for him.

Andrew J. Ferrell, secretary of St. Paul A.M.E. Church in 1915, had been employed by the U.S. Customs Service earlier. A later publication referred to him as the "only Negro in Florida who held a master's license for steam vessels of unlimited tonnage for navigation in inland waters."

Ferrell had gained this distinction while serving aboard the bay steamer Manatee between the years 1895 and 1905.

The Tampa Bulletin, the weekly newspaper getting under way in 1915, was published into the 1950s. Rev. Potter and his wife, Mary, operated the Bulletin at 1105 E. Scott St. He was also pastor of the Allen Temple A.M.E. Church.

One of the catchier advertisements in the 1915 Times came from William M. Mims, "The only colored trunk and baggage transfer in the city — piano moving a specialty." Mims' motto: "If I don't get your business, both of us lose money."

Mims was also master of the B.W. Wiley Masonic Lodge that year.

St. Paul A.M.E. Church's new building was under construction at a cost of $30,000, with donations being sought for completion. Membership was given at 400, "annual collection" $5,000.

And the Bethel Baptist Church had raised $3,200 for a new $30,000 structure and was seeking contributions. R.H. Pittman was pastor of the 200-member congregation.

Tampa's black citizens had a long, upward pull facing them in 1915. With incomes pitifully low, job and school opportunities limited and health facilities sparse, they faced "a hard row to hoe."

But they managed to maintain optimism as they joined betterment groups seeking a brighter future.

operated in her home. Above, Edwin J. Moore was Tampa's first black letter carrier.



Blanche Armwood and Daniel Webster Perkins were married for a time. Both were activists.



The Harlem Academy, shown in a 1931 photograph, was a focal point of Tampa's black community in the early years. Christina Meacham became its first woman principal.

SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 22, 1998

Memories of grandma and buckrah

Editors note: The following, reprinted with the author's permission, is a short story written by Helen Matchett Rushing, a 70-year-old woman with rich memories of her early childhood years in Crystal River.

She is the daughter of Benjamin Matchett Jr.

Her story is entitled: "An Independent Business Woman" and is part of a copyrighted book of stories, folklore and recipes in manuscript form called "Crystal River."



Helen Rosa Matchett Rushing was the only child to live from the marriage of Benjamin Matchett Jr. and Helen Matchett (Lewis). She spent her first few years in Crystal River and now, after a long career in nursing, is retired in Chicago. She has written a book of short stories and recipes entitled "Crystal River."

By Helen Matchett Rushing
Special to the Chronicle

"Grandma, What's a buckrah?"

I clutched the handle of the great wicker basket while racing to keep step with Grandma. Inside the basket lay the freshly laundered gleaming white smoothly-starched and ironed clothing we were delivering to the "buckrah."

"Aintee, here's my clothes," a buckrah voice called out as a large pillow-case stuffed with dirty laundry was lifted over the old gray picket fence.

"Yassuh, Mr. Piney. I'll git 'em. Jes chunk 'em over the fence." Grandma said this as she slowly straightened up from the old round washtub and the worn tin washboard.

"O-OO-OO-EE-EE!" she said. "This old back sho do hurt."

I looked up briefly from my play, and back again. Grandma always wore a long apron tied around her waist and periodically she'd dry her hands, stretch and arch her back, then it was back to the washboard — the up-and-down motion of the

Please see **GRANDMA**, *Page* **4C**

GRANDMA

continued from Page 1C

clothes washing making a smooth, rhythmical sound.

On Sundays, Grandma always went to church. On Saturday night she and Grandpa went downtown for Sat'day night grocery shopping. Those were the times she took off the old long apron. "Got a nice shape, Ellen," Ms. Posey would say.

The only other time the old apron came off was when grandma went to visit her friend, Grace Mobley. Ms. Mobley lived way out past the colored school. She had a front yard full of roses. Grace (as Grandma called her) was the Principal of the three-room schoolhouse. Ms. Polly was the other teacher. One room was for school gatherings and morning devotionals that were held each day before regular classes began.

I liked to see the children march in and sing "America, the Beautiful," then pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. Afterwards, Ms. Mobley would read the Scriptures. Then she would solemnly announce "Let us bow our heads and say the Lord's Prayer. Oh, how beautiful! The sound of forty voices, rising and falling in perfect rhythm.

"Next year, my Grandbaby will be in school. She'll be one of them!" Grandma looked down at the sandy-haired brown-eyed girl standing next to her.

Grandma walked fast with the basket. I looked up at her. "Grandma, what's a buckrah?"I asked.

"Miz McBride, the lady what's run a bak'ry. She a buckrah, baby." Grandma's voice came, warm and soft as the southern breeze.

"Oh," I said. "Then is Mr. Mills, the postmaster, is he a buckrah, Grandma?"

"Yes, baby, he a buckrah, too."

"What about Dr. Hudson, Grandma, is he a buckrah?" I looked up inquisitively. Grandma answered wearily, "Yes, baby, Dr. Hudson is a buckrah too."

"But he's a doctor, Grandma!"

"I know, baby, but he a sho-nuff buckrah! It din't make no nevahmind if you a man, a woman, a doctor or whatever, you still a buckrah! But not you, baby. You ain't no buckrah. You my grandchild!"

A lovely smile crossed the smooth chocolate colored face of the old grandmother.

"Why Grandma, why ain't you and me buckrahs too?"

Grandma set her side of the basket down on the walkway. "Come here to Grandma," she said lovingly. She lifted me into her arms, right there on Main Street and laughed gently into my ear. "We ain't buckrah, baby, because we ain't WHITE!"

A buckrah passed and we two stepped politely off the sidewalk into the grass.

"Howdy, Mr. Fletcher," Grandma spoke.

"Hello, Aintee," Mr. Fletcher answered as he passed the aged black woman and the little black girl who were toting his neighbors's clothes home.

Grandma always washed and boiled those clothes in a big iron pot with sturdy legs. This she did in her back yard near the washshed. She made her own soap, too, and cut it into big bars. The part of the wash days that I like best was handing the clothes pins to Grandma as she hung the bright wash on the clothesline where they sun-dried and sun-bleached until they were dazzling white. Even the colors brightened like new 'cause Grandma used something she called blu-ing to make them extra bright.

Just before dark, Grandm'd call "Come baby, hold the clothes pin basket while Grandma take the clothes down."

Next day was Ironing Day. A charcoal bucket with grill covering three heavy cast iron smoothing irons set on top of the grill atop the blazing coals.

Those buckrah women's dresses could stand up on the floor of Grandma's back porch without a prop. They were stiff with homecooked starch. They were so sleek that grandpa said even a fly would sip up and fall long those buckrah men's shirt collars! *That's how* smooth they were! *And Grandma* didn't believe in making any "cat-faces" on her laundry. No sir. 'Cause she was a business woman and doing the buckrah's clothes was her business. "No slaving in some white 'oman's kitchen for this old lady," she'd say. "I'm an independent business woman! And I do my work right.

Grandma and me went to deliver some clothes to Miz Frazier.

"Here, baby, here's a nickel for you. Buy you some candy. Ms. Frazier gave you that. Say thank you to Miz Frazier." Looking at me and then looking up at the old buckrah woman, Grandma said, "Ain't she a beauty, Miz Frazier?"

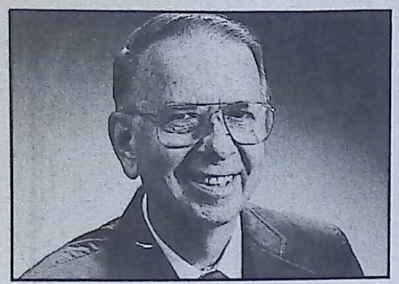
"She is that, Aintee Ellen. She sure is that," came Miz Frazier's answer.

Homeward bound. "Count this for Grandma, baby. This here's a fifty-cent piece?" Grandma said, fingering the larger of the two coins. "And this here ... what do it say, baby?"

"That's a quarter!" I answered brightly.

"So let's add it all up. Fifty-cents plus a quarter makes — seventy-five cents!" Grandma gently patted her earnings and put the coins in the big pocket of her apron, smiling.

When Grandma smiled, the wrinkles in her milk chocolate face were the little "cat faces" at the corners of her tired eyes.



MAILBAG
Leland Hawes

Emancipation Day of 1906 was a festive affair

Recently, when a rare photograph ran on this page showing an early 1920s observance of Emancipation Day, I learned that little documentation existed on the event in Florida.

University of South Florida history professor Gary Mormino came across a Tampa Tribune account from Jan. 2, 1906, that described a New Year's Emancipation Day parade that was said to be the largest of any sort staged in Tampa until then.

"The procession was the longest ever seen in Tampa," the Tribune reporter wrote. "It contained two bands. Those taking part in the procession were conveyed through the city in the best vehicles available."

Floats from various "secret societies, trades, crafts and private enterprises" took part in the flag-waving parade, which concluded downtown. There, an afternoon of speech-making took place at the Courthouse Square bandshell.

Major orator of the day was Bishop Alexander Walters, president of the Afro-American Council, U.S.A., who was described as having "a dignified presence, with iron-gray hair and with an infectious smile that punctuated the lighter points of his discourse."

Walters exhorted his listeners to "live better lives, to discard the evil things which had laid hold upon them ... to strive for higher ideals and nobler ends ... to take active part in church and educational work."

The Rev. J.C. Moore of Tampa served as master of ceremonies for the event. Another speech of "eloquence and good intent" was delivered by the Rev. T.S. Tice, "who rose from the plow-handles to be presiding elder of the Greater New York district in his church."

The Tribune writer contrasted the day

Teacher fought for and won equal pay

Hilda Turner and fellow black teachers were earning less than their white counterparts. She sued and helped change that.

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Staff Writer

Fifty years ago, Hilda Theodosia Turner was a soft-spoken history and economics teacher at Tampa's all-black Middleton High School who answered a call to take a stand for equal salaries for black teachers.

A native of Tampa who had grown up with an unquenchable ambition to teach, Miss Turner knew her salary was low — $89.68 a month — and that white teachers with similar degrees and experience made considerably more.

At a meeting of the Hillsborough unit of the Florida State Teachers Association, which represented black teachers, Miss Turner expressed her willingness to take part in a class-action suit.

"I thought there would be some other volunteers," she said recently in an interview. "But I was the only one."

After answering the call from S.D. McGill, a Jacksonville lawyer who represented the teachers, Miss Turner soon found herself in contact with a future Supreme Court Justice, Thurgood Marshall, then a counsel for the NAACP.

Marshall, who came to Tampa for a preliminary meeting at St. Paul A.M.E. Church, was to take the lead in arguing the case when it came to trial in federal court in 1943.

Willingness to take a stand — or volunteer — could be hazardous in that period of supposedly "separate but equal" segregated schools.

Noah Griffin, president of the statewide group speaking for black teachers, had been fired as principal at Gibbs High School in St. Petersburg in 1938 after the first suit had been brought on salaries in Brevard County.

And the late Edward D. Davis, who lost his school job in Marion County but went on to lead Central Life Insurance in Tampa, wrote later:

"Negro teachers came under surveillance, 'agitators' were isolated and branded and teachers were fired."

'Nobody bothered me'

But Hilda Turner somehow escaped those problems. "Nobody bothered me," she declared.

Because she left Tampa to take another job in Chicago several years after the suit, a legend has evolved that pressures forced



Tribune photograph by TODD L. CHAPPEL

Hilda Turner, right, took a chance by suing the Hillsborough County School Board in 1941. Among those who watched in the courtroom was Doris Ross Reddick, then a senior "prize student."

made the motion to accept it, seconded by Ed J. Keefe.

Firestorm of opposition

But the rating system that would determine all teachers' pay stirred up a firestorm of opposition — primarily from the powerful white Teachers' Federation.

Members reacted angrily to a rating committee scoring them on such intangibles as "physical health, personality and character, scholarship and attitude, instructional skill and performance."

The scores would also be based on such points as whether a teacher had a "pleasing personality ... emotional stability ... spiritual and moral influence with pupils ... loyalty to the school ... cooperation with co-workers ... punctuality."

Superintendent Robinson had to sweat out an hours-long night session with a crowd of Teachers' Federation members early in December. He tried to placate the dissidents by saying:

"Where reductions in pay will occur,

assistant director who oversaw the black schools, that they had made no effort to explain the new structure to black teachers.

When the NAACP lawyer asked Robinson if he visited individual classrooms to check on teachers' performance, the superintendent replied that with 40 years of school experience, he did not need to visit teachers to evaluate their performance.

Miles said he took "two or three days" each week visiting classrooms. He asserted he gave advice to individual black teachers in making his rounds.

But 36 black teachers were called to the stand, and they said Miles' visits lasted from a brief appearance at the doorway to "a few minutes."

Mabel Purcell testified Miles was in her classroom "only long enough to walk from one door to the other."

Margaret Brody said she asked Miles for assistance on two occasions, but never heard anything more from him.

Earlier testimony had indicated the rating committee placed more weight on

Former teacher helped mold black minds

Retired more than 20 years now, Miss Hilda Turner carries a lifetime of satisfaction that her teaching has touched so many lives.

She knows there have been "thousands" in her classrooms during the years, and she encouraged many of them to go on to college. As a result many became Tampa's black professionals.

Included among them were Doris Ross Reddick, Doris Thomas, Susan Maddox, Dr. Andrew Jackson, Dr. Fred Smith, Dr. James Green, Hilda Smith, Marcia Macfarland Reddy,

of positive feelings with a disorderly parade" that had occurred in Savannah in the Emancipation Day celebration there.

■ ■ ■

The column on Dan Stevenson's proposal for trolley service as a way to help revive Tampa Heights brought a response from Ralph Slovenko, professor of law and psychiatry at Wayne State University in Detroit. He wrote:

"I read with much interest your article on the trolley as a vital link for Tampa Heights. In my boyhood, New Orleans, where I grew up, had 52 trolley lines, and it was easy to get about. They had charm. Just imagine if the city had retained them! It now has half a line, a major attraction."

Slovenko enclosed a copy of an article he had written for the Journal of Psychiatry and Law with this lead paragraph that gives you an inkling of his ideas on the subject of "Mobilopathy":

"A plague has covered the land — 'mobilopathy' — the automobile way of life. Mobilopathy (from the Latin *mobilis*, or motion and the Greek, *pathos*, or suffering) has ravished the land, polluted the air and has taken an awful toll in human lives. ..."

■ ■ ■

Evanell Powell-Brant of Lake Panasoffkee saw the Tribune business story about Bern's Steak House inaugurating the use of its own credit cards.

She noted that proprietor Bern Laxer is following in the footsteps of several other Tampa restaurateurs of the past. She said her father, the well-known photographer, C. Verne Klintworth, had credit cards for the Hillsboro Hotel's dining room, the Spanish Park restaurant and the Cafe Sevilla.

I can't resist adding a note of nostalgia about Bern's when it opened in a storefront on Howard Avenue and served perfectly delicious 98-cent steak sandwiches. Those were the days!

■ ■ ■

Retired University of Tampa history professor James W. Covington is trying to learn the exact location of the long-departed Port Tampa Inn, a hotel built by Henry B. Plant even before he constructed the Tampa Bay Hotel.

Plant had extended his railroad to Port Tampa by 1887 when he built a mile-long wharf there and erected the Port Tampa Inn over the water on stilts.

"Guests at the Inn could enjoy the novelty of fishing from the windows of their rooms," Louise K. Frisbie wrote in her book, "Florida's Fabled Inns."

If you know where the once-legendary Port Tampa Inn stood, call Covington at (813) 839-5970.

■ ■ ■

If you have photographs or written recollections of Florida's past, write to Leland Hawes at The Tampa Tribune, P.O. Box 191, Tampa 33601.

her to leave her teaching job here.

But she insists she left simply because she had visited Chicago, saw a better opportunity there and took it.

Nevertheless, the prospect of a single black teacher struggling to have her salary improved in 1941 was not predictably optimistic.

Hillsborough School Board minutes reflect members' concerns that the long-time practice of paying black teachers considerably less would be overturned — and would bring budget strains they hadn't anticipated.

In October of 1941, the Hillsborough unit of the Florida State Teachers Association had written a letter to the board, asking members "to make the salaries of Negro teachers the same as salaries of the white teachers."

Board members instructed Superintendent E.L. Robinson to write a polite reply thanking the black teachers for their service but adding, "There are no funds for any further increase at this time."

By November, the class-action suit had been brought in federal court with Hilda Turner's name as plaintiff.

Later that month, members of the State School Board Association met at Wakulla Springs. With several counties — Duval, Palm Beach and Marion — already facing similar suits, a strategy evidently was devised to meet the issue.

The services of Tallahassee attorney J. Velma Keen were offered by the association to counties facing the salary claims. Hillsborough members voted unanimously to accept the offer.

"The Crisis," national magazine of the NAACP, reported in its March 1942 issue that three cases on salary equalization were being argued in federal courts in Florida in February 1942. No outcomes were given.

In October 1942, the Hillsborough School Board decided it was time to meet the challenge of the Hilda Turner suit.

Members asked Superintendent Robinson, "in collaboration with the State Department of Education," to come up with a "single salary schedule ... as soon as possible."

The new, "non-discriminatory" salary schedule should follow a pattern already set in Marion, Dade, Palm Beach and Duval counties, the board resolution directed.

On Nov. 19, 1942, the Hillsborough salary schedule was presented — based on "training, experience, ability and performance." Board member David M. Dowdell



Tribune file photographs

Thurgood Marshall, left, later to become a Supreme Court justice, came to argue for salary equalization in Tampa. Defending the pay schedule at the federal court trial was then-Superintendent E.L. Robinson.

they will probably be needed as a stimulant up."

Robinson admitted that the single salary scheme had been "forced on the School Board in an emergency," and tried to assure the white teachers most would get superior ratings.

He said teachers would be rated A-1, A-2 or A-3, "according to their ability or performance."

Robinson followed by saying that a similar salary schedule adopted in Marion County "has already been declared fair and free from racial discrimination by a federal judge."

Nevertheless, federation leader Mollie Rose Cox called for the school board "to reconsider," and Margaret McIntosh pushed for a secret poll of federation members on their feelings toward the plan.

In January 1943, Mrs. Cox announced that 71 percent of the federation members wanted the board to rescind its action.

But by then, school officials were committed to stick to their decision — at least, until they could get through the federal court trial.

As it turned out, when the case came before Federal District Court Judge William J. Barker on March 31, 1943, the major issue was whether the new salary schedule was being administered "fairly," without regard to race.

In an early statement, then NAACP lawyer Thurgood Marshall said, "We contend that the salary schedule makes discrimination possible and that the people who rated teachers did so in a discriminatory fashion."

He noted that all but 20 of 178 black teachers had been put in the lowest pay bracket while all but 100 of the white teachers were placed in the highest bracket. Only six white teachers ranked in the lowest category.

Miss Turner testified that she held a life certificate to teach in Florida, had taught in Hillsborough County 12 years, seven of them at Middleton. She received her bachelor's degree in education at Atlanta University, an accredited institution.

In response to questioning, Miss Turner said she hadn't known what her rating would be until the previous week, when she learned her salary would be $151.50 a month, near the top of the scale.

But Marshall bore in on the way the pay ratings were contrived.

He elicited testimony from Superintendent Robinson and from Frank D. Miles, Miles' evaluations than those of the black principals. So his opinion counted.

Among the final witnesses were Mrs. Mary Kent of Orange Grove School, a member of the rating committee, and Miss Verna Holcomb, chief clerk of the school board. They gave general figures on increases under the new salary schedule.

Mrs. Kent indicated 131 white teachers in city schools had their pay reduced, and "in no instance was a black teacher's salary decreased under the new schedule."

Motions denied

Robert W. Shackleford, representing the school board, moved for dismissal of the suit on the basis that no discrimination had been proven. Judge Barker denied the motion.

Then Shackleford asked the court to enter a decree that the school board was not guilty of discrimination against the black teachers as a group. This motion also was denied.

Judge Barker said he would take the case under advisement.

Almost two months later, the judge "upheld" the school board and the salary rating system, declaring: "The schedule is fair on its face and is not discriminatory."

He added that the salary schedule was being applied "uniformly" to all principals and teachers, white or black, "without regard to race or color."

Barker ordered the school board to continue setting salaries "without discrimination because of race or color."

Ironically, the controversial rating system Judge Barker approved had been thrown out by the school board the week before.

Under continued attack by white teacher groups and threatened by legislative alternatives, the board had backed down. It retreated to a previous salary standard that called for equal pay, based on experience and training.

But the salary increase gained by Hilda Turner — and other qualified black teachers — stayed in effect. The losers were those whose training did not equal four years of college.

Miss Turner looked upon the outcome as a "settlement" by the school board. "There was equalization," she said. "We got more money."

Robert Saunders, later the NAACP's field secretary for Florida, took a different view. He saw the outcome as part of the pattern of that period: A compromise was struck by the white establishment, he said, "but it did not advance the cause of black people."

The effect was to "hold the line," Saunders said. Not until the Supreme Court decisions of the 1950s did the barriers of segregation come down in schools.

Sheehy Smith, James and John Hewett, Ruth Moore and Francisco Rodriguez.

Approaching her 88th birthday, Miss Turner has had to resume the educational process herself. Because of dwindling eyesight, she had to learn how to read and write Braille at the Lighthouse for the Blind.

Her educational roots came early in Tampa, where she attended Harlem Academy and was taught in the seventh and eighth grades by Christina Meacham.

"She had a strong voice," Miss Turner said. "When she spoke, you knew it. She was a big woman — a tall, stately, proud woman."

She also came to know Blanche Armwood, another Tampa educator memorialized by a school named in her honor. She particularly remembers a speech made by Miss Armwood, at which school board members were present.

Miss Armwood dared to speak of the ironies presented by those days of strict segregation, but she did it in a good-humored way that caused no offense. Miss Turner recalls her saying:

"You white folks just don't know what to do with us blacks. You put us in front of you on the trains [in the baggage-car] and behind you [on the back seats] of the street-cars...

"You won't sit by us on the bus but you trust us with the most precious things in your lives — looking after your children — and cooking your food."

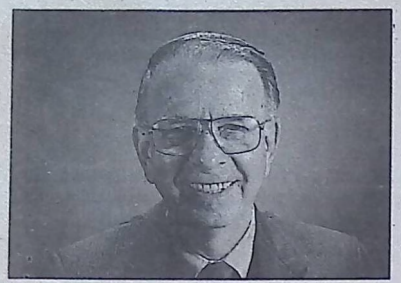
In addition to knowing Thurgood Marshall when she was plaintiff in a salary equalization suit, Miss Turner also came to meet two other giants in the civil rights movement: A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Benjamin Mays, president of Morehouse College.

Following her period of teaching at Middleton High School in Tampa, she visited Chicago, "decided I liked it up there," and stayed 24 years where she taught a class for mentally handicapped children at the Abbott Elementary School.

In the early 1960s, she joined her sister, Addie Washington, on a five-week visit to the Philippines, Hong Kong and Japan. This was one of those memorable lifetime experiences she looks back on with pleasure.

She returned to Tampa to retire in the 1970s. Several years ago, she was honored by the Sable Club for her role in the salary equalization case.

— LELAND HAWES



MAILBAG
Leland Hawes

Readers remember those alligators near courthouse

Those alligators at the old courthouse really crawled into a lot of readers' memories, judging by the response to an inquiry here Jan. 17.

"Salty Sol" Fleischman, retired TV and radio sportscaster, wrote from Sun City Center: "Yes, there was a fountain-type pool in the front of the old courthouse.

"It was next to a small bandstand where we broadcast [1932 onward] the speeches of Hillsborough County folks running for all elections. Also, the late V. Ficcio's band gave concerts in the bandstand when I was a boy.

"The fountain and pond, rimmed by cement, were about 25 feet in diameter. To keep the alligators from biting people, a sort of cyclone wire covered the pool."

Sol also remembered that in 1953 he was urged by the election board chairman to run for county fish warden. There was no such office, but he decided it would be fun to make the pitch in his fishing column for the Tampa Daily Times.

Hundreds of write-in votes were recorded, anyway, and County Commission Chairman Fred Ball made it official that Fleischman was warden "for life" of the courthouse fish pond. Mayor Curtis Hixon followed suit and had him named City Hall fish warden!

■ ■ ■

Former Hillsborough County Sheriff Ed Blackburn wrote from Tallahassee with a drawing that places the alligator pit on Franklin Street, a short distance from the bandstand at the corner of Madison Street.

■ ■ ■

Mel Culbreath also dropped a note to say: "You can tell Mrs. Osmer of St. Pete that I can verify there were alligators in a pool in front of the old Hillsborough County Courthouse until the new courthouse was built about 1950.

"I was born and reared at 804 and 806 Jackson St., just a few blocks from there.

Booker T. Washington slept here

The famed Tuskegee educator and orator came to Tampa in 1912 as part of his tour through Florida.

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Staff Writer

Born in slavery on a plantation in Virginia, Booker T. Washington came to Tampa in March 1912 renowned as a national spokesman for Southern blacks.

Because he praised the progress that had been made in race relations at a time when civil rights were being whittled away and lynchings still lacerated the country's conscience, Washington had his detractors.

W.E.B. Du Bois and other more militant black leaders looked upon the Tuskegee educator as a compromiser who accommodated the status quo and kept quiet about evils he should denounce.

Washington had won fame and standing among whites because he placed a strong emphasis on black self-help — and an apparent non-priority on social equality.

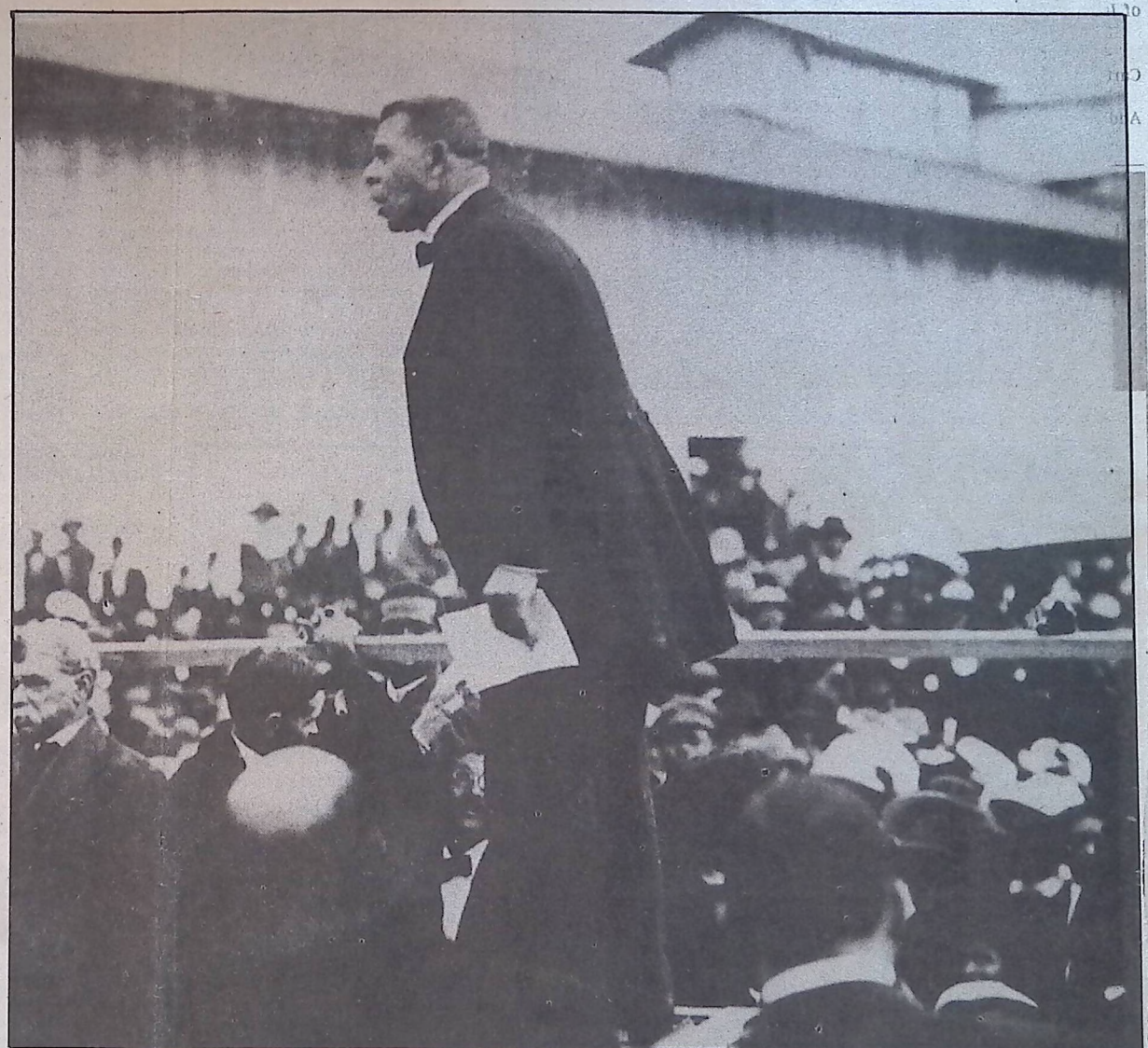
Only in later years did it become known that he had secretly financed test cases on voting rights and railroad segregation.

Tampa in 1912 gave all the appearance of being a "solidly Southern" town, with little concern for educating black children or hiring black adults for jobs beyond menial levels.

A "white municipal primary" for city elections had followed the election of Mayor D.B. McKay in 1910. The plan deprived the black population of any meaningful voice in choosing city officials.

McKay had advocated the white-only primary on the basis that numerous black votes had been bought. But he acknowledged in 1912 that graft had not been eliminated from city elections.

In other words, white votes were being bought, too. But the White Municipal Primary was to continue into the 1940s.





Above, in the last year of his life, Booker T. Washington is shown at a speaking engagement, articulating his thoughts on how

Political power

Booker Taliaferro Washington first gained national attention in 1895, when a speech he made at the Atlanta Exposition had a spellbinding effect. He used an analogy that drew acclaim from white listeners especially:

"In all things that are purely social, we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

almost caused him to cancel the speech.

In an advance story, The Tampa Morning Tribune had noted 75 cents would be taken from enough of the audience "to cover costs" for the spacious auditorium. The rest of the crowd would be admitted free.

Apparently doormen kept charging, and Washington learned of delays. The Tampa Daily Times reported "Washington declared to the committee, as he did later

When I was just a kid, my uncle W.P. 'Bob' Culbreath was clerk of circuit court, and my uncle John Culbreath Sr. planted all the trees around the courthouse."

■ ■ ■

Master sign-painter Ernest L. Ramirez said, "When I was a boy, a policeman told me not to put my hand in the fountain with the alligators in it."

■ ■ ■

William H. McClellan recalls the alligators grew to about 15-18 inches long, and seemed to grow fast in captivity. "The wall was not very high, and people would sit on it," he said.

■ ■ ■

Ruth L. Filkins of Winter Haven sent the photograph shown below, taken in the early 1920s. "My dad took these pictures when I was a little girl in Tampa," she said.

"He came down as a civil engineer with the company which is now Agrico in 1919, and we lived in all the little towns in Florida until 1927, when we returned to Michigan."

■ ■ ■

Coincidentally, since the question was raised, I came across an item in a March 1912 Tampa Daily Times, which pins down the approximate time when the fountain was installed at the 1892 courthouse.

The article tells of "a new and beautiful bandstand" in the works, which would replace "the present eyesore." The new bandstand would be topped by a cupola.

Here's the final paragraph of the article:

"With the work that is being done ... by Ole Jacobsen, the landscape gardener, the addition of the handsome fountain, and then the new bandstand, the courthouse square will present that appearance which will show prosperity and which will be a credit to the city."

■ ■ ■

If you have photographs or written recollections of Florida's past, write to Leland Hawes at The Tampa Tribune, P.O. Box 191, Tampa, Fla. 33601.



Photograph provided by Ruth L. Filkins

Alligators crawled around in a pool in front of the Hillsborough County Courthouse on Franklin Street from 1912 to the early 1950s.

The speech gave him a lofty new status, far beyond what a president of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama would ordinarily command. In the years to come, Washington became politically powerful, received honorary degrees and made national speaking tours.

The fact that President Theodore Roosevelt dined with him at the White House in 1901 created a national stir, for there was little precedent for such socializing between the races at that time. Numerous Southern newspaper editors expressed outrage.

In 1903, Florida's state school superintendent, W.N. Sheats, invited Washington to give a speech at Gainesville. But a local official blocked use of an auditorium.

Sheats persisted, and Washington spoke before 2,000 people, while hundreds were turned away. Although reaction seemed favorable, Sheats lost the next state election. His sponsorship of Washington was blamed in his defeat.

Author Louis R. Harlan, in a 1983 book on Washington, noted that "public speaking was the chief form of entertainment in Washington's day, and he almost always put on a good show."

During the years, the Tuskegee president cultivated wealthy white backers, many of them Northern liberals or Southern Jews. Harlan indicates Washington could be both persuasive and manipulative in his dealings with black followers.

A series of state tours brought his message before mixed audiences in a period when whites and blacks seldom mingled at public events. Washington usually traveled with an entourage by special train.

The National Negro Business League, which Washington dominated, set up the tours through its state affiliates. The Florida event grew out of an invitation extended in July 1911 at a meeting in Live Oak.

A detailed account of the weeklong railroad tour appeared in a special issue of The Florida Sentinel, then a monthly magazine published in Pensacola and edited by M.M. Lewey, president of the Florida Negro State Business League.

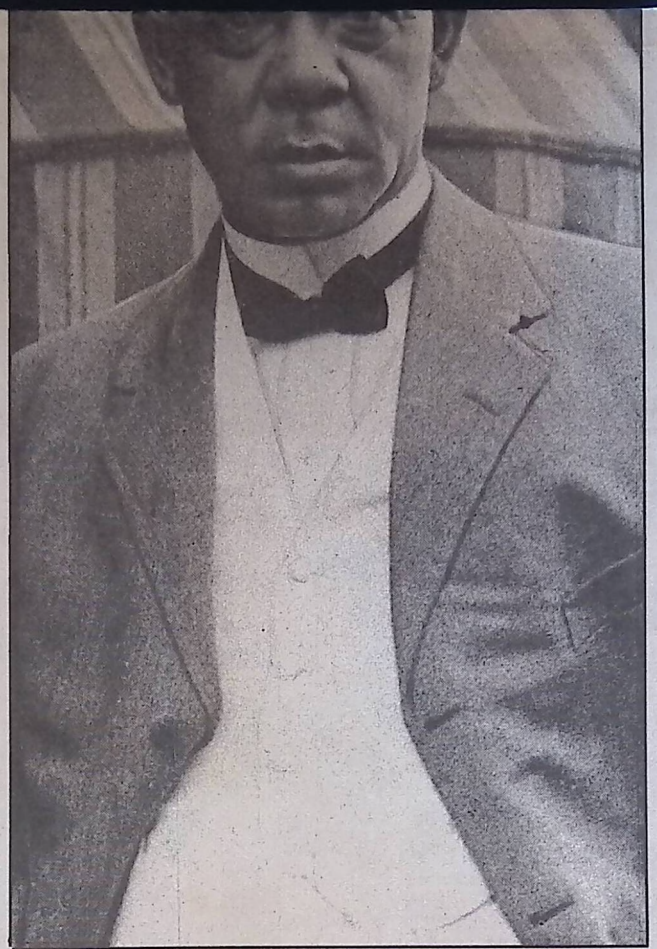
Preaching progress

Washington arrived in Pensacola on March 1, 1912, accompanied by a party of 22, including a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal church, doctors, educators, insurance executives, bankers, a secretary and a stenographer.

The mayor of Pensacola extended greetings on the platform, as did prominent white leaders at every speaking engagement.

Washington's talk there followed his usual pattern: praising race relations "on an individual basis" in the South and advising blacks how to improve their lives.

Despite sensationalist accounts of the "the worst that occurs between the races," Washington contended "the best that occurs is seldom heard outside of our immediate local communities."



blacks could best advance in America. At left is a portrait of Washington shot around the turn of the century.

He urged black farmers to acquire land while prices were low and to keep abreast of production techniques. And he spoke against idleness, tardiness on the job and toleration of immoral leaders.

The Tuskegee Institute man complained: "So many of our people are going around the country loaded down with pistols in their pockets. The pistol-carrier in Florida is a disgrace to the race, a disgrace to any race."

Washington told his white listeners the burden of setting a good example rested upon them. "If the white man is law-abiding, virtuous and sober, the Negro is likely to lead something of the same kind of life," he said.

He went on to make a series of predictions that, from the vantage point of 1993, proved overly optimistic:

"There is going to be no social war. There is going to be no emigration from the South. Both the black race and the white race are going to live here, in my opinion, in peace and in harmony."

As Washington's train made its way to Tallahassee, ex-slaves in Florida's onetime cotton belt clamored to see their idol at various stops. In the capital city, a Florida A&M brass band paraded through town before his address.

Washington went on to Lake City, then to Ocala, where Circuit Judge W.S. Bullock introduced him to a crowd of 5,000.

Bullock, who had grown up on a Marion County plantation, asserted that blacks had been given "an equal show in the race of life" although he knew there had been miscarriages of justice and "wrongs done."

The judge praised Washington for "taking the benighted, vicious, ignorant and superstitious Negro from his condition and clothing him in the garments of industry, intelligence and morality. In short, he is qualifying the Negro for citizenship."

Ocala's mayor and the editor of the Ocala Banner sat on the platform with "many prominent colored men," according to The Florida Sentinel.

Rolling into Tampa

The entourage reached Tampa on Monday night, March 4, just prior to Washington's speaking engagement at the Tampa Bay Casino. But a flap over an admission charge upset the orator and to his audience, that he was not here to make money out of his people, either for himself or anyone else."

The Times writer also noted another element of the Tampa appearance: "Someone had stretched a white sheet down the middle aisle to separate the races, and it was about as effective as a 10-foot brick wall and about as unpleasant to both sides of the fence."

The afternoon newspaper quoted Washington as commenting, "This is the first time I ever saw anything of this sort."

He went on to say: "My people have enough common sense not to intrude themselves, and the white men of the South are able to protect themselves and their families when there is any need of it. And when there is, we'll help."

The Times said applause came from both sides of the curtain.

Mayor McKay was reportedly ill, and U.S. Customs Collector Matthew Macfarlane gave a welcome in his behalf. He said he had heard Washington speak once before, at a Chautauqua festival and he added:

"He has done more than any one man in the United States to bring the people of this country, black and white, together, and make them feel they owed a common duty, one to the other."

The chairman of the local committee, G.S. Middleton, introduced Washington. But before the speaker began, he asked that the audience sing two spirituals, "I Never Expect To Get the Journey Over" and "In Bright Mansions Above."

Washington led off by praising Florida A&M for providing blacks "the best plant with the best equipment of any state in the union."

He went on to say that if it had not been for white friends, blacks would not have earned $50 million a year in Florida.

"The fact that we have this property, that we are getting more property and that we get work is the highest proof of the friendship and good will of the white man in Florida," Washington said.

He continued by saying good relations should be the basis for more progress — better education for black youth and preparation "to meet the same test before the law the white man has."

Washington concluded that "There is no greater enemy to the state today, be he white or black, than the man who would spend his time and energy in stirring up racial strife." And he said there would be no greater friend than the man who promoted racial peace and amity.

A Spanish dinner for 300 awaited in Ybor City, where the Florida Sentinel said, "Cubans, Spaniards and Negroes spared neither pains nor money to make the festivities the liveliest during the entire tour."

The party went on to Lakeland, Palatka, Daytona Beach and Jacksonville, with large turnouts at each place.

Washington's Florida tour came just three years before his death in 1915.

Friday, November 22, 1996 Citrus County (FL) Chronicle

Multiracial center plans in the works

By Julianne Munn
Staff writer

Black community leaders envision a multiracial community center for Crystal River and plan to convert that dream into reality early next year.

Another in a series of meetings was attended early this week by about two dozen people interested in building a community center in the downtown area, said Don Watkins, president and spokesman of the group.

"The ultimate goal is to have built, on our property, a community center serving all the people of Crystal River," Watkins said, explaining the coalition's goal. "The objective is to do something good for the city."

Watkins said a group of black citizens bought a tract of land just west of U.S. 19 between Northeast Third Street and Northeast Fifth Street in the early 1920s.

About an acre of the original plot remains — located roughly at the rear of the Fina service station and the Key Center Thrift Store, he said — in a trust held by a non-profit group known as the Colored Community Center.

One of the objectives of the meetings is to decide on a new name for the group, and ways and means for launching the building project, Watkins said.

The land proposed for the center was originally donated to the Citrus County School District in 1926 to build a three-room school for black children in the city, Watkins said.

It was called Carver Junior High School and used for that purpose until about 1954. Students then were moved to the new Crystal River Primary School, which also was restricted to black children until county schools were integrated in 1968, according to Watkins.

Watkins noted the trustees of the land successfully petitioned the school board to return the land to the trust, and it was given back to the group in 1955, after the junior high school was closed.

"We want to get people really involved in this," Watkins said, describing how the group plans to eventually solicit support from the entire Crystal River community.

Watkins said the center could be a multi-function building, available to the public for such activities as weddings, club meetings and other uses.

Another trustee, Frederick Copeland, was not available for comment, but Marjorie Copeland, his wife and a former city council member, said "I think it's a worthwhile project."

Since the property is located in an area subject to flooding, Watkins said the project won't get off the ground until all engineering studies related to drainage and site elevation and other building requirements are completed.

He emphasized the project is only in the talking and early planning stages and another meeting won't be scheduled until early next year.

Parade's Special
Intelligence Report

The Tuskegee Airmen Remembered

By Jane Ciabattari

With an Oscar nomination and a Tony Award under his belt, Laurence Fishburne has his pick of roles these days. Yet he took time off from the big screen to star in *The Tuskegee Airmen*, a TV film about a little-known group of World War II veterans—America's first black combat pilots.

"I had to do this piece," the 34-year-old actor told me, "not just for black Americans but for *all* Americans. It is part of our history that deserves to be recognized."

The film will be televised Aug. 26 on HBO and later will be shown at high schools around the nation. But it premieres next Friday in Atlanta at a reunion of the surviving Tuskegee Airmen. One of them will be Robert W. Williams, 72, whose account was the basis for the screenplay. He spent 43 years trying to get the airmen's story told.

Before 1941, blacks were given mostly menial jobs in the military, he explained. The top brass believed blacks lacked the intelligence or courage for the elite world of fighter pilots. Black Americans launched a campaign that led to an act of Congress establishing an experimental training program for black pilots at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Once trained, however, they were not posted overseas.

"They didn't have any intention of letting anybody fight," said Fishburne, "but we found a champion in Eleanor Roosevelt." The First Lady visited Tuskegee, flew with one of the pilots and went back to talk with the President. In 1943, a squadron of Tuskegee Airmen was sent to North Africa to provide cover for U.S. bombers.

The "Fighting 99th," part of the 332nd Group, compiled a remarkable record. "In spite of the roadblocks placed in our path," said Robert Williams, "we flew more than 700 missions and never lost one bomber to enemy aircraft." (Though initially resistant, white bomber crews ended up requesting their services.) The 450 Tuskegee Airmen who flew overseas earned 744 Air Medals and Clusters, more than 100 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 14 Bronze Stars, eight Purple Hearts, a Silver Star and a Legion of Merit.



Steven/HBO

Laurence Fishburne (r) with Robert W. Williams, 72, whose experiences in World War II were the basis for an HBO film about America's first black combat pilots

They went on to excel in other areas too: Benjamin O. Davis, their commander, became the first black three-star general in the Air Corps; William Coleman became Secretary of Transportation; Charles Diggs became a Congressman; Coleman Young became mayor of Detroit; George Brown became a lieutenant governor; and Roscoe Brown became a college president.

Fishburne believes their story will affect a new generation. "My son is 7," he said. "He knows what the Tuskegee Airmen did. If he ever hears anyone talk about what black people can and cannot do, he has clear examples he can cite. He has clear reflections of himself."



Mystery subject

Susanne Smith/*The Chronicle*

Mildred Freeman was on hand for the Celebration of Black History in Citrus County held recently at the Coastal Heritage Museum in downtown Crystal River. The museum is asking for help in identifying the person in the portrait on display. The hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

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Learning from the past

Citrus County (FL) Chronicle



Robin Cornetet/*The Chronicle*

James Anderson of Homosassa holds his son, James Anderson Jr., while he studies the exhibits displayed in honor of African American heritage in Citrus County at an open house Saturday at the Coastal Heritage Museum in Crystal River. The framed photograph which was recently advertised by the Citrus County Historical Society as an unidentified man has been claimed as a relative of a Crystal River family.

Spotlight falls on black heritage

Museum exhibit features notables of years past

By Terry Connelly
Chronicle writer

The legacies of many early residents were highlighted Saturday during an open house celebrating the black heritage of Citrus County.

A display of newspaper accounts, photographs, books, letters, illustrations and church records supplied by families and individuals at the Coastal Heritage Museum in Crystal River brought what seemed a reverent hush as youngsters and adults looked at the photos of the faces of the past.

Like "Tuna" Whaley, an oyster shucker whose knowledge of the waterways helped in the routing of U.S. 19 from Homosassa to Ozello Trail and Marie Hunter McCoy, a midwife known as Grannie Marie, who brought scores of rural county children into the world before she died in the mid-1940s.

Mildred Freeman of Crystal River supplied many of the chronicled memories of the area.

"My grandfather, Oscar Hopkins, settled here in 1910 after he left the West Indies. He worked here as a turpentine chipper before he became an independent cedar cutter," she said and added his products were used for making pencils.

He also used palmettos to fashion brooms and brushes and processed hardwood cedar for oil and, as an aside, Freeman noted that his work in the woods was aided by his oxen, Brendy and Dave.

Hopkins' sons, Oscar J. and Willie, also stayed in the wood business and became contractors in logs and pulpwood.

There was also an old portrait of a serious looking man in a suit and starched color. A photographer who had the portrait turned it over to the county historical society when an owner couldn't be found.

"Recently W.T. Watkins Jr. saw it reproduced in a newspaper and identified the man as Ernest Brown," Freeman said. "The portrait is soon to be handed over by the historical society to David Brown of Crystal River, the subject's son."

Displays lent by Chris Satchell explained the life of Mother M.L. Tate, who was the founder of The Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth Inc.

There were also historic accounts of Annie M. McCray of the Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church of which

Please see **HISTORY**, *Page* 2A

HISTORY

continued from Page 1A

Freeman is a member.

Other accounts point to notables like Arthur Norton, a phosphate miner, and his wife Clemmie, who were recognized by the county in a resolution citing their community leadership by church membership in Floral City's Mount

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Hard work becomes recipe for success

ditor's Note: This is the first in an ccasional series about Citrus County raduates who work for the school istrict.

y LOUKIA LOUKA
imes Correspondent

INVERNESS — At home, Shirley Poe has no great passion for cooking. She doesn't spend her evenings whipping up lobster bisque or roasted duck. She describes her cooking style as strictly ordinary.

But get her in a school cafeteria and the story changes. As the school district's food service supervisor, Poe is in charge of a budget close to $4-million that, among other things, is being used to serve more than 1-million school lunches during the current school year.

In the five years Poe has been supervisor of the district's food services division, she has made sure school lunches aren't boring — a variety of dishes are offered on any given day — and she keeps up with nutritional standards, making sure cafeterias prepare foods that are low in salt and fat.

"I have fun with it. We do a lot of creative things with the lunch program. I think the workers enjoy the job. . . . We are not just there dishing out food," Poe said.

Long before Poe was concerned with lunch menus, before she married and had a daughter, she was Shirley Franklin, a native of Evergreen, Ala. Her father died when she was a toddler. Later, she moved with her family to Citrus County to be near relatives. Her mother worked two jobs to keep things going.

In 1965, when broad social movements were beginning to sweep the country, Poe was a pupil at Booker T. Washington, a school for black students that became Inverness Middle School after integration.

Now 41, Poe remembers those days as a time when teachers and administrators shared a feeling of family and belonging with the pupils.

"I remember it being a lot of fun. I remember the teachers being very, very strict. There was a lot of learning that occurred because of the discipline," Poe said.

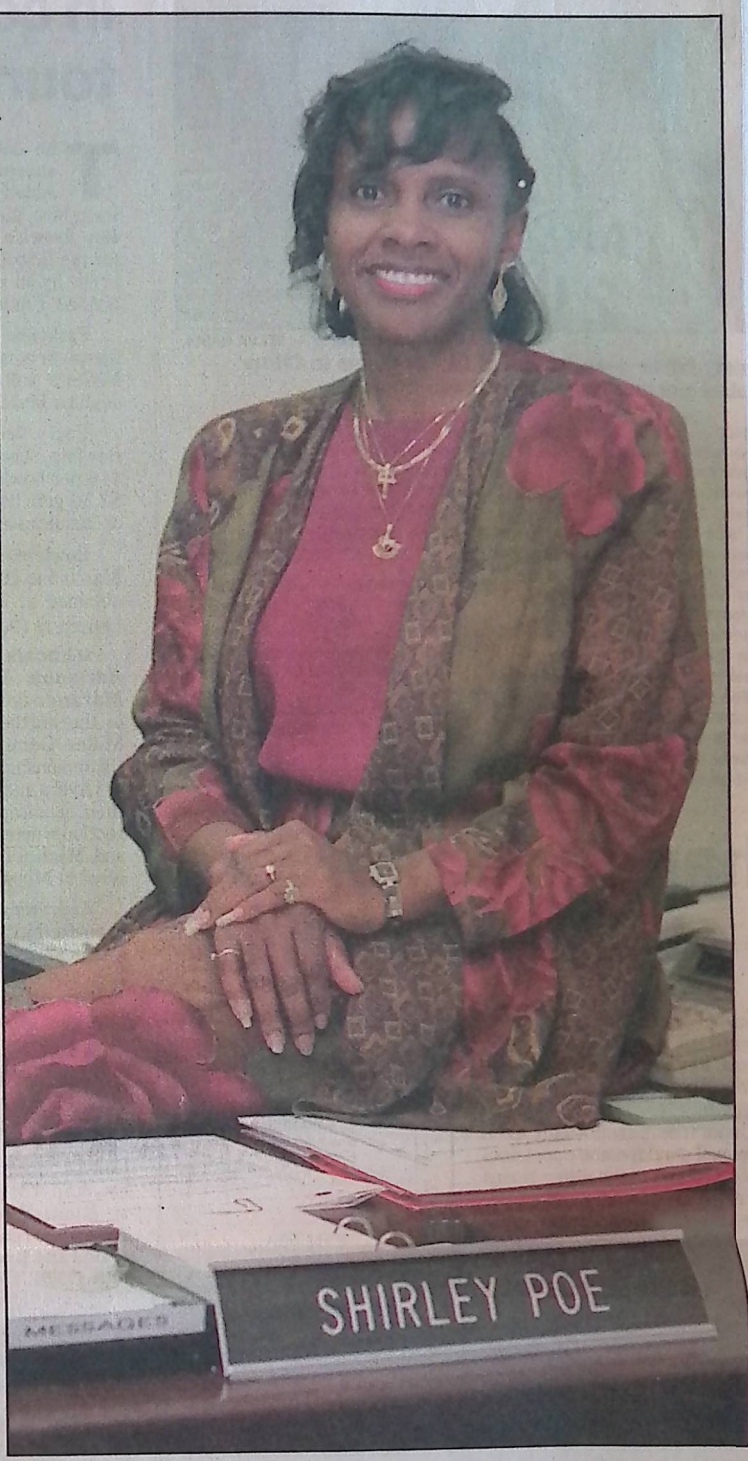
"I really treasured the times I spent at Booker T. Washington. The quality of what we received was much higher than what I believe kids receive today," she said.

After integration, Poe went to Citrus High School and, while she was a student there, began working for the school district doing clerical work. She went on to be a finance clerk. After graduating from Citrus High in 1972, she began taking classes at Central Florida Community College and earned an associate's degree from the junior college.

For 23 years, Poe has worked for the school system, working her way through various promotions until she was named supervisor of the food services division. She also has continued her education, receiving a bachelor's degree in business administration from Saint Leo College.

Poe's mother, Ruby Franklin, thinks her daughter's accomplishment is great.

"She's done a very good job . . . I raised Shirley up while I was working in the school system. I guess this is what she wanted to do, only she got to go further than I did," said Franklin, who works in the cafeteria at Inverness Primary School. Family is an important thread in Poe's life. In addition to her mother, an uncle, Arthur Franklin, was her inspiration then and now. "After my dad died, he became like a father to me," Poe said.



Times photo — STEVE HASEL

Shirley Poe, a 1972 graduate of Citrus High, has worked for the school district for 23 years. She is supervisor of the food services division.

Also, Poe's aunt, Althea Franklin, works in the cafeteria at Inverness Middle School.

Poe never expected to make a career in the school district, but she said it is rewarding to give back to the school system and community where she was raised.

Today, Citrus County schools continue to evolve and students have greater chances than before, but growing discipline problems offset the opportunities, Poe said.

As a result, students can be hindered in reaching their potential. The behavioral shift came in the years after integration. "When we got to integration, the discipline wasn't there. I believe it took away from what was given. I think it's more of a consequence in the black population," Poe said.

Poe's advice for success is this: Find something you believe in. "Mine is Christianity. That's what pulled me through. I didn't start out working at the school (district) thinking I'd be an administrator. I made it my business to put myself in a position to reach that potential," Poe said.

And she enjoys her work and her life. Despite her busy schedule, she finds time to play softball and make time for herself.

"I love what I'm doing. I love what I've done with myself and I love people. I supervise about 100 staff members and I consider myself a very compassionate supervisor. That's very important to me. If I can walk up to one of my employees and give them a hug, that's important. I feel really blessed to be where I am today," she said.

Black Heritage series stamp commemorates female aviator

STAMPS
David V. Tilton

Aviation pioneer Bessie Coleman was honored Thursday on the Black Heritage series' 18th stamp, a 32-cent vertical adhesive.

Celebrated at Chicago's Midway Airport, the commemorative's public debut and first-day ceremony kicked off with an aerial salute by members of the Chicago branch of the American Pilots Association.

Attending the stamp's dedication was Coleman's niece, Marion Coleman, a retired postal employee.

"Throughout my postal career, I saw the Black Heritage stamps and thought my Aunt Bessie should be honored," Coleman stated in a recent interview.

"Aunt Bessie's dream was to learn aviation and teach others. Even though she faced obstacles, she didn't let anything stop her."

Coleman believes her aunt's determination is a fine example to young people "that they can accomplish whatever they dream of doing in life — no matter what the challenges are."

Humble start

Bessie Coleman was born Jan. 26, 1893, in Atlanta, Texas, in a one-room cabin, the 12th of 13 children. She spent part of her growing-up years in a single-parent family. From early on she desired to fly, but her ambition was stymied by dual prejudices of race and gender.

Encouraged by Chicago Defender editor Robert S. Abbott, Coleman traveled to Europe for flying lessons.

On June 15, 1921, she earned an international pilot's license in Paris from the Federation Aeronautique Internationale. The document granted her the right to fly anywhere in the world, including the United States.

Coleman is believed to have been the first black woman aviator, the first U.S. woman to earn an international pilot's license, and the world's first licensed black pilot.

Her victory was not without sacrifice, however. Before going to Europe, Coleman studied French at night while working days to earn the money.

Returning to the United States with her right to fly vouchsafed, Coleman traveled the country performing aerial maneuvers and acrobatics. She encouraged others to take up flying, especially women and blacks.

Coleman's long-term goal of opening her own flying school was never realized. She died April 30, 1926, in Jacksonville while practicing for a flying exhibition. The plane crashed when controls jammed in the hands of her mechanic, who was piloting the plane.

Add the 32-cent Bessie Coleman Black Heritage series stamp to your collection. Find it at U.S. Postal Service philatelic centers and larger post offices starting today.

Blocks of four cost $1.28, and full panes of 50 run $16 each.

Annual series

The Black Heritage stamps are usually issued each year during February's Black History Month. This year's stamp was delayed because of the postal rate increase on New Year's Day.

For a free copy of "Celebrate Black History With Stamps," a 14-panel, full-color brochure depicting the first 17 Black Heritage stamps and others featuring blacks, send a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope to Black Heritage Stamps at my address shown below.

Multiple requests are fine, but please provide a separate envelope for each copy desired.



Thought to be the first black woman to earn her wings, aviation pioneer Bessie Coleman was honored on this 32-cent Black Heritage series stamp released Thursday in Chicago.

The Tampa Tribune, Friday, April 28, 1995

Re-examining slavery

Many blacks find inspiration in the spirit of survival in the face of incredible suffering.

By CHARISSE JONES
of The New York Times

During most of his 59 years, Oswald Sykes, a former hospital administrator for New York state, rarely thought about his ancestors' odyssey through slavery. And when he did, all he felt was a fleeting rage.

But then he saw the remnants of a rotting English slave ship, the Henrietta Marie, discovered in the Florida Straits. As he examined the heavy iron shackles and ship's bell, he pondered how strong his ancestors must have been to survive the passage from the Gulf of Guinea.

THE AMERICAN SCENE

"They had to be good," Sykes remembered thinking, "or we just wouldn't be here."

Within the last decade, Sykes' evolution of emotion has been experienced by a growing number of blacks, who have begun to re-examine slavery — reflecting upon it in film and music, remembering it through ritual and ceremony, assessing its legacy from universities to neighborhood study groups.

Some scholars compare this widespread reflection to that of Jews who have vigilantly preserved memories of the Holocaust.

Much in the same way, the scholars say, many blacks are now looking to slavery for inspiration as they struggle to withstand modern-day troubles.

"What's happening is an attempt to celebrate the spirit of ingenuity and survival in the face of suffering," said Michael Eric Dyson, professor of communication studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"We can say, 'If they could make it under slave conditions, then certainly we could make it under crack. If they made it under economic misery, we can make it under conditions of ethical collapse.' "

Looking back at slavery is not new. From emancipation celebrations at the turn of the century to Alex Haley's "Roots," the celebrated book and miniseries of the 1970s, black Americans have long grappled with that era and its legacy.

But some scholars say the recent burst of introspection, greatly inspired by the Afrocentric movement, represents a transition from feelings of shame and denial about slavery to an embrace of that painful past.

Some have begun to call slavery by another name, dubbing it the black Holocaust, or "maafa," a Swahili word meaning "unspeakable horror."

"I guess the generation here in the '90s is doing what it is called to do, and that is to remember," said Velma Maia Thomas, curator of a black Holocaust exhibit in Atlanta. "To finally open up the wounds, so when we go into this next millennium, some healing has taken place."

Jump the broom

This unsealing of memory has taken many forms. Across America, black couples jump over a broom to seal the bond of matrimony, a ritual created by slaves, who were often forbidden to marry.

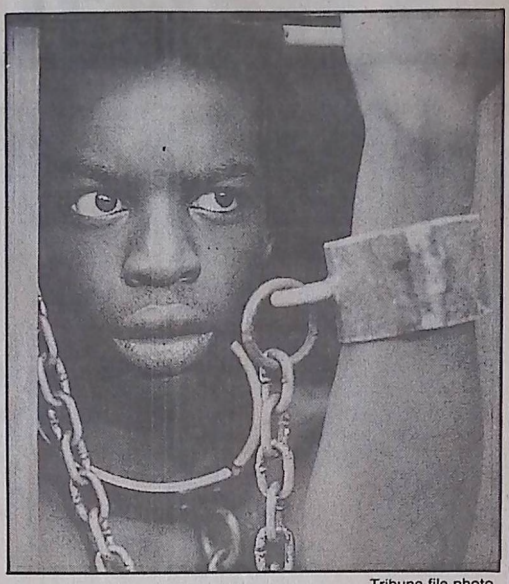
Along the shore of Coney Island, hundreds gather each June, to pray and cast flowers into the sea in honor of the millions who perished during the voyage from Africa known as the Middle Passage.

Hundreds more gather in September at Mount Vernon, Va., where they sing and pour libations in memory of the slaves owned by George Washington.

Blacks in New York City rallied in the early 1990s to preserve the African Burial Ground (originally Negro Burial Ground), where slaves and free blacks were buried through the 18th century.

Wynton Marsalis used slavery as the theme for his concert piece "Blood on the Fields" last year.

"Middle Passage," a novel by Charles Johnson about the slave trade, won a 1990 National Book Award. Over 100,000 people have seen "Sankofa," a film about a black woman who travels in time to the slavery era.



Tribune file photo

Slave Kunta Kinte played by LeVar Burton in the TV series made from Alex Haley's "Roots."

Such a renewed perspective on the past is vital if black Americans are to overcome the travails of the present, said Zala Chandler, a professor in the department of literature, languages and philosophy at Medgar Evers College.

"What our children are doing, being able to kill each other so easily, has to do with the fact they haven't been given that history," said Chandler, who makes a point of discussing slavery with all of her classes.

"It would be less likely if they understood what our ancestors went through, those who died and were buried in the Atlantic Ocean, and those who survived."

Experts estimate 40 million to 100 million Africans were taken to the Americas during the era of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Millions did not survive the voyage and their bodies were thrown overboard.

Buried at sea

So it is at the sea that Chandler and hundreds of others gather each June. They go to Coney Island to gaze into the Atlantic Ocean, and with dance and song, speeches and prayer, remember those who were buried in the waters.

Chandler and other faculty members have coordinated the tribute for six years, usually in summer. But the first service was held in a colder time, forcing Chandler and others to remember their ancestors' suffering in a visceral way.

"It must have been the coldest day in November," Chandler, 48, recalled. "But to me it was the most spiritual one, because it helped us to remember that when they brought slaves to this country, they didn't wait until summertime."

Rituals like those at Coney Island reflect a willingness to examine the past that has long been discouraged, both among blacks, for whom slavery has often evoked feelings of pain and shame, and in the larger society, where it is often dismissed as a bygone era with little resonance.

Black Americans young and old speak of the cursory references to slavery in their schoolbooks, in which blacks were often portrayed as passive victims who achieved nothing before being enslaved.

Some remember the overwhelming silence that surrounded the subject in their homes and communities.

"For people of my generation," said Roger Wilkins, a writer and history professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., "slavery was pushed away."

Now in his 60s, Wilkins recalled a day when his mother told him stories of their ancestors that he had never heard. "I said, 'Why didn't you tell me that when I was growing up?' " he said.

"She said 'Well, Roger, I guess it is like the old folks used to say: we didn't like to clank our chains.' Apparently, that was a common expression among black people. It meant that slavery was a shameful past. People didn't want to look back at it.

Citrus County (FL) Chronicle Monday, February 27, 1995

Sea captain is honored by a boat

Associated Press

NEW YORK — He was known as "Hell-roaring" Mike Healy, a fearless sea captain who prowled the Arctic, fighting poachers, saving Eskimos and dispensing frontier justice.

He also was a drinker with a temper who was court-martialed for abusing his crew and "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman."

But there's nothing ambiguous about Healy's legacy as a hero to 120 students at Virgil I. Grissom Junior High School in the borough of Queens.

They mounted a letter-writing campaign to get the U.S. Coast Guard to name a ship after Healy, a black who served more than 100 years ago in the Revenue Cutter Service, which became the Coast Guard.

He was known as "Hell-roaring" Mike Healy.

On Monday, just in time for Black History Month, the students will get their wish. Top Coast Guard officials will announce at a school assembly that they are naming a new polar-class icebreaker after Healy.

It will be the first Coast Guard ship named after a black, said Robert Browning, the Coast Guard's chief historian.

The Tampa Tribune-Times, Sunday, August 28, 1994

Silent figures speak volumes

Baltimore museum features 125 wax figures of historic black Americans.

By TRACIE REDDICK
Tribune Staff Writer

BALTIMORE — There's no need to book a tour of the Motherland or travel through the heart of Dixie, searching for an authentic slave plantation, to get a true sense of America's black history.

Just step through the doors of Baltimore's Great Blacks in Wax Museum and come face to face with 125 well-known and unsung history makers.

Dubbed the nation's "first and only African American wax museum," its life-size, lifelike figures not only capture the glory, they also tell the story of historic and contemporary black heroes and heroines.

Perched on a horse, there's Bill Picket, a rodeo star who helped introduce the sport of bulldogging or lassoing young cattle to the public; aviator Bessie Coleman peering down the cockpit of her plane; and Benjamin Carson, a pediatric neurosurgeon who helped separate German Siamese twins in 1987.

"Nothing grabs the attention of people like a wax figure," said curator Joanne Martin, who founded the museum with her husband, Elmer, a professor at Morgan State University. "They weave their magical spell and people are drawn to them like a moth to a fire."

The concept of the 11-year-old museum was inspired by a trip the Martins took to the Potter's Wax Museum in St. Augustine.

THE GREAT BLACKS IN WAX MUSEUM

- **WHAT:** A wax museum committed to the study and preservation of black history through the use of life-size wax images of historic and contemporary people of African ancestry.
- **HOURS:** Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 6 p.m.
- **ADDRESS:** 1601-3 E. North Ave., Baltimore, Md.; (410) 563-3404 or 563-6416.
- **ADMISSION:** Adults, $5.50; seniors and college students, $5; students 12-17, $3.50; children 2-11, $3; 1 and younger, free.

"We did a little investigating after that trip and discovered there weren't any African American wax museums anywhere in the country," said Joanne, who grew up in Yulee, a small town south of Jacksonville.

After visiting several wax museums around the world depicting blacks, the Martins noted the "color of the figures were usually the same, very dark and shiny." They decided to use pure beeswax rather than the vinyl visages in most wax museums to highlight the varying shades of blackness.

"Whites have different eye and hair colors and that's how they identify themselves," Joanne Martin said. "But, we [blacks] have the same eye and hair color. We paid special attention to the skin tones and hair textures of each figure because those characteristics help define our uniqueness as a people."

To gauge interest for a black wax museum, the Martins created four wax figures, including one of educator Mary McLeod Bethune, as part of a traveling exhibit that toured churches, malls and schools along the East Coast.

At each stop, people stuffed coins and bills in the hands and lap of Bethune, who peddled sweet potato

See PROMINENT, Page 3



Photo from the Great Blacks in Wax Museum

Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth are two of the 125 life-size figures that can be seen at Baltimore's Great Blacks in Wax Museum.

Prominent and unsung have place in museum

■ From Page 1

pies to raise funds for the construction of Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach.

"Right then and there we knew we had struck a nerve," Elmer Martin said. "Time and again we were bombarded with the same question: What are you going to do next?"

Their next step was a storefront museum near the Baltimore harbor, featuring 21 wax figures from 1983 to 1985. "What we had was good, but it wasn't great," Elmer Martin said. "We closed our doors so that we could concentrate on developing something spectacular."

The Martins secured a $100,000 state grant that was matched with funds from the city of Baltimore, charities and social and civic organizations. A project titled "Fund-a-Figure" helped raise money for the wax replicas.

The National Political Congress of Black Women was one of the first groups to sponsor a figure, paying $8,200 for a replica of Shirley Chisholm, which wears a suit given by the former congresswoman.

A habit and chair donated by the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the oldest Catholic order of black women, for a figure of their founder, Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange, shows how the museum is able to cast historically correct figures.

In 1988, the museum reopened with about 100 wax figures. Since then, the piercing glass eyes of the museum's 125 wax figures have attracted 200,000 visitors.

"We want to get across the point that African American history is first and foremost American history," Joanne Martin said. "It makes no sense to talk about Alexander Graham Bell without talking about [black inventors] Granville T. Woods, who invented the transmitter for the telephone, or Louis Latimer, who created its design."

The museum's peak season is February, which is Black History Month. About 65 percent of the museum's visitors come from public school systems in the mid-Atlantic region.

"The first thing the kids want to know is if we have any wax figures of any famous rappers," Joanne Martin said. "When I say no, their faces get one of those get-me-outta-here looks. But even the most jaded child who walks through our doors will leave here with an appreciation of African American history."

Figures such as Crispus Attucks, the martyr of the Boston Massacre, stand in closet-size niches, while others appear in settings that help tell a story.

For example, Reginald Lewis is depicted signing an agreement to take over the Beatrice Co. — an international food products conglomerate — in a $985 million leverage buyout, a coup that stunned the business world in 1987.

Lewis died in 1993 of a brain tumor. The museum is re-creating his wax figure because his family didn't like the photo used to cast his figure. A figure of the late Martin Luther King Jr. also is being recast.

"Our figure depicts Martin Luther King at the age of 23," Joanne Martin said. "The kids only remember Dr. King from his 'I Have a Dream' speech, so they don't recognize him when they see him. I know the figure we have is very accurate, but it bothers me when visitors don't accept it as realistic."



Photo from the Great Blacks in Wax Museum

Elmer and Joanne Martin flank a replica of former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm at the Great Blacks in Wax Museum.

There have been compromises. Objecting to a bow tie worn by a figure of Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam purchased a white clip-on for the Muslim leader, who they said never wore the type furnished by the museum because someone could grab it and choke him.

Also, the museum was told it could not mold a figure of boxing great Muhammad Ali because the Muslim religion forbids an image to be created in his likeness while he is alive.

"Trying to please everybody can be frustrating and costly at times," Joanne said.

It also takes some coaxing to get visitors who marched with King to view the segregation exhibits that include "colored only" drinking fountains and a display of Rosa Parks getting pulled from a Montgomery, Ala., city bus by two fierce-looking white police officers.

"Elderly [blacks] represent the flip side of the same coin as whites," Joanne Martin said. "They are uncomfortable about the images they see because they have lived through some of those experiences.

"Whites are uncomfortable because they think it is going to be some kind of guilt trip that points the finger of blame at them. So they both approach the [segregation and slavery] exhibits with a degree of caution."

As painful as those memories are, they are too important to ignore.

"We have to adapt the same attitude the Jewish people have about the Holocaust; we must not allow people to forget or to trivialize our history," Joanne Martin said.

"Instead of being ashamed, we designed these exhibits to help celebrate our victory over slavery and the Jim Crow era."

Tobacco has roots deep in history

Associated Press

CLINTON, Md. — The plants stand tall and beefy in the August haze on fields worked for 400 years by machete and sweat. Servants, then slaves, then hired hands have coaxed floppy tobacco leaves from this Chesapeake soil.

Even with suburbs pressing in and tobacco under assault in Washington less than 15 miles away, that "bewitching vegetable" still carpets the land.

"I've been thinking about giving it up some day," farmer Paul Goddard says of his crop. But switching from lucrative tobacco can be as hard as kicking a pack-a-day habit.

It has long been that way for a leaf loved and hated across time.

The world has hungered for North American tobacco since pre-colonial European traders discovered its use among natives of the New World.

Tobacco helped finance the American revolution, became a symbol of women's emancipation and gained such a reputation as a cure-all in the 1500s and 1600s that doctors blew smoke into patients' intestines with bellows.

Generations have become "bound in aromatic chains," as a writer put it ages before Washington bureaucrats began dryly debating nicotine's addictive properties.

"This herbe, or rather weede, seemeth not voide of venome and thereby seemeth an enemy to the life of man," a critic said some 360 years before the U.S. surgeon general linked tobacco to fatal disease.

A 17th century Turkish ruler was said to have beheaded subjects caught with tobacco, his way of saying Thank You for Not Smoking. These days, smokers might feel they've lost their heads, so socially and medically unacceptable has smoking become.

Places to light up shrink by the week and the Food and Drug Administration is weighing whether it can regulate cigarettes and take so much nicotine out of them they would lose their grip on the smoker.

For all their gains — among them the warning labels on packs, the 1971 ban on TV and radio advertising, smoking bans in many buildings — tobacco foes still face a huge enterprise that pumps $50 billion or more into the economy.

Despite a 20 percent drop in production over 20 years, the U.S. tobacco industry leads the world in exports, remains a pillar of agriculture and markets aggressively for customers — spending almost $4 billion in 1990 for promotion and advertising.

The anti-smoking clatter has been greeted like the buzz of locusts on the farms of Maryland, where tobacco was the main cash crop from the 1600s to the 1980s, when fruits and vegetables surpassed it.

Tobacco is a tough plant, says Goddard, who farms 25 acres of it with his brother. "It will wait for the rain." Not like the finicky tomatoes that swell and split with too much water or languish with too little.

Still grown mainly on small family farms, tobacco promises a decent payoff for people who can stand the backbreaking work — the flashing of knives and spearing of plants in a harvest-by-hand little changed from the old days.

The yield is astronomically higher than for most other crops — in 1992, farm receipts for tobacco averaged $3,890 per acre compared with $200 per acre of corn and soybeans.



Associated Press

A tobacco farmer rides a tractor at a farm in Clinton, Md., Thursday, Aug. 11. Tobacco helped finance the American revolution, symbolize women's emancipation and gained such a reputation as a cure-all in the 1500's and 1600's that doctors blew smoke into patient's intestines with bellows.

Citrus County (FL) Chronicle Thursday, August 11, 1994

Tuskegee is rich in black history

Associated Press

ORLANDO — Its alumni include Air Force Gen. Daniel "Chappie" James and actor Keenan Ivory Wayans. Its first principal was Booker T. Washington.

Tuskegee is a name out of black history.

It is noted for George Washington Carver and the Tuskegee Airmen, the group of aviators who flew to greatness in the hostile skies over Europe during World War II.

From Tuskegee Normal School of Booker T. Washington's day to today's Tuskegee Institute, there is a world of difference in the historically black university, its teachers and alumni say.

Today's graduates, gathered in Orlando for their annual reunion, are engineers, business leaders, doctors and lawyers and well as teachers. No longer is the school content to produce merely teachers, farmers and tradesmen.

Although officials say they are faithful to Washington's original vision, Tuskegee began changing almost as soon as it opened.

"It simply grew," said Frank J. Toland, a professor at the Alabama university.

"So we don't offer brick masonry for our college students, but we offer a program in building and construction. We don't offer any programs in drafting, we offer degrees in architecture."

The school that lobbied behind the scenes for compromise in 1890 followed the guidelines of early leaders such as Washington: that blacks could get ahead by learning a vocation, not challenging Southern society by agitating for the vote.

Changes began in the early 1900s, Toland said, as public schools started educating black students. Tuskegee shifted to higher education, becoming an institute in 1937 and a university in 1985. It bowed to no one during the civil rights struggles of the 1950s and 1960s.

'We're having our say . . .'

Centenarian sisters recount their remarkable lives—and share their hard-earned wisdom

BY CHRISTINE LYONS AND WILLIAM BARNHILL

SUZANNE DECHILLO/NYT PICTURES



"Sadie is sugar, and I'm spice," says Dr. Bessie Delany (right), a retired dentist. The keys to their longevity: Exercise and good nutrition—and laughter, enjoyment and a stress-free life.

With the perspective that living more than 100 years can bring, Elizabeth and Sarah Delany, two women of color who broke new ground in the fields of health and education, have a loving admonition for America:

Wake up! Stop dwelling so much on differences in race. Instead, focus more on caring, helping others and maintaining your dignity, independence and personal accountability.

"There's too much attention paid to color," says Elizabeth Delany, at age 102 two years her sister's junior. "Racism has ruined America. The Founding Fathers didn't intend for it to be like it is right now; they intended for everybody who wanted to make a contribution to be able to make it."

Daughters of a freed slave who became the first elected black Episcopal bishop in the United States, the two sisters have earned the right to speak their minds, and not just because of their longevity.

Elizabeth Delany, known affectionately to her former patients as "Dr. Bessie," battled through both racial and sexual bias to earn a degree in oral surgery at the Columbia University School of Dentistry. In 1923 she became the second Negro woman to be licensed as a dentist in New York state.

Her sister, Sarah, whose gentle disposition won her the family nickname "Sweet Sadie," used cunning misdirection to achieve her goal as a master's level educator. She became the first Negro high school teacher of domestic science in New York City.

Now the two sisters have reached another milestone. This time they have surprised even themselves by becoming best-selling authors, telling the story of their lives and recounting their remarkable struggle to succeed in a sometimes hostile society.

They impart the wisdom they have gained in "Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years," written with Amy Hill Hearth (Kodansha America, 1993).

As it turns out, the Delany sisters have a good deal to say about many different things: family values, marriage, the role of women in America, race relations, aging, not to mention the state of the country.

Recently, the Delany sisters shared their thoughts with a Bulletin reporter who visited them in their comfortable, two-family red brick colonial home in Mount Vernon, N.Y., where they have lived for some 30 years.

With the Manhattan skyline clearly visible through a living room window, the setting is perfect for talking.

And the sisters are passionate talkers. Both have gray hair, pulled up on top of their heads in buns. On the wall behind them are pictures of their family; on the table beside them, a century-old family Bible.

'We were taught you don't look at color. It's the way you act that I look at.'

BESSIE DELANY

Physically, they appear fragile, but their strong minds—and fierce independence—come through in almost every sentence. They clearly don't pretend to be in tune with popular opinion.

Both sisters abhor racism and refuse to be stereotyped as "black" or "African-American." "I am a colored woman, or a Negro woman," Bessie says. "Either one is OK. Today they use this term 'African-American.' I prefer to think of myself as an American, that's all."

Despite her frustrations with racism, Bessie today objects philosophically to affirmative action programs that give preferential treatment to minorities.

"Let the best person get the job, period," snaps Bessie. "Everybody's better off in the long run. We were taught you didn't look at color. It doesn't make any difference to me whether you're black or white. It's the way you act that I look at."

Sadie and Bessie aren't only ruggedly independent in their thinking; they also live that way. The night before their interview with the Bulletin an electrical fire erupted in the basement, leaving them without heat.

After discovering the blaze, Bessie first contained it, THEN called the fire department. And, when offered shelter for the night in a relative's home, the sisters declined; they would remain in their own home—with or without heat.

If their determination comes through, so does their sense of fun. "We laugh and cut up so much," says Bessie, "that the children next door must wonder what do those two old women find to be so tickled about."

As they speak, the sisters hold hands and their comments go back and forth between them, with each sometimes finishing the other's sentences. There's an easiness between them, like long-married couples; they share the calmness and confidence that best friends have.

But their styles are very different, as they have been since childhood. Sadie is sweet and wily; Bessie is outspoken and confrontational. "If Sadie is molasses, then I am vinegar! Sadie is sugar, and I'm the spice," Bessie says.

Indeed, Bessie speaks her mind, always. "And who is going to stop me?" she asks. "Nobody, that's who! Ain't nobody going to censor me, no sir. At my age, I can say what I want!"

The Delany sisters trace their sense of fair play, and their strong wills, back to their parents. "We had unusual parents," says Bessie. "Everyone thinks their parents were special, but I know ours were. Our father was wise and he was very proud of his family. We were and we are a loving family, very close to each other."

Together, adds Sadie, their father and mother gave them clear values and a strong sense of self-worth, pride and independence. From this strength, the sisters say, came the secrets to their achievements, their triumphs over racism and sexism, and their own enduring relationship—pride, independence and personal accountability.

Their parents stressed for them, as they now stress for America: Be your own person, beholden to no one; help others; be proud of what you are; and struggle for the best and most education you can get.

Both followed those rules, which gave them the strength and confidence to hurdle prejudice and racism. "We didn't have to worry about what [a] person thought," says Sadie. "If they didn't think the same, well, we were sorry. They just didn't like us and that's all. We went right on and it never bothered us at all."

Their father, Henry Beard Delany, learned to read and write while a slave on a Georgia plantation. He later attended Saint Augustine's School for Negroes in Raleigh, N.C., and became an Episcopal priest and bishop.

He met and married Nanny James Logan at St. Augustine and the two worked there most of their lives, he as vice principal, she as matron. They raised 10 children on the campus, including Sadie and Bessie. All 10 graduated from college and became professionals, among them two dentists, a

continued on page 12

Sisters

continued from page 20

physician and a lawyer who became a judge in New York City.

But the struggle wasn't easy. Both Sadie and Bessie had their share of hard knocks. Since their parents didn't have the money to send them to college, they worked as teachers in Southern school systems and saved.

By 1916, Sadie was ready to make her move, migrating to New York City and Harlem. After getting a master's level degree, she maneuvered her way into the New York City school system, a feat that required a bit of stealth.

She cleverly skipped the supposedly mandatory personal interview for a teaching position to which she had been tentatively assigned, realizing that if she appeared in person she would be rejected due to race. Instead, she appeared in the classroom on the appointed day and began teaching.

Joining Sadie in New York, Bessie enrolled in the Columbia University School of Dentistry. She wanted to attend New York University, but in 1918 that university refused to accept women into its dentistry program. And at Columbia, she was the only colored woman in a class of 170.

Neither Bessie nor Sadie ever married; in those days it never occurred to most people that a woman could have a career AND get married.

Today, women are told they can have it all, be a successful career woman, a wife, a mother and the perfect homemaker, all rolled into one. Sadie doesn't believe in this mythical "superwoman."

"In some cases it works," she admits, "but in most it does not. That's why there are all these broken families—so many women with children who have no father and miss out on the nurturing they need, especially from the father. I don't think a woman's got any business trying to raise children without a father."

The sisters have strong views, too, about aging and independence. "When you get as old as we are," says Bessie, "you have to struggle to hang on to your freedom, your independence. We have a lot of family and friends keeping an eye on us, but we try not to be dependent on any one person. We try to pay people, even relatives, for whatever they buy for us, and for gasoline for their car, things like that, so that we do not feel beholden to them."

They still handle their own finances, and take care of their home—with the aid of a "youngster" of 80 who comes in once a week to help with the cleaning. They make their own soap from chicken fat and lye and brush their teeth with homemade soap. They refuse to have a phone installed; they see it as a "nuisance."

Asked the secret of their longevity, Bessie jokes that it just might be that they never married, never had husbands "to worry us to death."

More seriously, her sister points first to exercise: "Exercise is very important," she says. They did yoga exercises five mornings a week until Sadie broke a hip.

They also watch their nutrition, staying away from fatty foods, eating as many as seven different vegetables a day and taking vitamin supplements.

A clove of garlic a day, finely chopped and swallowed raw, does wonders, Sadie says. And a teaspoon of cod liver oil helps. They boil their tap water. They eat their big meal of the day at noon. Neither smokes.

Less tangible longevity secrets are laughter, enjoyment and a stress-free life, says Sadie.

With all this, Sadie remains moderately optimistic about her own future. At the age of 90, she renewed her membership in AARP—for 10 years. At 101 she was a bit more cautious; the renewal was only for three years.

One subject on which the sisters aren't optimistic is the American view of money. Unfortunately, too many Americans put too much value on accumulating it, Bessie says. "As people get more money, they get tighter. Selfishness and greed—those are two of the main problems these days ..."

'Life still surprises me. So maybe the last laugh's on me.'

BESSIE DELANY

"... And personal accountability," finishes her sister.

Greed is a trait the sisters certainly don't have. Their book is in its fifth printing, with 250,000 copies in print, and Camille Cosby, wife of entertainer Bill Cosby, recently acquired film and television rights. Will it make them rich? Probably not; in keeping with their family tradition, the sisters plan to give most of the money away, to God and their loved ones.

One of their loves is their country: The Delanys are passionately patriotic. "America's a beautiful place and it's mine as much as it is yours," declares Bessie. "And I have put as much effort into it as you have. I wouldn't live anywhere else. I don't want to be buried anywhere else. This is my home.

"Lord, ain't it good to be an American," she adds. "Truth is, I never thought I'd see the day when people would be interested in hearing what two old Negro women have to say. Life still surprises me. So maybe the last laugh's on me."

Christine Lyons and William Barnhill are New York-based free-lance writers.

AARP

BULLETIN

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A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS

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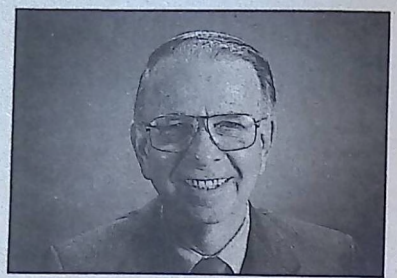


MAILBAG
Leland Hawes

Preview center aims to tempt history palate

Interested in learning more about the events that shaped this area?

Saturday is opening day for the Tampa Bay History Center's preview center on the second floor at the Shops of Harbour Island. There will be an open house from noon to 5 p.m.

"A Gateway to Florida" is aimed at giving viewers an idea of how exciting a full-blown museum could be, director Byron Johnson said.

The preview center should whet the appetites of history lovers as a tray of hors d'oeuvres might before an expected banquet, Johnson suggested.

Four Hillsborough County institutions have lent their support for the "Gateway to Florida" exhibits: the Henry B. Plant Museum, the East Hillsborough Historical Society, the Veterans Memorial Museum and the Tampa Museum of Art.

Johnson said the opening already has brought the promise of a collection of 10,000 Tampa Bay area Indian artifacts assembled by an amateur archaeologist in St. Petersburg who has been gathering materials for 35 years.

That collection alone could fill an exhibition hall devoted to the area's Indian past.

Backers of the Tampa Bay History Center are still considering potential sites for a large, state-of-the-art building that may be located in a heavily trafficked area.

IRS clerk's grandson

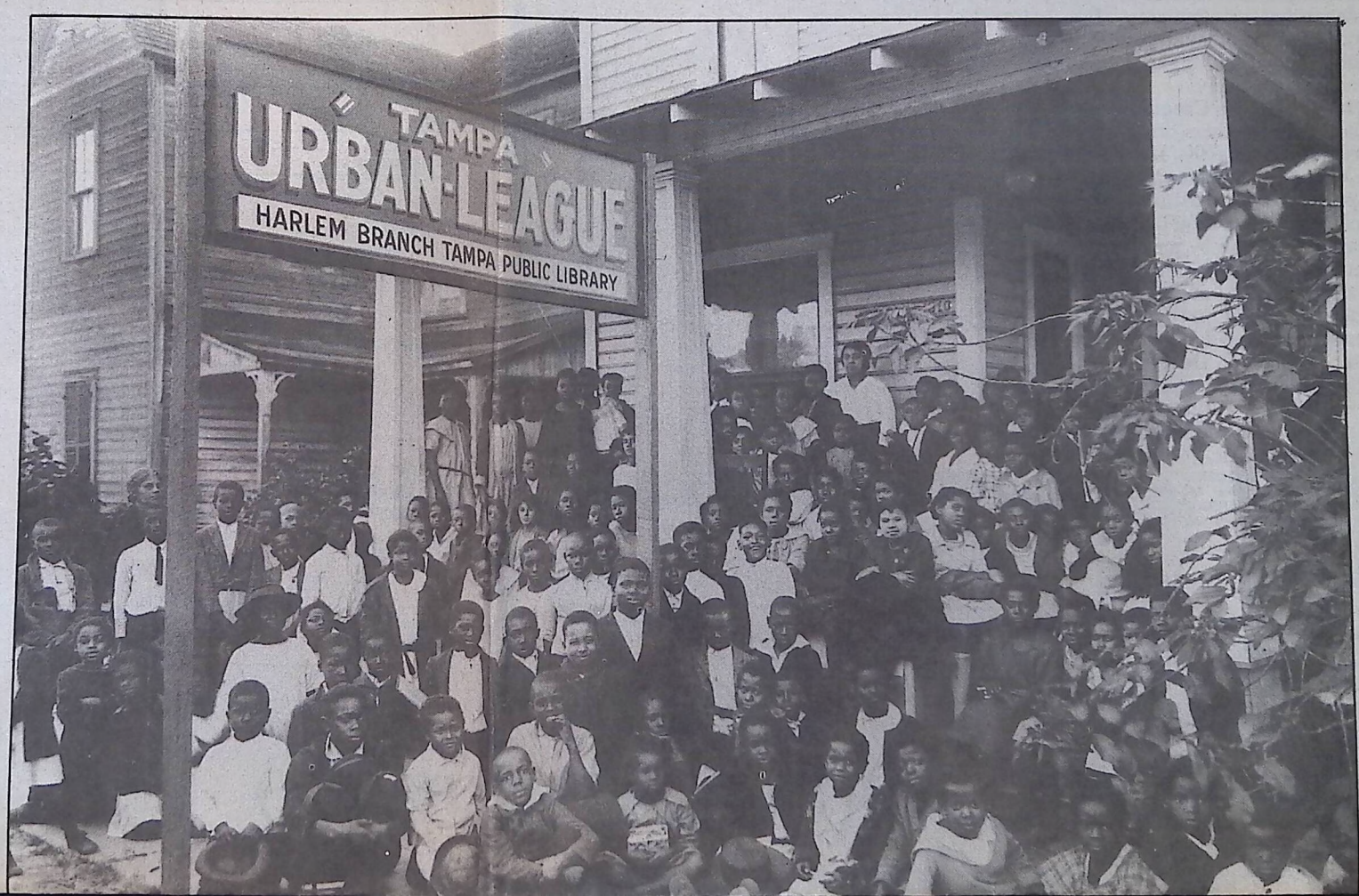
The History & Heritage page on Feb. 13 told the story of Joseph N. Clinton, a black "deputy clerk" who actually headed Tampa's Internal Revenue office in the early years of the century.

Cigar manufacturers rallied to his support in 1912 when his job was threatened

Scenes from a family album



This street scene from the 1950s shows black-owned businesses along Central Avenue, including Watts Sanderson's Blue Room.



but to no avail, for he lost his post when Democrats took control in Washington in 1913.

After the article appeared, I learned that Clinton had a grandson, Henry "Red" Clinton Jr., who was well known here as a musician. And I talked to Gladys Johnson of Tampa, who was married to him from 1943 until his death in 1958.

"He played the alto saxophone," she said. "He and Charley Brantley organized a band and played on and around Central Avenue here in Tampa, at places like Watts Sanderson's, the Apollo Ballroom and the Cuban patio [Marti-Maceo Society's earlier building]."

She and Clinton had one daughter, Maxine Clinton Davis.

Johnson said Clinton told her he taught music "during WPA times" — the Depression years of the 1930s.

And he had played with the "Florida Collegians" as well as the "Bama State Collegians."

In later years his "Red Clinton Melody-Makers" played clubs such as the Turf Exchange and the Red Mill, Johnson added.

Magazine features Ybor

Historic Preservation, the magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has an eye-catching cover and a wonderful spread on Ybor City's efforts to hang onto its historic atmosphere.

The cover photograph shows a couple dancing the tango in the cantina of the Centro Asturiano during the 1920s. Inside the magazine, 9½ pages are devoted to photographs and text under the title, "A Sense of Belonging."

Author Allen Freeman concentrates on the mutual aid societies that helped assimilate the unique ethnic mix of Tampa's cigar-making Latin Quarter. And he tells of efforts to restore the community.

His opening paragraphs are intriguing:

"Envision a neighborhood in which skilled, well-paid workers walk daily to quiet, non-polluting factories. Picture a community surrounding a main street lined with lively shops, affordable restaurants, and theaters that attract famous entertainers.

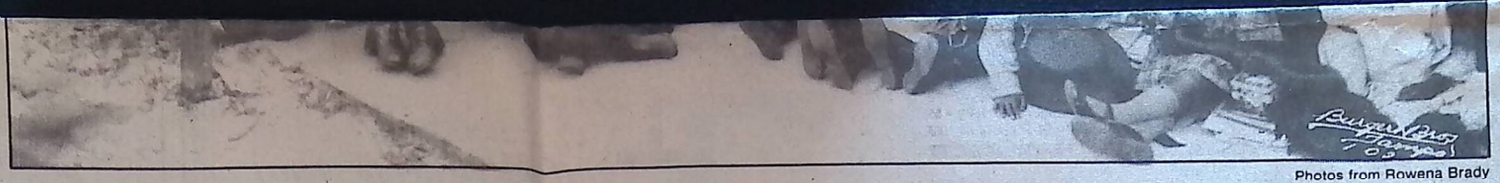
"Imagine a diversified, multiracial society offering equal opportunity of housing and employment. Such is the romantic picture of Ybor City during the early years of this century.

"If the reality wasn't quite as wonderful as all that, some people remember it that way and others hope to revive Tampa's cigar-making district with such a vision in mind."

Freeman's article is illustrated with colorful views of the present as well as striking scenes from the past.

■ ■ ■

If you have photographs or written recollections of Florida's past, write to Leland Hawes at The Tampa Tribune, P.O. Box 191, Tampa, Fla. 33601.



Photos from Rowena Brady

Tampa's first library branch for blacks was housed on Marion Street. Blanche Armwood Beatty is shown standing, rear center.

Old family pictures inspire effort to create book about the history of blacks in Tampa.

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA

For Rowena Ferrell Brady, a suitcase stuffed with old family pictures inspired her to come up with a major project in her retirement years.

"On rainy days, my mom used to pull an old suitcase from under the bed," she said. "She would tell us stories about the pictures in the suitcase — and stories about people in the pictures."



Brady

When she retired after 36 years as a public school teacher, Brady remembered her childhood fascination with photographs. And she asked herself, "Why don't I do something about it?"

She decided then — about four years ago — to aim for a book that would reclaim Tampa's black heritage in a meaningful way. And she got enthusiastic encouragement from several area historians.

Brady began borrowing pictures from acquaintances and having them copied. Her "collecting" phase has continued, but it's coming to a climax. Now the book is past the anticipation stage.

Backing is being enlisted to create a pictorial history of Tampa's black citizenry since 1900, with Brady serving as editor/compiler/author.

The University of Tampa Press has agreed to publish it, and the Tampa Historical Society has set up a special fund to accept tax-deductible contributions to make the book possible.

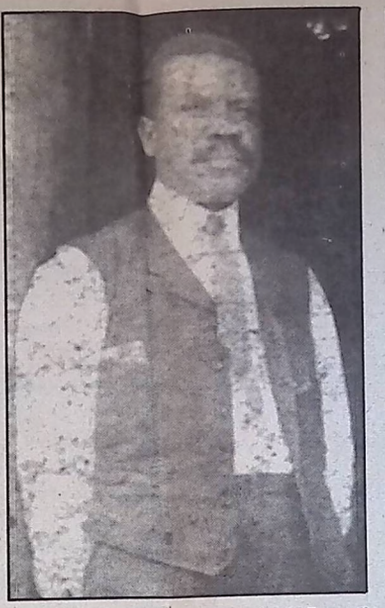
Co-chairs of a fundraising committee are Altamese Purity Hamilton, Henry Carley and Ella G. Cusseaux.

George B. Howell III, president of the historical society when Brady was a member of the board, has enlisted foundation support.

Target date for books coming off the press: spring of 1995.

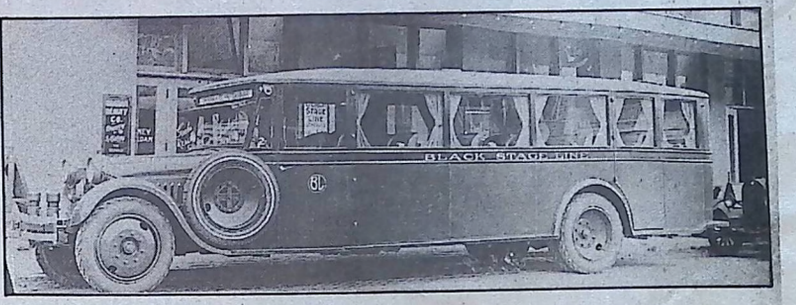
Get your pictures in

Time is drawing short on the collection of pictures. Those who feel they have family photographs or scenes of community activities that would be of significance for the book are asked to contact Brady at (813) 877-6494.



Rowena Brady's father, A.J. Ferrell Sr., is shown at the time he was a U.S. Customs inspector.





Luther Alexander Sr., left, cut a sporty figure as chauffeur for a Tampa Coca-Cola Bottling Co. executive in the 1920s. Below, this was the bus used by Pepsi-Cola's black baseball team.

Since her family forebears came to Tampa around the turn of the century, Brady is well-positioned to know the people and events that should be commemorated in a volume of this sort.

Her own family has been involved in significant community movements in the past, and Brady herself is active in civic, church and social pursuits.

Her father, the Rev. Andrew Jackson Ferrell Sr., was an inspector for the U.S. Customs office in Tampa before he went into the ministry through St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was also active in the Afro-American League in 1915.

Both Ferrell and his wife, Sarah A. Ferrell, served as board members for the Tampa Urban League, and the first branch library for blacks was set up in their home on Marion Street — under auspices of the Urban League.

Sarah Ferrell taught at Harlem Academy, the first elementary school for black youngsters in Tampa. She later served as a tuberculosis social worker for the city of Tampa.

Education pays off

Rowena Brady was born in Plant City in the parsonage of the Allen A.M.E. Church when her father was pastor there. She had two brothers and three sisters, all now deceased.

Educational achievement obviously motivated the entire Ferrell family.

Brady herself went on from Middleton High School in Tampa to Florida A & M College in Tallahassee, where she got her bachelor's degree in elementary education and her master's in early childhood development.

She taught 18 years at College Hill Elementary — now Lockhart — in Tampa, then another 18 years at Miles Elementary. Mostly, she taught the third grade.

After a brief retirement she volunteered and taught part time at St. Peter Claver parochial school. Last year she retired from teaching again.

She was married to Charles L. Brady, now deceased, who was a science teacher in the Hillsborough County school system. They had one daughter, Renee Brady Coleman, who is regional director of an insurance company in Los Angeles.

Brady's brothers and sisters also had notable careers.

Andrew J. Ferrell Jr., a graduate of Wilberforce University in Ohio, became manager of the first housing project in Tampa, North Boulevard Homes. He later served as principal of Middleton High.

Hewitt D. Ferrell, a graduate of South Carolina State College, became a film editor for Channel 10 in Miami.

All her sisters obtained at least one educational degree from Florida A & M.

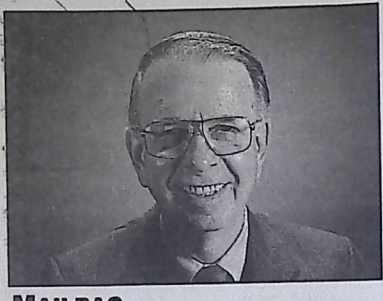
Alma Ferrell Brooks went on to become principal of Bunche Park School in Opalocka; Eloyce Ferrell Combs became state supervisor of migrant education and lived in Tallahassee; and Carol Ferrell Coffee worked for the government during World War II in Washington, D.C., then went on to become a social worker in Newark, N.J.

Getting back to the book, Ferrell said: "I'm not in it for a profit. The proceeds will go towards a scholarship to enable an African-American student to attend the University of Tampa."

The scholarship will be named in honor of her parents.

Sunday, February 6, 1994

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE



MAILBAG
Leland Hawes

Book filled with facts about blacks

Researcher Julius J. "Jeff" Gordon has notched another landmark volume, compiling material from Tampa's past. It's called "Afro-Americans of Hillsborough County, Fla. 1870-1890."

If you're interested in delving into the backgrounds, occupations and affiliations of black residents who lived in the county in that period, you'll find it in Gordon's new book.

You may be surprised to learn that Hillsborough County had five black county commissioners who were appointed during Reconstruction. They were Cyrus Charles, Mills Holloman, Mack Hamilton, John Thomas and the Rev. Robert Jackson.

And there were three black nominees for the city council: Henry Brumick, 1877; Cyrus Charles, 1869; and Joseph A. Walker, 1887.

Walker, incidentally, was elected to the first council after Tampa gained its charter as a city. He was also treasurer of the United Order of Knights of Labor of America.

Other officers of the union were Joseph Phillips, chairman; John J. Larry, secretary; and P.L. Hamilton, financial secretary.

Tampa had three black attorneys in that period: Peter W. Bryant, Sam King and Thomas McKnight.

John A.W. Patton was listed as principal of what was called a "colored free school" in 1890. He was also a cabinetmaker employed by the Germania Co. in Tampa.

Farmer Washington George Miller was credited with donating the land where Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church was built.

F.C. Thomas made the list as editor of a newspaper for blacks called "Southern Progress" in the mid-1880s.

Officers of the Mt. Pleasant Masonic Lodge No. 13 in 1880 were shown to be: Louis Henderson, John A.W. Patton, James Welch, Isaac Howard, C.C. Johnson, James Anderson, Solomon Sallie and John Edwards.

Hillsborough County had two black men listed by census-takers as cowboys: Joseph Crews and Thomas Waker.

There were 37 farmers, 17 teachers, three firefighters, four fishermen, three grocers and one hackman.

Other occupations included: 18 carpenters, three bartenders, one cigar factory owner, one chicken farmer, 25 ministers, five railroad employees, 12 sawmill workers, five seamstresses, 30 domestic servants, one sexton, one shoeblack, 12 steamship hands and six teamsters.

Gordon also checked the birthplaces of blacks residing in Hillsborough County 1870-1890 and found Florida leading by far with 680, Georgia following up with 123, Virginia with 26 and North Carolina with

The historian/researcher previously had indexed the newspapers of 1870-1890, and he has included every reference to blacks and their activities he could find.

"It's a book of facts, a history of that time," he said.

Copies of "Afro-Americans of Hillsborough County" are available for research at the Hillsborough County Historical Commission room at the Hillsborough County Courthouse and at the Tampa/Hillsborough County Public Library.

Gordon previously compiled a statewide "History of Free Blacks, 1850-1870," based on census findings.

Sarasota historical talk

The Historical Society of Sarasota County has scheduled a talk on "Black Settlements in the Manatee/Sarasota Area, 1812-1821," by historian Canter Brown Jr., for 8 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 15.

Brown's presentation will follow up on some of the material presented on the History/Heritage page and in the magazine Tampa Bay History on what became known as the "Sarrazota or Runaway Negro Plantations."

A doctoral candidate at Florida State University, Brown has come up with evidence that a black community formed near the confluence of the Manatee and Braden Rivers after 1812 battles in North Florida.

These were black veterans of the British Army in the War of 1812 and black warriors and their families fleeing from Andrew Jackson's troops after the last battle of the First Seminole War.

Plantations developed and settlers traded with British and Spanish authorities. But the community ended when Spain sold Florida to the United States in 1821.

During the confusion of the transition, Creek Indians led by friends of Andrew Jackson descended upon Southwest Florida, destroyed the community and enslaved most of its residents, Brown learned.

His talk will take place at the Woman's Club at 900 Cocoanut Ave., Sarasota.

Kwanzaa gathers more celebrants

An estimated 18 million people of African descent will observe the 27th annual holiday that runs from Dec. 26 to Jan 1.

By JUDY THIEDE WADE
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA

Carolyn Reed Whitaker had heard about Kwanzaa through the years, but the idea of participating in the 27-year-old African heritage holiday didn't spark her interest at first.

Today, Whitaker begins observing the seven-day celebration with her family and friends, a tradition that began in her household just two years ago.

■ SONG
A New York musician comes up with a Kwanzaa song/ Page 5

"I had heard about it for years, but I was never really familiar enough with it to really appreciate it or want to participate in it," said the 45-year-old mother of six. But when she began modeling African fashions, she realized she wanted to know more about African traditions.

"The more I got into the modeling, the more I wanted to know about my culture," she said. "It became a part of me and Kwanzaa was just the next step."

An estimated 18 million people of African descent observe Kwanzaa in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, England and Africa each year. The holiday, neither religious nor political, runs from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1. While those dates coincide with Christmas and New Year's, Kwanzaa is not a substitute for either.

The term comes from the Swahili phrase "matunda ya kwanza," which means "first fruits of the harvest" in the East African language. The concept comes from the agricultural tradition of celebrating and giving thanks for the harvest.

The celebration was founded in 1966 by Maulana Karenga, professor of black studies at California State University, Long Beach, and chairman of the President's Task Force on Multicultural Education and Campus Diversity.

Karenga wanted something to help strengthen ties among black Americans, and so Kwanzaa centers around five activities that reinforce family, community and culture. As such, it's a time:

- For moral reflection and commitment.
- To reinforce bonds with family and friends.
- To reflect on the past and the people part of that past.
- To celebrate the good of life, family, community, friendship and the Earth.
- To focus on thought and the ethical values of love, sisterhood, brotherhood and respect for each other and nature.

Kwanzaa's cultural significance is based on seven principles with corresponding Swahili names: unity (Umoja), self-determination (Kujichagulia), collective work and responsibility (Ujima), cooperative economics (Ujamaa), purpose (Nia), creativity (Kuumba) and faith (Imani).

A different principle is highlighted each day.

Symbols of celebrations

In addition to the seven principles are seven symbols of Kwanzaa, which many families incorporate into their celebrations:

- Mazao, fruits and vegetables, symbolizes harvest time in African agricultural societies, when the fruits of collective labor abound in a time of joy, thanksgiving and remembrance.
- Mkeka is a straw place mat that represents the homage to tradition.
- Vibunzi are ears of corn, which represent each child in the family.
- Zawadi are the simple gifts, preferably related to education or to things African or African-influenced, which are given to the children as rewards for promises they've kept through the year.
- Kikombe cha umoja is a communal cup that symbolizes the most important principle of Kwanzaa, unity.
- Kinara is a seven-branched candleholder that symbolizes the continent and people of Africa. Each holder contains three green, three red and

See KWANZAA, Page 5



PHIL SHEFFIELD/Tribune photo
Carolyn Reed Whitaker and family light a Kinara candle.

Kwanzaa celebrates African pride, unity

■ From Page 1

one black candle. Red represents blood, the liquid of life; green, hope and the continent of Africa; and black, race and unity.

■ Mishumaa saba are the seven candles, each symbolizing one of the seven principles people should live by on a daily basis, reinforced during Kwanzaa.

"African-Americans really have no way of knowing where they came from or what their heritage is all about," said Jack Moore, professor of English and American studies at the University of South Florida.

"Elements of their culture were expunged when the slaves were brought to this country so many years ago and this holiday celebration is a way for them to reconnect," he explained.

Sense of pride

Celebrants carry among them different meanings and significances for the holiday, but one element many seem to share is a sense of pride in who they are and where they came from.

"It's more than the symbols and the daily traditions. It's something that I can pass on to my children," said Whitaker. "Our family celebrates it as an awareness of the struggles we've endured, the pride we feel about who we are, and the goals that we want to achieve."

This year, Whitaker plans to pull out all the stops in her celebration. Each family member will wear traditional African garments, which include a shirt and pants set for men, Kufi, and a wrap set for women, Buba-Iro.

"I want to bring all of the traditions into it and make it something that the kids can remember and carry with them," Whitaker said.

Likewise, Navita James, the University of South Florida's Afrikana studies director for two years, wants her children to learn such traditions.

"This will be the first year that my family will celebrate the holiday with all of the physical symbols intact," James said. "Each day we will light the candles and have a discussion of the principle for that day. ... It's important to me to celebrate it and teach the customs to my children."

Other local families new to the holiday were offered a workshop earlier this month by physician Victor Wright of Bartow. At the Museum of African American Art, 1308 Marion St., Wright presented a film about Kwanzaa, hands-on activities for kids and a ceremony complete with lighting of the Kinara.

"My family has celebrated the holiday for 12 years," Wright said. "I've been doing the workshop for the past three years now and it gives me a way to spread the word and educate the local folks who want to learn more about it."

Events on tap

Area events still on tap include a global holidays exhibit open through Jan. 2 at Great Explorations, 1120 Fourth St. S. in St. Petersburg. It features a display by Aziza Bonner, owner of Aziza's African Art Gallery, 226 Fourth Ave. N.

"I celebrate the holiday every year and try to teach the aspects of it to my 6-year-old son," Bonner said. "To me it's more of a renewal of my heritage and it keeps me in touch with where I came from."

The Tampa Urban League plans a Kwanzaa celebration and fashion show Thursday at the downtown Days Inn, 515 E. Cass St. The event will feature live reggae and jazz, cultural dancers, a fashion show and a champagne breakfast for $25.

Urban League president Joanna Tokley has participated in Kwanzaa with her husband and their son for three years. They begin each day with meditation on the day's principle while lighting the Kinara.

"It is a time for reflecting on what we've accomplished and what we can do for the coming year," Tokley said. "It's a way of celebrating and affirming our heritage."

On New Year's Day, Tokley and her family will gather with friends and have a feast, Karamu, which includes such traditional black American foods as fried okra, collard greens and corn bread. Other dishes may include "jerked" pork chops or jambalaya.

"It's always been an important aspect of the holiday season for me," Tokley said. "It gives me and my family a way to connect with ourselves and with each other and it gives us hope for the future."

Greeting cards, too

Another sign that Kwanzaa is becoming more popular each year is that greeting card companies have come out with new designs and verses hailing the holiday.

Hallmark, the world's largest manufacturer of greeting cards, has introduced its first Kwanzaa line: 12 African-themed designs created with Harlem Textile Works, a nonprofit art school in New York.

"We listened to our consumers and retailers through market research and we found that they wanted Kwanzaa cards," said Ann Ottewill, design manager at Hallmark. "The African-American market is a growing one, and Hallmark is interested in responding to its needs."

Information from Tribune wire services was used in this report.

Musician hopes song becomes Kwanzaa tradition

By DAVID HINCKLEY
of the New York Daily News

NEW YORK — If you'd like to hum a Kwanzaa song, but none springs to mind, that's where Imhotep Gary Byrd would like to come in.

Since the Kwanzaa celebration is only 27 years old, it's not surprising it does not yet have a large body of familiar songs. It's also not surprising that a musician like Byrd, who is best known in New York for hosting the Gospel Black Experience daily over WLIB-AM, would like to help start changing that.

He's well-suited to the task, since he is better known in many parts of the world as the jazz-influenced musician who recorded the anthem "The Crown" and wrote lyrics for Stevie Wonder.

Now he has recorded "Kwanzaa Nguzo Saba," a rich, rhythmic melody supplemented by the gospel-flavored vocals of the Willis sisters behind his own narration on the seven principles of Kwanzaa: unity (Umoja), self-determination (Kujichagulia), collective work and responsibility (Ujima), cooperative economics (Ujamma), purpose (Nia), creativity (Kuumba) and faith (Imani). A secular holiday of unity among black Americans, Kwanzaa is marked by the lighting of red, green and black candles.

With the Kwanzaa celebration beginning today, Byrd's song was released Dec. 17, along with an updated version of "The Crown," an R&B hit in 1983.

These two songs precede the release, tentatively around March, of a new full-length Byrd album, "Words of Power From Mother Africa." Both "Kwanzaa Nguzo Saba" and the album will be distributed primarily through Byrd's own 800 number: 1-800-967-3423

"I see myself as a griot," says Byrd, referring to oral historians who pass along the lore, folk traditions and wisdom of a people. "So the synergy of doing a Kwanzaa song was perfect, and not just for this season. If the principles of Kwanzaa have value every year, why not every day?"

Byrd's musical career includes reaching the top 20 overseas with "The Crown" and writing lyrics for "Black Man" and "Village Ghetto Land" on Wonder's album "Songs in the Key of Life." He was doing rap on the radio in the '60s, he says, and rappers such as Kool Herc and Jazzy B have noted his influence.

"I grew up in the era of the rapping deejays," says Byrd, a gifted child speaker whose move into radio was logical and who is now writing a book about several great early deejays.

The musician hopes "Kwanzaa Nguzo Saba" will help in that endeavor. The griot hopes, more importantly, that its message is delivered.

Black Baptist church celebrates 100-year anniversary

The Tampa Tribune-Times, Sunday, November 21, 1993

By KAREN HAYMON LONG
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA — The Rev. Oscar Johnson Jr. is standing on the very spot where in 1893 his church's first home — a tent — was pitched.

It had windows made of palmettos and sawdust floors.

"There were only nine or 10 members then, so it was probably just big enough for them to fit," says the 64-year-old pastor. "Hard to imagine, isn't it?"

Just a few feet away, Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist's stately red brick building looms over an old, walled cemetery. It was built in 1949, on the edge of downtown Tampa, long before the noisy interstate highways robbed the church of its neighbors.

A long time ago, little frame houses lined Jefferson Street, across from the church, Johnson recalls. They are long gone, replaced by the jail parking lot.

But the church lives on, stronger than ever with 500 members.

Today at 11 and 4, members will gather to celebrate their church's 100th anniversary. Oswald Bronson, president of Bethune-Cookman College, will speak in the morning and the Rev. S.L. McQueen of Highland Missionary Baptist Church will speak in the afternoon.

The City of Tampa and Hillsborough County have designated today as Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church Day.

Johnson, a former assistant principal and football coach who has pastored the church 16 years, will cut the anniversary cake today in an outdoor celebration, about where the tent used to be.

Tampa had only 8,000 residents in 1893, the year nine people pitched a tent and named their little church Ebenezer Missionary Baptist. It was later changed to Bethel Baptist, then to Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist.

The Emancipation Proclamation and freedom for blacks to establish their own churches came only 30 years before the birth of the little tent church. Black churches were thriving, bursting at the seams then, says University of South Florida religion professor Mozella Mitchell.

From the late 1800s through the 1960s, black churches were the center of social, political and religious lives of many blacks, she says.

"Everything was taken care of by the church. People were in church all day Sunday and all during the week."

During the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, many members heard the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. speak at neighboring St. Paul A.M.E. Church and took part in sit-ins and demonstrations for justice, recalls Ozie W. Dew, 77, who joined the church in 1928.

She also remembers the fear members felt when Interstate 275

See GREATER BETHEL, Page 7

Greater Bethel church 'just like a big family'

■ From Page 1

and Interstate 4 were carved out of the church's neighborhood in the early 1960s.

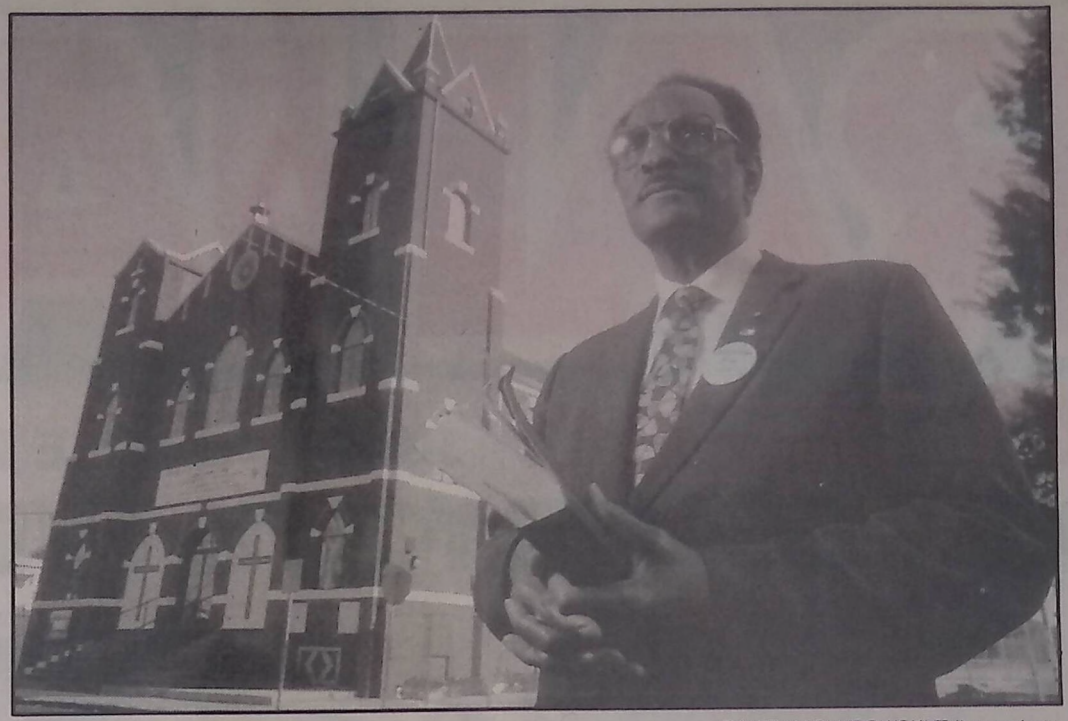
Greater Bethel, built with bricks longtime pastor Jacob Rhodes brought from Alabama, was "virtually the only structure that survived the renewal program" in that area, says church historian Minnie Burrows.

Pastor Johnson marvels at the hard work it took to build the church. Pastor Rhodes and many of the men of the church pitched right in with construction workers, he says.

"The women sold pies, fish sandwiches and dinners to build this building," he says looking toward the front doors, flanked by twin crosses.

Evelyn Hill, who joined in 1933 as a teenager, says Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church has always lived up to its name. Like missionaries, members have faithfully fanned out to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and look out for those less fortunate, she says.

"It is just like a family. Like a big family."



DAVID KADLUBOWSKI/Tribune photo

The Rev. Oscar Johnson Jr. stands near the Greater Bethel Missionary Church.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Friday, Dec. 24, the 358th day of 1993. There are seven days left in the year. This is Christmas Eve.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 24, 1814, the War of 1812 officially ended as the United States and Britain signed the Treaty of Ghent in Belgium. However, because of the slowness of communications, both countries fought the Battle of New Orleans the following month.

On this date:

In 1524, Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama — who had discovered a sea route around Africa to India — died in Cochin, India.

In 1851, fire devastated the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., destroying about 35,000 volumes.

In 1865, veterans of the Confederate Army formed a private social club in Pulaski, Tenn., called the Ku Klux Klan.

Ten years ago: U.S. Marine peacekeepers in Beirut, Lebanon, ate a Christmas dinner of turkey and baked ham one day early for what were termed security reasons.

Five years ago: President-elect Bush nominated Elizabeth H. Dole, onetime transportation secretary, to be his secretary of labor.

One year ago: President Bush pardoned former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and five other figures in the Iran-Contra scandal. President-elect Clinton appointed Bruce Babbitt interior secretary, Mike Espy agriculture secretary and Federico Pena transportation secretary; Clinton also chose Zoe Baird to be attorney general, but the nomination fell apart over Baird's hiring of illegal aliens as domestic workers.

Today's Birthdays: Author Mary Higgins Clark is 62. Federal health administrator Anthony S. Fauci is 53.

Thought for Today: "Christmas is the day that holds all time together." — Alexander Smith, Scottish poet and essayist (1830-1867).

The Tampa Tribune-Times, Sunday, October 31, 1993

These 20 made state history

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Staff Writer

■ Mary McLeod Bethune — Opened a school for young black children in Daytona Beach with $1.50 in 1904. It became Bethune-Cookman College in 1923. She founded the National Council of Negro Women in 1935.

■ Ray Charles — Soul singer, songwriter and pianist who grew up in North Florida, lost his eyesight, went to the School for the Deaf and Blind at St. Augustine. Played piano in a Tampa combo before national fame.

■ Thomas A. Edison — Inventor-genius whose presence and residence in Fort Myers gave national prominence to Florida and brought famous friends Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone to the state.

■ Henry M. Flagler — One-time Standard Oil associate of John D. Rockefeller who built St. Augustine resort hotels, then extended Florida East Coast Railway to Miami and Key West.

■ George S. Gandy — Built a landmark St. Petersburg theater, then connected St. Petersburg and Tampa via the Gandy Bridge in 1924.

■ Gen. Andrew Jackson — Florida's first territorial governor who stayed only long enough for a successor to be named. Had conducted military expeditions into the state when it was under nominal Spanish control.

■ Daniel "Chappie" James — Pensacola native in a family of 17 children, he became the first black American four-star general. After training in an all-black Air Corps unit in World War II, he rose to head the North American Defense Command.

■ May Jennings — Wife of former Gov. William Sherman Jennings, she became an effective lobbyist for women's suffrage. Swung the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs behind Royal Palm State Park, with the goal of establishing Everglades National Park.

■ Jose Marti — Cuban revolutionary whose Florida residency in the 1890s galvanized the support of thousands of cigar workers in the effort to overthrow Spain.

■ Vicente Martinez-Ybor — Prominent Spaniard who moved his cigar factory to Tampa in 1886, creating its first major industry and attracting thousands of immigrant workers.

■ Osceola — Part Creek Indian, part Scottish, he was a major Seminole leader whose attacks in 1835 triggered the Second Seminole War. Captured under a flag of truce, he died while imprisoned at St. Augustine.

■ Ruth Bryan Owen — Florida's first congresswoman and first congresswoman elected from the Old South, serving two terms (1929-1936) from an East Coast district. Daughter of William Jennings Bryan, she also served as ambassador to Denmark (1936-1938), becoming the first woman to represent the U.S. in another country. She helped create the United Nations.

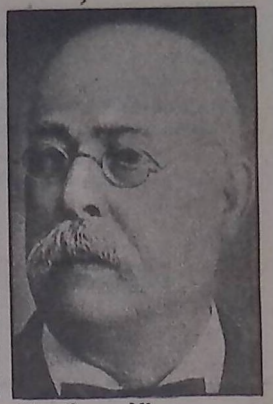
■ Claude Pepper — U.S. senator from Florida (1936-1950) who championed aid to Great Britain before the U.S. entered World War II. After defeat, he was elected to the House of Representatives, becoming an advocate for elderly causes.



Walls



Tuttle



Martinez-Ybor

■ Henry B. Plant — Railroad baron whose South Florida line and destination resorts — including the Tampa Bay Hotel — put Tampa on the map in the 1880s and 1890s.

■ Dick Pope — Creator of Cypress Gardens and mastermind of Florida tourism who pioneered the theme park concept at Polk County's Lake Eloise.

■ A. Philip Randolph — Crescent City black man who headed national Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, eventually integrated the American Federation of Labor and became an AFL-CIO vice president.

■ Harriet Beecher Stowe — Anti-slavery author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" who resided in Mandarin on the St. Johns River after the Civil War.

■ Julia D. Tuttle — Succeeded in luring Henry M. Flagler to Miami after the freeze of 1895 by sending a bouquet of flowers and a promise of land. She owned 640 acres on the Miami River, in the heart of today's metropolis.

■ Josiah T. Walls — Florida's first black congressman, he was elected three times, unseated twice, in Reconstruction turbulence.

■ David Levy Yulee — One of first two U.S. senators from Florida and the first Jew to serve in the U.S. Senate. President of the Florida Railroad.

Black history comes alive on Atlanta street

By DON MELVIN
of the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

ATLANTA — If you like your history under glass, confined to a museum to be puzzled over as distant and quaint, do not visit Auburn Avenue.

But if you like your history gritty and alive, connecting what used to be with what is now, then come. The sights and sounds of a vibrant slice of black history in America echo here still.

A life insurance company founded by a former slave still thrives, the second-largest black-owned insurance company in the nation. The oldest black-owned daily newspaper in the country still publishes. The church where Martin Luther King Jr. followed his father and grandfather into the pulpit still holds services every Sunday, continuing a chain of prayer stretching almost from the end of Reconstruction to the present.


King

In the 1930s, the area was dubbed "Sweet Auburn" because money flowed through the district like honey. From the early part of the century, well before integration, until about 1960, it was a center of black entrepreneurial activity.

In 1957, Fortune magazine called Auburn Avenue "the richest Negro street in the world." And it is now a draw for tourists from all over the country: Nearly 3 million visitors came here last year.

"It is a pilgrimage for a lot of African-Americans whose forebears left the South after the Civil War and moved to Northern cities," says Daryl Toor, a spokesman for the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau. "Their children want to get a sense of where they come from."

But it is more than that. Here, black Americans can see and feel a history that speaks not of servitude, but of success.

"People are fascinated, because they can come back and see living examples of the black success," said Herman "Skip" Mason Jr., editor of a newly published pictorial history of black Atlanta. "Here on Auburn Avenue, you are immersed in what this American dream is all about."

A walking tour of the Sweet Auburn district begins a short distance from the pseudo-history of Underground Atlanta, where bricked streets serve only as a backdrop for tourist boutiques.

Start at the intersection of Courtland Street and Auburn Avenue, and you will see at once the juxtaposition of past and present. On this block stands the white columned front of the Atlanta Life Insurance Co., founded in 1905 by Alonzo Herndon, a former slave and one of Atlanta's wealthiest barbers.

Next to it stands the modernistic white stone and glass structure that houses the insurance company today.

Across the street, stop in at the APEX museum (for African-American Panoramic Experience). The museum displays African art and rotating exhibits of local and national black artists.

Walk down Auburn Avenue with the skyscrapers of downtown at your back. Notice the historic "Freedom Walk" markers put up by the National Park Service and the city of Atlanta.

There is history aplenty. On the right, the Atlanta Daily World, the oldest continuing black-owned daily newspaper in the country. It was founded in 1928 by the Scott family, which produced Coretta Scott King, and the Scott family runs the paper still.

On the left, the Royal Peacock Club. It is dormant now, but it once showcased some of the finest entertainers in the country: Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Dinah Washington, the Supremes.

Farther down looms the gray stone face of Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. It was founded in 1847, before the Civil War, by slaveholders for their slaves, and moved here in the 1890s. Community gatherings were so frequent at the church, it was called "Sweet Auburn's City Hall."

The district has fallen on hard times in the past two or three decades, but not disastrous ones. Black business activity still abounds. There are clothing stores and art galleries, sweet shops, a Caribbean restaurant and an Ethiopian one. Music spills into the street from the Ancestor Records and Tapes store. Smoke from the Auburn Rib Shack stirs the appetite.

There are more sights to come: WERD, the first black-owned radio station in the country, now defunct. The Prince Hall Masonic building, home since 1965 to the national headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded by King.

King's maternal grandfather, A.D. Williams, became pastor in 1894. Martin Luther King Sr. started preaching here in 1931. King, the youngest man ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize, preached here from 1960 until his assassination in 1968.

Visitors can sit in the pews and hear a tape recording detailing the history of the church. Or they can participate in the present, by attending regular Sunday services.

Just beyond the church, King's white marble tomb lies on display, a place of pilgrimage and renewal for many Americans. And a block beyond that, the yellow wooden Queen Anne-style house with dark trim in which King was born. He lived there until he was 12 years old.

It is to visit these sites, King's birthplace and his resting place, that many people come to Auburn Avenue in the first place. But by the time a visitor reaches those spots, the street has taught him something already. It is this: that Martin Luther King Jr. was no fluke, no aberration. He did not rise up, brilliant and wise, out of nothing.

He was exceptional, of course. But he was to some extent, too, a true son of Auburn Avenue.

■ ■ ■

For more information, contact the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, 233 Peachtree St., Suite 2000, Harris Building, Atlanta, Ga. 30303 or call (404) 222-6688.

Little-known black aviator to get her due

An Associated Press Report

WASHINGTON — She was a pioneer American aviator. Her flights drew big crowds. She was daring and exciting and beautiful, too. And she died tragically while flying. But unlike her contemporary, Amelia Earhart, Bessie Coleman made no splash in history.

Bessie Coleman was black.

The world's first black female aviator got her pilot's license in 1921 — two years before Earhart. She flew in Europe, starred in air shows, and tried her best to become famous. But outside of the segregated black world in which she lived, few people ever paid attention.

Now the author of an acclaimed biography of Earhart is working to change that, with a new book, "Queen Bess: Daredevil Aviator."

Doris L. Rich first heard about Coleman while doing research for "Amelia Earhart: A Biography." Over and over, she came across her name in early aviation history. But no one gave details. It took a lot of digging to find any.

Coleman didn't leave records; she could barely write. And the mainstream press rarely wrote about her. Old copies of the black newspapers that covered her appearances are not easy to come by.

"With Earhart, I was flooded with information," says Rich. "Every time I found a fact about Bessie, I was deeply grateful that day."

Looking back, it's hard to believe anyone could have lived Coleman's life. Born in 1892 in east Texas, she grew up in a three-room shotgun shack, picking cotton and taking in white people's laundry. She went to Chicago in 1915 and became a manicurist.

Then one day she decided to fly.

How she came to the idea is unclear. But she had always set her sights high, Rich says.

When no one in Chicago would agree to teach her, Coleman raised the money to travel to France, where she took courses at one of the best flight schools — L'Ecole d'Aviation des Freres Caudron at Le Crotoy in the Somme.

Her biggest problem was getting a plane. She scraped together money to buy an old one in California in 1923, but was laid up for three months with a broken leg after it stalled and crashed the first time she took it out.

Her second plane cost her her life. She fell out of it on April 30, 1926, as it nose-dived toward the ground while she was planning an exhibition flight in Jacksonville. She was 34 years old.

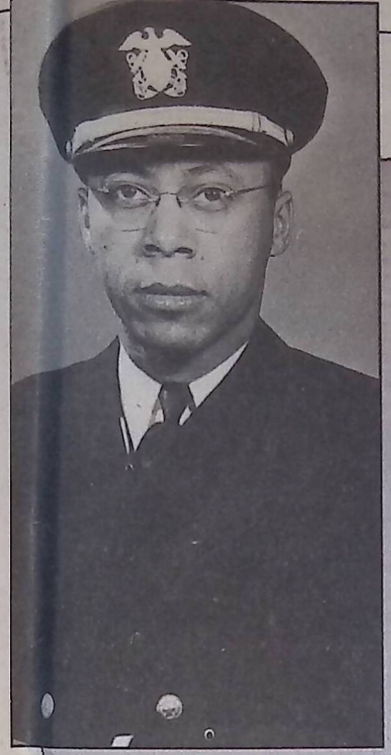
In 1977, a group of black women pilots from the Chicago area formed the Bessie Coleman Aviators Day. The city of Chicago made May 2 Bessie Coleman Day in 1992. And fellow pilots fly over her grave in Chicago each year on the anniversary of her death.



Associated Press photo

Bessie Coleman stands on the wheel of a plane in the 1920s. She is the subject of a book by Amelia Earhart's biographer.

At long last, a salute



George Cooper, 76, was one of the first 13 black officers in the U.S. Navy. He's seen as a young ensign at left.

Alumni of the Navy's first black officer candidate class in early 1944 are finally getting some recognition.

By STEVE HUETTEL
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA

Passengers at Chicago's bustling railroad station froze and stared at George Cooper in his crisp, new naval officer's uniform.

"I never saw a place get so quiet so fast," chuckles Cooper, reflecting on the day 49 years ago.

A few weeks later, classmate Graham Martin and his wife suffered 12 hours of diarrhea after eating at a restaurant where he's convinced someone slipped a laxative into their food.

The first 13 black Navy officers endured a host of other indignities: orders to stay out of the officers club; white sailors who wouldn't salute; jobs aboard small stateside craft instead of the Navy's seagoing fleet.



"We could have rebelled and got a lot of media attention," says Cooper, 76, a retired Dayton, Ohio, civil servant now living in Temple Terrace. "But that would have thrown the cause back."

Now, alumni of the Navy's first black officer candidate class in early 1944 are getting their due.

They tell their stories in "The Golden Thirteen," an oral history published in February by the U.S. Naval Institute in Annapolis, Md.

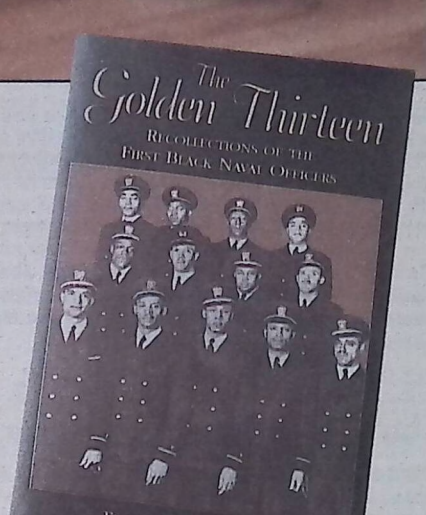
Their shared experiences at



Cooper is shown in 1937 as a student at Hampton Institute in Virginia.



TODD L. CHAPPEL/Tribune photos
Black-and-white photos from the U.S. Naval Institute



The officers' stories are told in "The Golden Thirteen," an oral history published in February.

threads tying the book together.

But other recollections of growing up, suffering through boot camp and coping with racism inside and outside the Navy give keen insights into what it was like being black during the Depression, World War II and beyond.

James Hair, for instance, recalled with horror how his brother-in-law was dragged from a car and lynched in Fort Pierce for standing up to white bullies.

No such trauma marred Cooper's childhood in eastern North Carolina. But racial slurs and Jim Crow rules helped develop his "antennae" for looming trouble — and the sense to know when to step out of the way.

He graduated from Hampton Institute in Virginia and returned to teach metalworking at its naval training school. Cooper hoped the job would keep him out of the rigid military life.

It didn't. First, he was sent to boot camp and came back to Hampton as a chief petty officer. Cooper was soon sent packing again on secret orders.

At the time, U.S. soldiers were battling for ground in Italy and thousands of Allied troops massed in England for the Normandy invasion.

About 100,000 blacks served as sailors. Only in the previous 18 months had the Navy allowed them to do more than cook or serve food. Still, they were barred from warships. None wore an officer's shoulder boards.

Top admirals urged Navy Secretary Frank Knox to maintain the tradition.

But, legend has it, Bethune-Cookman College founder Mary McLeod Bethune pushed for change with Eleanor Roosevelt, who talked with her husband.

The Navy quietly sent Cooper and 15 other petty officers to the Great Lakes center in January 1944. No announcement was made to the press or public.

Sitting in a barracks built for twice as many men, they wondered what the Navy had in store for them. None of them guessed right.

"Nobody ever dreamed they'd let them make Navy officers out of black people," says Cooper, then 28.

With orders from the top, there wasn't any question that officers at Great Lakes would make it work, says Paul Stillwell, editor of "The Golden Thirteen." But they kept the project under wraps to avoid antagonizing the white Navy, he says.

Black recruits already trained at a segregated area of Great Lakes. The officer candidates did their nine weeks of studies in the barracks, except for drilling recruits and firing weapons at the range when everyone else was gone.

At the start, they forged a pact: They'd all make it or none of them would. None could face the pressure of failure alone.

"We knew if it didn't work, it could be another quarter-century or half-century before we got another

See PLAN, Page 3

Eight rebels revolutionized American art



John Sloan's darkly colored "Six O'Clock, Winter" captures commuter traffic in 1912 New York.

By JOANNE MILANI
Tribune Staff Writer

ORLANDO — Come meet the Rough Riders of American painting. In 1908, a ragtag platoon of eight artists, each one as much a maverick as Teddy Roosevelt, grabbed the bully pulpit by staging an exhibition of their own works.

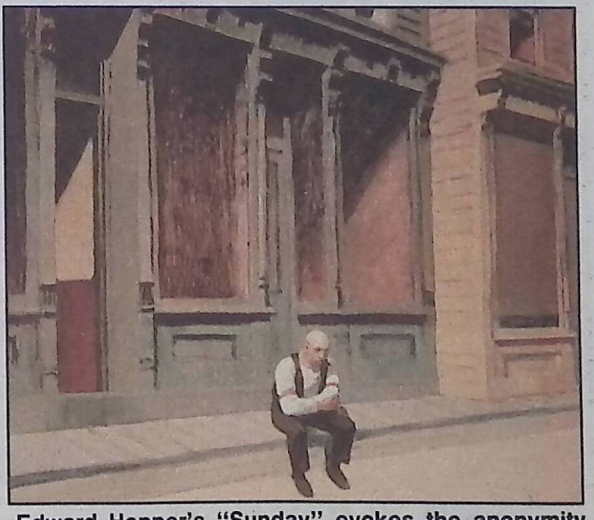
ART REVIEW

Together they stormed the bastions of fuddy-duddy academic painting, and they ended up changing the course of American art.

Duncan Phillips was a collector who supported their revolt against the ultraconservative National Academy of Design by buying up works by the rebels, who came to be labeled "The Eight": Arthur B. Davies, William Glackens, Robert Henri, Ernest Lawson, George Luks, Maurice Prendergast, Everett Shinn and John Sloan. He also bought up works by later artists who shared their spirit, among them George Bellows, Walt Kuhn and Guy Pene du Bois.

The purchases Phillips made between 1916 and

See THE EIGHT, Page 6



Edward Hopper's "Sunday" evokes the anonymity and alienation of life in the 20th century.

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN



> "It was even thought that a light-skinned black had more white blood, so, consequently, he was more fit. ... This thing went a lot deeper than a lot of people realized."
>
> — Henry C.L. Bohler, former Tuskegee Airman



Black pilots faced Germans in the air, racism on the ground

By PHILIP MORGAN
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA

Henry C.L. Bohler of Tampa produces a booklet showing his pilot graduation class at Tuskegee Institute in December 1944. He poses a question.

Guess which black pilots in the photograph received immediate commissions as second lieutenants and which were assigned the lower rank of flight officer?

He points to the light-skinned black men, all second lieutenants.

The dark-skinned men graduated as flight officers.

"It was even thought that a light-skinned black had more white blood so, consequently, he was more fit. ... This thing went a lot deeper than a lot of people realized," says Bohler, who was elevated from flight officer to second lieutenant after a couple of months.

"This thing" he talks about is racism in the military during World War II.

Bohler, 67, was a Tuskegee Airman, a black fighter pilot who trained and trained but was not sent to the front. Those pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group who did fight the air war in Europe distinguished themselves.

Two other Tampa Bay area veterans were Tuskegee Airmen: Nasby Wynn, 67, of Sarasota, who was a bomber pilot; and Al Downing, 76, of St. Petersburg, who was dropped from flight training because of asthma and later conducted the 613th Air Force Band, playing at flight graduation ceremonies for the airmen at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

Quotas clipped wings

The graduation classes were small, says Bohler, because of a quota system for black

The first black combat pilots in the U.S. military also fought racial prejudice to achieve an unparalleled war record.

By RON MARTZ
of Cox News Service

TUSKEGEE, Ala.

To the German pilots who battled them in the skies over Europe in World War II, they were the *Schwartze Vogelmenschen*, the Black Birdmen.

To their comrades and the white pilots who would not fly with them, they were the "Red Tails" because of the color they painted the tails of their P-51 Mustang fighters.

But to the crews of Allied bombers, the black pilots known as the Tuskegee Airmen were heroes and saviors. In more than 200 missions, the segregated fighter squadrons whose pilots trained at this east-central Alabama town never lost a bomber they were escorting, a record no other unit can claim.

Retired Air Force Lt. Col. Charles Dryden of Atlanta says it is not unusual at annual conventions of the Tuskegee Airmen to see aging white men embrace aging black men and thank them for what they did during the war.

"It's a very moving experience to see a white man walk up to a black man, throw his arms around him and say: 'You don't know me, but you saved my life. If it wasn't for you and the Tuskegee Airmen, I wouldn't be here today,' " says Dryden, 72, one of the original Tuskegee Airmen.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Tuskegee Airmen's introduction to combat, when Dryden led a flight of six black pilots against German fighters. In that engagement over Pantelleria — an island off the southwest coast of Sicily — and in hundreds of others that followed, the Tuskegee Airmen disproved the contention that blacks could not fly and were too undisciplined to fight.

"The Experiment," as the Pentagon called the training of black pilots at Tuskegee Institute and a nearby airfield, produced well-trained, dedicated and disciplined fliers who more than held their own in combat.

Members of the Tuskegee Airmen are hoping an increasing awareness of black history will bring to light their contributions to the war effort.

"The Tuskegee Airmen provided President Truman with an example of how integration could work in this country, and they are why the armed services are integrated," says retired Air Force Col. R.J. Lewis, a Vietnam veteran who spent more

"Regardless of how many good pilots you had in any class, you knew from the onset that the 500 people you started [initial training] with in Keesler Field near Biloxi, Miss., would be 20 when you graduated."

Bohler says 23 pilots were set to get their wings in his class, but three were dropped on graduation day.

Most spent the war stateside because of the limited number of black pilots allowed at the segregated base at the front, which moved with the fighting from North Africa to Sicily and Italy.

Wynn says his outfit had 500 hours of training in the B-25 bomber, when white pilots routinely were sent into combat after 350 hours.

"Everything there was to do, we could do it," he says.

Bohler got in a lot of dogfight practice when he and other black pilots from Walterboro Field in South Carolina would mix it up with white pilots from nearby Shaw Field.

He would sometimes fly alongside the white pilots, and they would flash friendly thumbs-up signals. Between pilots up there in the blue, the racism didn't show itself so much, Bohler says, likening the atmosphere to that of professional sports.

"That malice which exists in the whole community does not generally extend itself to the playing field."

He trained in the P-40, the fighter made famous by the Flying Tigers, and later the P-47 Thunderbolt, which made him miss the P-40.

With the Thunderbolt, Bohler laughs, "everything in the technical manual that you read ended in 'bail out.' 'If your speed drops below 130 mph, bail out. If you get on your back or into a spin below such and such an altitude, bail out.' "

Unabashed racism

Wynn says his unit seemed to change bases frequently, which he supposes was a reaction to the sensibilities of the communities.

At station stops, he adds, the shades on the train would be lowered so the sight of black soldiers would not offend the citizens.

He can't forget one bus ride when he was based in South Florida. He and several other black Army

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a single-runway airfield surrounded by marshes and stands of pine, where the original Tuskegee Airmen trained more than 50 years ago.

Most of the young blacks who came here were highly motivated, had some college experience and possessed a burning desire to fly at a time when blacks were discouraged from taking to the air.

"You weren't just the cream of the crop; you were the cream of the cream," Horace Bohannon, 70, of Atlanta, says of

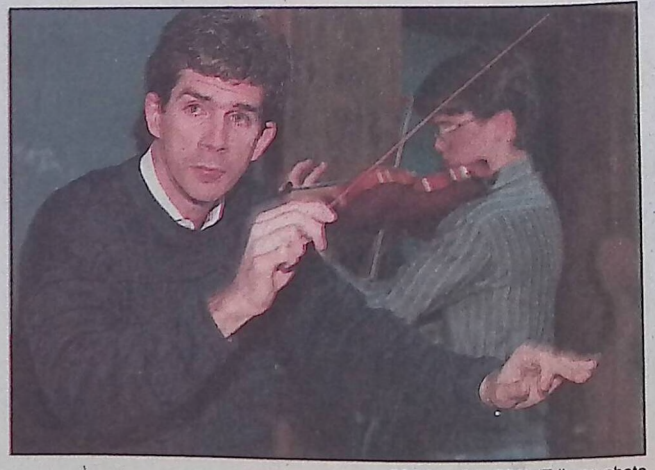
See BLACK, Page 6

GARY RINGS/Tribune photos



MARK GUSS/Tribune photo

Nasby Wynn, 67, of Sarasota, was a bomber pilot with the Tuskegee Airmen and still flies today; above is Henry Bohler's miniature of the Tuskegee Airmen statue at the Air Force Academy in Colorado.



TODD L. CHAPPEL/Tribune photo

Conductor Edward Cumming directs the University of South Florida Symphony Orchestra during a rehearsal.

Orchestrating an education

Conductor Edward Cumming believes the discipline of great music in school can enhance any career later in life.

By KURT LOFT
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA — Take any college orchestra and throw a copy of Johannes Brahms' Third Symphony on the music stands, and either you're asking for trouble or the group knows its stuff.

This remarkable work — all four Brahms symphonies are strokes of genius — taxes the most seasoned ensembles, so those that attempt it usually are up to the challenge. This, hopefully, will be the case tonight when the talented University of South Florida Symphony Orchestra breaks open the Third in Theatre 2, under the direction of Edward Cumming.

MUSIC PREVIEW

Cumming, resident conductor of the Florida Orchestra and a USF music instructor, considers this an acid test for his 60-member orchestra, but one not out of reach because his students are so adept at concentrating.

"We've learned a lot together doing this piece," Cumming said. "And it never ceases to amaze me just how spongelike these students are in absorbing the music. We're really having a lot of fun with it."

Maestro Cumming said the F-major symphony, which premiered in 1883, differs from the other three in its structure and flow, particularly because all four movements end quietly. The final moments of Brahms' First, Second and Fourth blow the barn doors

See STUDENTS, Page 6

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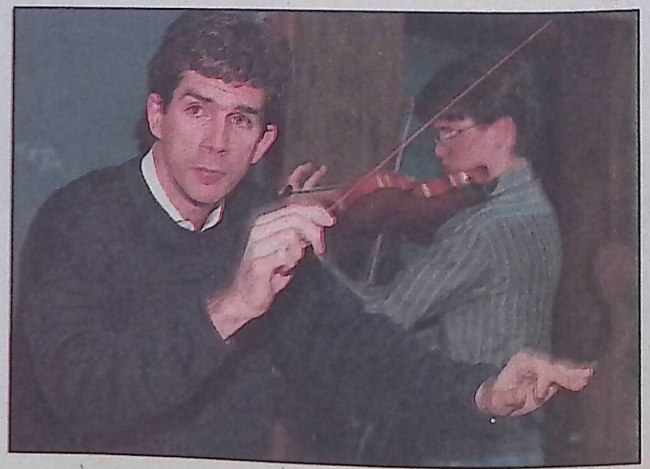

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See STUDENTS, Page 6

Archives teach valuable lesson for blacks, whites

From Page 1

them at the museum."

Although the museum sits on a college campus that is 88 percent black and frequently opens up its archives for blacks who want to research their heritage, most of the 110,000 annual visitors are white.

"Well, one reason is, whites love to see museums," said Eaton, who believes some whites also return to savor a part of the Old South.

"But I think it's important for whites to be reminded of how bad race tensions used to be. It's important for white people to see how foolish their parents and grandparents used to be."

Eaton said the most important thing to him about the KKK Kollection is that it shows young blacks their past.

"Most of them can hardly believe it," said Eaton. "I think it's kind of traumatic for them. They come in and look around and realize that what their parents have been trying to tell them is actually true.

"But I've dealt with this racism. I used to sit at the back of the bus. Now I can drive the bus if I want."





Tribune photographs by COLIN HACKLEY

Curator James Eaton sits among the Koons, Komics and Kartoons Kollection at Florida A&M University, left. A Klan robe, right, is part of the collection.

More than a collection of antiques, this museum puts on display a society's attitude toward an entire race.



Racism *on display*

By CATHERINE STENGEL
Tribune Staff Writer

TALLAHASSEE

In the 1880s, many white children learned to count by reading "The Ten Little Niggers."

The story counts down as each of the 10 black children dies. Ultimately, only one survives and grows up to bear "ten more little niggers."

This book and more than 1,000 other rare artifacts are part of the Koons, Komics and Kartoons Kollection at the Black Archives Research Center and Museum at Florida A&M University.

Curator James Eaton put together the collection to expose the negative treatment of blacks from 1870 to 1970. He said opening this type of thing to public view allows blacks to heal and whites to start respecting how far blacks have come in society.



"The Ten Little Niggers" is a 19th-century book for white schoolchildren.

"If you hide it away, you'll never know it exists," said Eaton, who teaches American history at the university.

"White people are not going to respect our history until we stop hiding it," he said. "This shows our holocaust ... what we've been through."

Racial signs, derogatory postcards and black rag dolls crowd into a tiny second-floor room, barely fitting into the drawers and cases designed to hold them. Eaton uses the room for the KKK Kollection and as his private conference room.

But limited space is not the only reason he holds meetings in the crowded room. He said he also wants to remind visitors of one of the hardest periods for blacks.

In 1975, Eaton began developing the Black Archives with money from Florida A&M's history department. Although the Florida Legislature passed a bill in 1971 to have black archives on campus, no funds were provided.

His efforts were pushed along when he won $10,000 in grants from the Winn-Dixie Foundation and the American Bicentennial Commission. The archives officially opened in 1976 as part of the school's Bicentennial celebration.

Organizers first set up shop in a corner of the Carnegie Library building in the middle of the Florida A&M campus with a few pieces from Eaton's and another professor's personal collection. The 500,000 museum artifacts now trickle out of every room of the building.

The museum will reopen March 1 after a year of exterior renovations, but organizers are in the midst of searching for a larger building for the museum.

The KKK Kollection takes up only a small part of the museum.

Other exhibits include a photographic display of the first black members of Congress, one of the nation's largest collections of Ethiopian crosses and authentic African wood carvings.

In the KKK Kollection area, a KKK robe and hood from the 1920s drapes a mannequin propped up in a corner of the room. Eaton has stashed away a fuzzy picture of the garb's affluent owner and his family sitting atop expensive motor scooters in front of their large rural house.

"Don't just think for a moment that all racist people came from the backwoods. Some were upper and middle class," said Eaton. "It was something of status to belong to the Klan.

"The politicians couldn't win office if they weren't in the Klan," continued Eaton. "It was the money and influence that came from the prominent members but the acts of violence came from the lower class ones."

Among the ceramic salt shakers and sheet music stands a yellowed 1921 Cream of Wheat advertisement. Eaton feels this is the most important piece in the collection. Depicted is a laughing young boy in a cart being pulled by an old black man, who has paused to light his pipe. The boy cracks a whip as he says, "Giddap, Uncle!"

Many of these artifacts have practically fallen in Eaton's lap. Once a solid brass letter opener with a sculpture of a black man's face on one end came to him in the mail. There was a note attached saying that the owner found it in his garage and wanted the museum to have it.



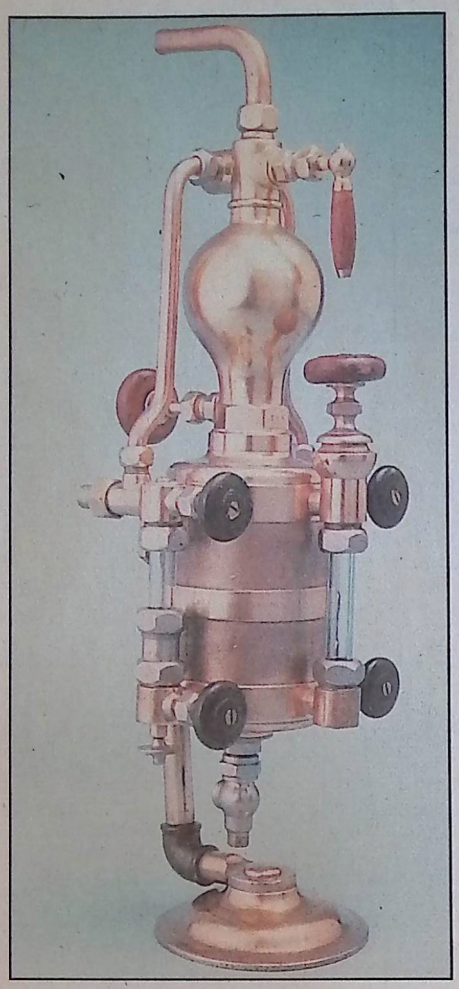
Items on display include this bank, soap powder, and salt and pepper shakers.

Myrta Hall, who organizes national collectible and postcard shows, began selling her black-oriented pieces to the museum over 10 years ago.

"I like selling to the archives because Mr. Eaton is so devoted to that collection," said Hall of Lane, S.C. "I even took him some books of my own so they would be preserved there.

"Things have so much more meaning than if they go into a personal collection," Hall said. "With his enthusiasm over what good it does, I just feel so much better having

See ARCHIVES, Page 5



Black Invention

In 1872, Elijah McCoy patented a hydrostatic engine lubricator for machines that stood still.



Elijah McCoy (1843-1929)

A mechanical engineer, McCoy patented more than 50 inventions. The best known was the McCoy lubricator, a machine that automatically oiled the engines of trains and ships. Even after similar systems appeared on the market, McCoy's invention was considered the best, and "the real McCoy" became slang among railway workers for first-rate equipment.



Photographs provided by Harold Dorwin, Anacostia Museum, Washington, D.C.

Black women took a shine to Madam C.J. Walker's hair care products.



Madam C.J. Walker (1867-1919)

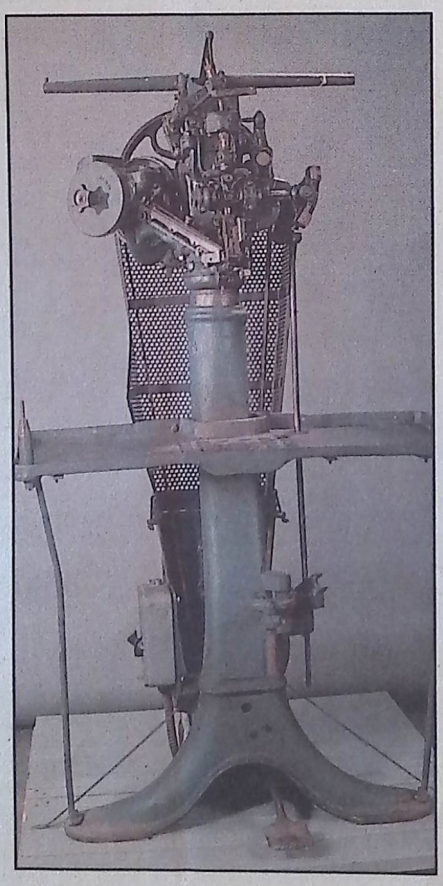
America's first self-made woman millionaire, she built a business empire on her formula for grooming black women's hair. Walker began to sell her shampoos and ointments in Denver in 1906. Five years later she moved to Indianapolis and amassed an army of saleswomen to sell her products nationwide.



Jan Matzeliger patented his shoe-lasting machine in 1883.

Jan Matzeliger (1852-1889)

America's shoe industry was changed in the 1890s by Jan Matzeliger's shoe-lasting machine. Lasting (shaping the upper part of a shoe to fit the foot) was the only job in shoe manufacturing that had not been fully mechanized. A native of Surinam in South America, Matzeliger came to the United States as a young man and settled in Lynn, Mass., the center of the shoe industry.



Creative achievements of pioneering black scientists improved the everyday lives of Americans.

By KATHY FEENEY
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA — Perhaps the most unique characteristic the first self-made woman millionaire shares with the master mechanical engineer and the successful shoemaker is obscurity.

Mention Madam C.J. Walker, Elijah McCoy and Jan Matzeliger, and most people can neither identify the names nor the faces of these black inventors.

But in "The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation," showing at the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), they are among more than 40 black scientists profiled.

Artifacts on display include examples of early black innovations such as an automated traffic signal; the safety mask, forerunner to the modern gas mask; and a bread-crumbing machine.

"Most of the things you see here are very simple everyday types of things that have affected your life," said Carolyn Thomas, MOSI's manager of school services.

"And I think what's neat about these inventions is that in many cases they're not real glamorous or earth-shaking. But the inventors were working in a particular field, they were doing the job, they understood the job, they understood the problems of the job, and they thought, 'Gee, if I change this or that then my job would be easier.' "

Created by the Anacostia Museum, a Smithsonian Institution museum in Washington, D.C., the exhibit is on a two-year tour under the organization of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

The stories of the inventors are told through information panels and photographs.

"There are a number of things you can get out of it," said Washington, D.C., historian Portia James, curator of the exhibit.

"[Including] that African-Americans were part of the development of technology in this country, and some notion of the nature of innovation and invention and how they as a process work."

At MOSI through Jan. 10, "The Real McCoy" is named after Elijah McCoy, who patented nearly 50 inventions, including the locomotion lubrication device.

Trained as a mechanical engineer, McCoy worked as a firefighter on the Michigan Central Railroad. Engine overheating was a problem that plagued railroads then. To prevent damage, train engines had to be oiled frequently by hand. That was McCoy's job — and he pondered about a faster way.

His initial experiment, a hydrostatic engine lubricator for machines that stood still (such as those in factories), was patented in 1872. Aiming for perfection, McCoy persevered, developing an automatic lubricator that would keep a train or ship engine oiled while it was running.

After copycat lubricators appeared on the market, train engineers dubbed McCoy's device "the real McCoy," to distinguish the equipment as first-rate.

Also in the late 1800s, Jan Matzeliger came to the United States from South America and secured a factory job sewing soles onto shoes.

In the 1890s, Matzeliger transformed America's shoe industry when he invented the shoe-lasting machine.

Lasting, shaping the upper part of a leather shoe to fit the human foot, was the only job in shoe manufacturing that had not been fully mechanized.

Matzeliger lived and worked in Lynn, Mass., spending his spare time tinkering with a variety of inventions. He patented his shoe-lasting machine in 1883.

In "The Real McCoy," visitors see a circa-1900 photograph of the interior of a Lynn shoe factory supplied by the Lynn Historical Society.

Matzeliger, who lived from 1852 to 1889, is humanized by the exhibition of his lunch pail and his Bible, both on loan from the First Church of Christ in Lynn.

Though his invention was a success, Matzeliger was hated by shoe industry workers who feared losing their jobs. After Matzeliger's machine came into use, the trade of shoe lasting disappeared.

Madam C.J. Walker, born Sarah Breedlove in 1867, was an uneducated washerwoman who became the first self-made woman millionaire in the United States.

PREVIEW

THE REAL McCOY: AFRICAN-AMERICAN INVENTION AND INNOVATION

- **WHAT:** Black inventors' exhibit
- **WHEN:** Through Jan. 10
- **WHERE:** Museum of Science and Industry, 4801 E. Fowler Ave.
- **TIME:** Sundays through Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **TICKETS:** $4.50 for Florida resident adults; $5.50 for non-residents; $2 for children 3 to 15; free for children under 3. Call (813) 985-5531.

Personal care products

Working under her married name, Walker built a business empire on her formula for straightening and grooming the hair of black women.

She began to sell her shampoos and ointments in Denver in 1906. Five years later, Walker established her headquarters in Indianapolis and recruited a legion of saleswomen to sell her products nationwide.

Her business expanded to include beauty shops with classes for the "Walker System." By 1915 (Walker died in 1919), she was one of the most famous black American philanthropists.

Two well-known black inventors — George Washington Carver and Benjamin Banneker — also appear in the exhibit at MOSI.

Carver was a former slave renowned for his agricultural research. He developed more than 300 products

See INVENTORS, Page 5

Inventors who tinkered to do things better come alive in show

■ From Page 1

from the peanut and nearly 120 from the sweet potato.

Banneker, a self-taught mathematician and astronomer, exchanged letters with Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson in defense of the intellectual equality of black Americans.

Other contributors

Other inventors profiled include:

■ **Ned,** a slave known only by his first name, who invented a plowing device called the "double cotton scraper." The machine cleared cotton plants from a field after the cotton was picked.

Ned, a blacksmith and mechanic on the Mississippi plantation of Oscar J.E. Stuart, was not allowed to patent his invention because he was a slave. In 1860, Stuart began producing and selling Ned's scraper.

■ **Norbert Rillieux** of New Orleans patented a new technique for processing sugar in 1843. His invention was so efficient and profitable that it increased sugar production, and white sugar — once a luxury — became available to middle-class Americans.

■ **Joseph Lee,** who described himself as a "bread specialist," owned and operated hotels, restaurants and catering services in Boston. Lee patented a bread-kneading machine in 1894 and a bread-crumbling machine in 1895.

■ **Garrett Morgan** was a businessman in Cleveland interested in the problems of safety. In 1914, he patented a safety hood. The early version of the gas mask was developed for workers who were exposed to poisonous fumes.

But the genius of his invention was overshadowed by some customers who canceled orders when they learned Morgan was black. In his struggle to sell his safety hood, Morgan resorted to hiring a white man to impersonate him during promotional tours — while he posed as an Indian.

Then Morgan tackled the problem of automobile accidents. In 1920, more than 250,000 cars were on American streets and collisions were common.

Working on the premise that the solution was better traffic control, in 1923 Morgan patented his automatic traffic signal.

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

Sunday, May 20, 1990

Anthem for blacks stirs pride, hope and debate

By BRUCE BRITT
of the Los Angeles Daily News

LOS ANGELES — Many black leaders insist that to hear "Lift Every Voice and Sing," is to be instilled with righteous pride. The song, popularly known as the black national anthem, encourages listeners to combat injustice "till victory is won."

Composed in 1900 by brothers J. Rosemond and James Weldon Johnson, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" originally was written to celebrate Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

Over the years, however, black colleges and organizations took the tune to heart, and it eventually became a staple of the civil rights movement.

"In three stanzas, it addresses blacks' striving for a place in society," said Melanie Edwards, the granddaughter of composer J. Rosemond Johnson. "It works at a poetic level while addressing complex political issues."

Now, 90 years after its conception, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" has been transformed into a pop song by singer Melba Moore and a stellar gathering of black talents, including Stevie Wonder, Anita Baker, Bobby Brown and Dionne Warwick.

Not surprisingly, reaction to the contemporary version of the classic has been mixed. Moore was honored recently at a congressional reception in Washington, D.C. Commending Moore, District of Columbia Rep. Walter Fauntroy said the singer's voice "rings across generations." He also noted that Moore and the song were entered into the Congressional Record.

Another adoring reaction is featured on the liner notes of Moore's "Soul Exposed" album, courtesy of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) executive director Benjamin Hooks:

"Ms. Moore's treatment of this classic gives it new zest, vitality and meaning. More than any other song, it represents our brave struggle for freedom and equality."

Criticisms of recording

But some people don't care much for Moore's rendition of the revered hymn, claiming the recording's glistening keyboards and strolling rhythms are desecrating.

"I don't feel comfortable with this version of it," said John Henrik Clarke, Hunter College professor emeritus of African world history. "I admire (Moore) as a singer and a performer, but I think a song that is meant to endear a people to themselves should be treated with a certain kind of respect."

"It isn't just a song, it's a hymn," said Mildred Johnson, daughter of composer J. Rosemond Johnson. "It shouldn't be updated anymore than 'The Star-Spangled Banner' should be updated. You don't have to place a swing beat on everything."

Moore, a former schoolteacher, insisted she meant no harm by refurbishing the cherished anthem. She said her intention was to reach younger, black radio listeners.

"It's absolutely the right start toward getting young African-Americans to know about themselves," Moore said. "The song is a legitimate part of their heritage, and I hope it will be more than another hit re-

See ANTHEM, Page 9H

Anthem stirs pride, debate among blacks

■ From Page 1H

cord. The song belongs to them."

Two versions of the song appear on Moore's Capitol Records album "Soul Exposed," the longer of them featuring narration by Jesse Jackson.

Actress-choreographer Debbie Allen has produced a video of the song.

Proceeds from the single will go to the NAACP, the National Association for Sickle Cell Disease and the United Negro College Fund.

Moore, who has appeared in Broadway productions of "Purlie" and "Hair," began performing "Lift Every Voice and Sing" three years ago at National Council of Negro Women meetings.

"When I sang it, I couldn't help but notice the binding, unifying effect it had on people," she said. "Everybody seems to like it."

Hoping to reach a wider audience, Moore approached Capitol Records chairman Joe Smith about the possibility of recording the song.

After assuring Smith she could rearrange the song for mainstream pop tastes, Moore enlisted the help of renowned contemporary gospel producer BeBe Winans.

Winans was so fond of Moore's concept that he took a sound engineer on the road with him during a recent tour to record celebrities' voices for the single. But some of the singers Winans encountered said the work was difficult to sing.

Moore, who described her version of the song as an "r&b-pop-spiritual-anthem-hymn," said Winans rearranged the tune to accommodate the singers involved.

Grew from folklore?

Just how "Lift Every Voice and Sing" became accepted as the black national anthem is not clear. Black historian Clarke said the assumption grew out of folklore.

"Someone said it, another one repeated it, and that set a rumor in motion," Clarke said. "But there is no official document stating it is the black national anthem."

Born in Jacksonville, lyricist James Weldon Johnson was a newspaper editor, lawyer, educator and civil-rights activist. After graduating from Atlanta University in 1894, he returned to Florida to become principal of Stanton School.

He is credited with establishing the first daily black newspaper in Florida, the Daily American, and as the first black to pass the Florida bar exam and be permitted to practice law. Johnson served as consul in both Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Educated at the New England Conservatory of Music, J. Rosemond Johnson was a composer and actor who once conducted at the London Opera House.

He performed in the original "Porgy and Bess." Mildred Johnson said her father even assisted composer George Gershwin in arranging many of the songs for the classic musical.

Two volumes of American Negro spirituals he compiled ranked high among J. Rosemond Johnson's list of accomplishments.

"People go through phases of selected memory, and, for a time, blacks weren't into the slave songs of previous years," Mildred Johnson said. "My father knew that if someone didn't act, those spirituals would disappear. So he traveled south, and went about finding and arranging these songs. He had a very full life."

'Black anthem'

A Tribune Wire Report

"Lift Every Voice and Sing," written by brothers J. Rosemond and James Weldon Johnson in 1900.

"Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of liberty
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope the present brought us
Facing the rising sun
Of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won
Stony the road we trod
Bitter the chast'ning rod
Felt in the day when hope unborn had died
Yet with a steady beat
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed."

Marrow's 'Truly Blessed' celebrates Mahalia Jackson

By PATRICIA O'HAIRE
of the New York Daily News

NEW YORK — She was probably the greatest gospel singer this country — or any other — has produced.

Yet she could sing the blues as well as anyone, including the great Bessie Smith, who was her idol when she was growing up.

She was Mahalia Jackson, the Queen of Gospel Music — born in poverty, with almost no chance of escaping it. But she almost single-handedly accomplished a mission: to take the music from the black churches outside their doors and have others listen to the sounds that praised God.

Hers was a fascinating life, the stuff of legends. And now that legend is coming to life in "Truly Blessed," a new musical playing at Broadway's Longacre Theatre on West 48th Street.

"Truly Blessed" was written by Queen Esther Marrow, who performs the title role. It's the first piece she's ever written, and it took her two years.

But it was worth it. The play was presented earlier this year at Ford's Theater in Washington, and was so well-received, it ended up being nominated for three Helen Hayes Awards there: for Marrow as Best Actress; for Best Original Play and for Best New Musical. (The Hayes Awards are Washington's equivalent to Broadway's Tonys.)

Queen Esther is a handsome woman with a voice that can brush the rafters of any theater — or church — in which she happens to be at any given moment. But unlike Mahalia, who refused to work any place liquor was served and would never sing what she considered sinful, like jazz or blues, Queen Esther has worked as an actress (she was Auntie Em in "The Wiz" on Broadway) and as a singer.

She started her career as an opening act for Harry Belafonte, which is a pretty good start, and she sang and toured with Duke Ellington when he performed his Sacred Concert.

She's well-versed in the songs Mahalia sang. "I've been a great admirer of Mahalia since I was a child. When I came to New York to work, I was in one of many projects about her, but none of them were exactly successful, so I thought, 'Why not do my own?'

"I never heard her sing in person until I came to New York. And I met her only once, in 1965, at a rally for Dr. Martin Luther King in Chicago.

"I was on the bill just as she was, but I had been assigned a dressing room on the main floor while hers was up a flight of stairs. I knew she hadn't been well at that time, so I offered to exchange rooms with her, and she thanked me. Then later on, when she was standing on the platform with Dr. King, she called to me and said, 'Come on, baby, sing with me.' It was quite a thrill for me."

"Truly Blessed" is an inspirational showcase for many of the songs Mahalia Jackson sang; the story line is simply the chain that links the music.

Clint Eastwood, Parker do the Cannes-Cannes

CANNES, France — For the third time in seven years, a **Clint Eastwood**-directed movie has made its world premiere as an official entry in the Cannes Film Festival.

Whether or not the third time proves a charm, Eastwood admitted that he's charmed by the attention.

"I came here twice before and enjoyed it both times," Eastwood said at a news conference.

Eastwood has been one of Hollywood's most popular exports for nearly three decades, and though neither "Pale Rider" nor "Bird" — his previous Cannes entries — earned him a prize, the films were huge successes with the international audiences here.

The reaction to "White Hunter, Black Heart," a film based on the late director **John Huston's** obsession with elephant hunting during the pre-production of "The African Queen," seemed more subdued.

Another American-made movie, **Alan Parker's** "Come See The Paradise," became the Cannes festival's first major critical hit last weekend, positioning itself as a leading contender for the Palme d'Or award given to the best film shown at the extravaganza.

The reception given the film was good news for the 46-year-old Parker, whose last controversial release, "Mississippi Burning," drew indignation from black activists. His latest picture looks likely to draw a far more polite response.

It tells the story of trade union activists Jack McGann (**Dennis Quaid**) and his girlfriend Love for Lilly (**Tamlyn Tomita**) at the time of the internment of Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast during World War II.

Though a love story, the stresses and strains that this sad episode in American history put on one family are the film's main theme.

While not always welcoming debate, Parker is happy to label his latest film controversial and clearly hopes to make an impact.

"It will bring the matter to the attention of people not aware of what went on in World War II. I don't intentionally make controversial films, but if it provokes discussion that is good," Parker said.

"(Former President Franklin D.) Roosevelt did not have a single reason to do what he did," he added. "There was not a single example, not a single shred of evidence of lack of loyalty among Japanese-Americans. Yet he did it."

ON THE TRAIL OF HISTORY

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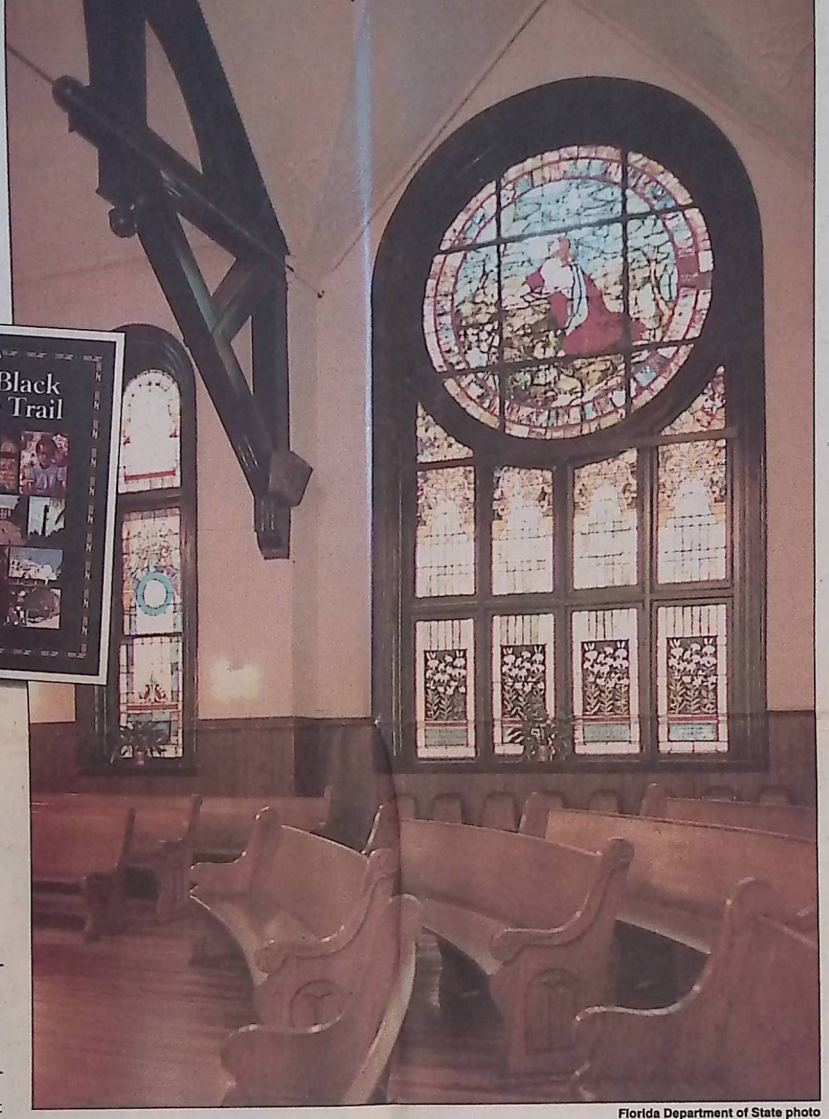

Florida Department of State photo

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PEGGY PETERMAN

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Please see **HISTORY** 3D



Times art

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YOURSELF

By RUTH WALSH
Times Staff Writer

Improving the odds against black youths

African-American males make up nearly 6.5 percent of Florida's population but comprise 54.8 percent of the state prison population, according to statistics cited in a program to air this week on local public television station WEDU-Ch. 3. *Black to School*, a segment of *Florida Crossroads* (produced by Florida Public TV), looks at a pilot program started in four Dade County public elementary schools in 1991 that is trying to change the terrible odds for young black men implied in those statistics. Barbara Carey directs Dade County schools' Division of Multicultural Programs. Part of Carey's job is to improve academic achievement in students who seem to be falling through the cracks of the school system; looking at statistics, she found that in Dade County, those students were largely African-American males. Under Carey's guidance, the school system began the Afrocentric Enhancement and Self-esteem Opportunity Program (AESOP); it is designed to help both young black men and women realize their culture's importance in the history of our country and the world. "What we're saying to them," says Carey in the special, "if we can find another way to capture their attention and to make them proud of who they are, maybe we can keep them turned on to education." *Black to School* airs at 6:30 p.m. Saturday.

'Codependency Revisited'

Are your thoughts, feelings and actions so closely tied into your relationships with others that you've allowed the lines to get hazy between your life and theirs, your needs and their needs of you? It is important to have a clear perception of your "self" — and to devote energy to filling your own needs. If you seek the approval of others to feel good about yourself, or feel you need to prove you are good enough to be loved, you may benefit from Ron Salmon's six-session seminar "Codependency Revisited." Sponsored by Bruised Reed Ministries, a non-denominational outreach program of Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Seminole, it will meet from 7 to 8 p.m. Thursdays beginning this week at the church, 9530 Starkey Road, Seminole. A support group will follow from 8 to 9 p.m. Child care is available. Call 391-0218. Free.

The loss of a loved one

Recovering from the death of someone you love means mending a huge hole in the fabric of your life. Immediately after the loss, you tack things together so you can do what is necessary. Gradually, the healing begins; eventually, a scar forms. Certainly, life can never be exactly as it was; but it can have meaning and joy again. These programs offer help:

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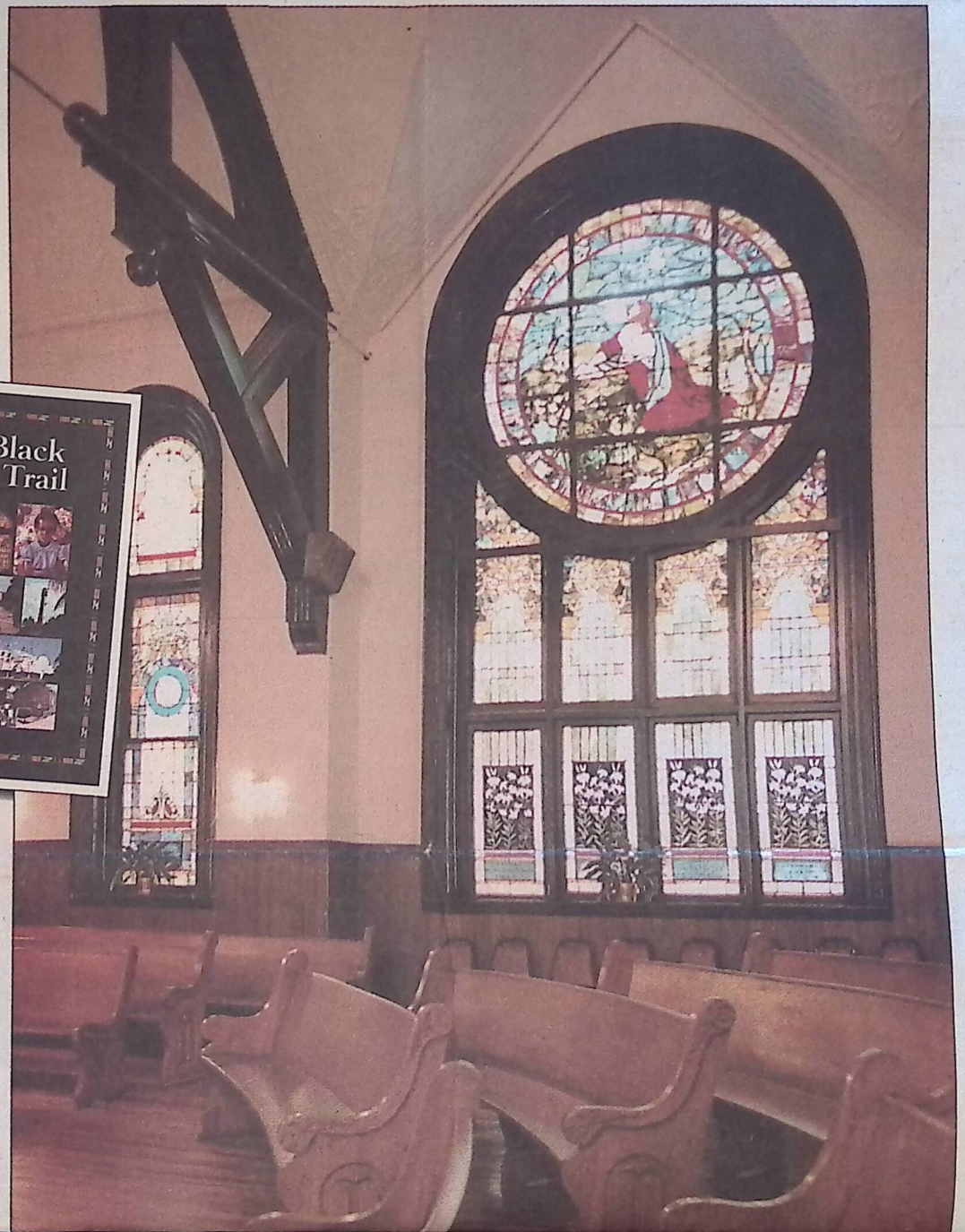

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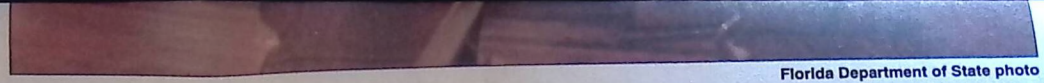
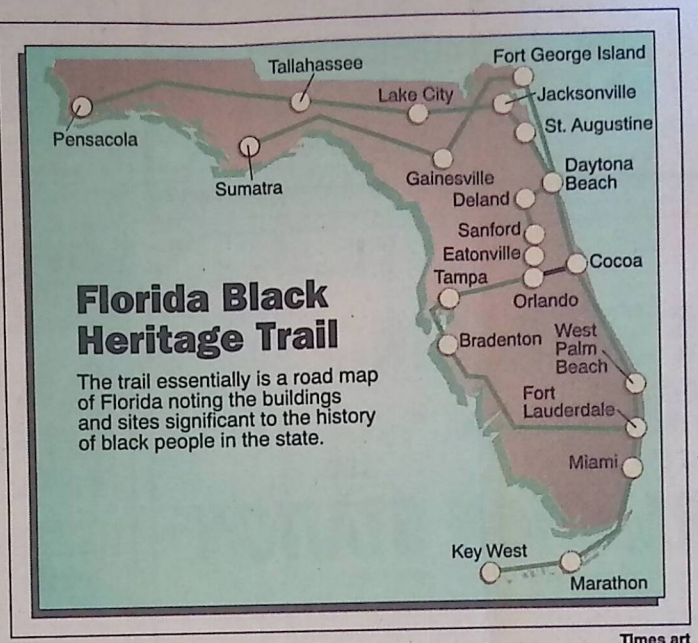


Florida Department of State photo



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By SUZIE SIEGEL
Tribune Staff Writer

GAINESVILLE

The handmade pewter medal bears a likeness of St. Christopher on one side and the four points of the compass on the other. Both meant salvation to the owner.

The medal turned up two miles north of St. Augustine in an excavation of Fort Mose, the first black town chartered in the United States. Catholicism offered sanctuary to slaves who fled British colonial plantations, heading south to Spanish Florida.

The Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville has prepared exhibits that tour the country, telling the tale of self-sufficient townsfolk who had their own leader and militia.

"The people of Mose were remarkably adaptable," writes Jane Landers, project historian. In addition to different African cultures, they learned the language and customs of the English, Indians and Spanish to survive.

Mose, pronounced Moh-SAY, was chartered in 1738. The museum has dubbed it "colonial America's black fortress of freedom."

Archaeologists, headed by Kathleen Deagan of the University of Florida, excavated the fort in 1987 and 1988. Digging may continue if they receive more state money, says Darcie MacMahon, the museum's exhibit coordinator.

"Our ultimate hope is that it will become a state park," MacMahon says.

The state owns the 24-acre site and is negotiating for 14 acres of uplands to give access through the salt marsh, says Albert Gregory, chief of park planning for the state Division of Recreation and Parks.

The museum offers a videotape and curriculum material on Mose. Next year, its large exhibit will travel to Miami and Jacksonville, and one of two small satellite exhibits will go to Orlando.

"The first slaves in the Americas were not African, and the first Africans in the Americas were not slaves," the exhibits note. Indians were the first slaves, while Africans came as explorers.

"You always think of this as a white male adventure," Landers says, referring to exploration of the New World. "But there were free blacks on all those expeditions. There were even some women."

Because the Catholic Church hoped to convert Indians, the Spanish colonies turned to Africa for slaves, she says. Black slave labor built much of St. Augustine.

The colonies had plenty of free blacks as well. The Spanish didn't assume every black person was a slave, as the British did, Landers says. Spanish slaves also had rights, such as the rights to marry and own property.

The Spanish in St. Augustine promised sanctuary to runaways who converted to Catholicism. Word spread to Charleston, then the closest British city, she says.

She details the results in her doctoral dissertation, which will be published as a book next year. It gives this account:

Despite British patrols, slaves slipped away by horse and boat, sometimes with Indian help.

The earliest record of black fugitives in St. Augustine tells of eight men, two women and a nursing baby who arrived by boat in 1687. The governor employed the women in his household while the men helped build the Castillo de San Marcos.

"... The men earned a peso a day, the wage paid to male Indian laborers, and the women half as much."

More than 100 had come by 1738, when the Spanish chartered Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose. Residents had full citizenship, with access to the governor as well as the marketplace, says Landers, who traveled to Cuba and Spain to trace the town.

Mose was the original Indian name for a site they had used for thousands of years, she says. But she knows of no Indians who remained when the black town was chartered.

A persistent commander

The Spanish welcomed the fugitives because their escape spelled financial loss for the British. Plus, they brought skills: They knew which plants could serve as medicine, they could forage for food and they could round up wild cattle and horses, she says.

"They knew the lay of the land they had just passed over. They were noted for being trackers, pilots, messengers, hunters and guides."

The Spanish sent Africans and Indians in canoes to scalp the British and return with slaves. Captured slaves may have been sold along with other loot, she says, or they may have won their freedom by serving in the militia.

Men of African lineage, both free and enslaved, fought in militias throughout Spain's colonies.

The Spanish relied on the Mose militia as the first line of defense for St. Augustine. More than once, the men helped save the city to the south.

They sent a declaration to the king, promising to be "the most cruel enemies of the English." They knew they would be returned to slavery if captured by the British.

The case of Capt. Francisco Menendez illustrates the dangers. He was a Mandingo who fled slavery to join the Indians and fight the British. When he reached St. Augustine, however, he was sold back into slavery.

He commanded other slaves who had been promised freedom in exchange for their service in the Mose militia, and his exploits won their freedom the year the town was chartered. As the militia commander, he governed the town.

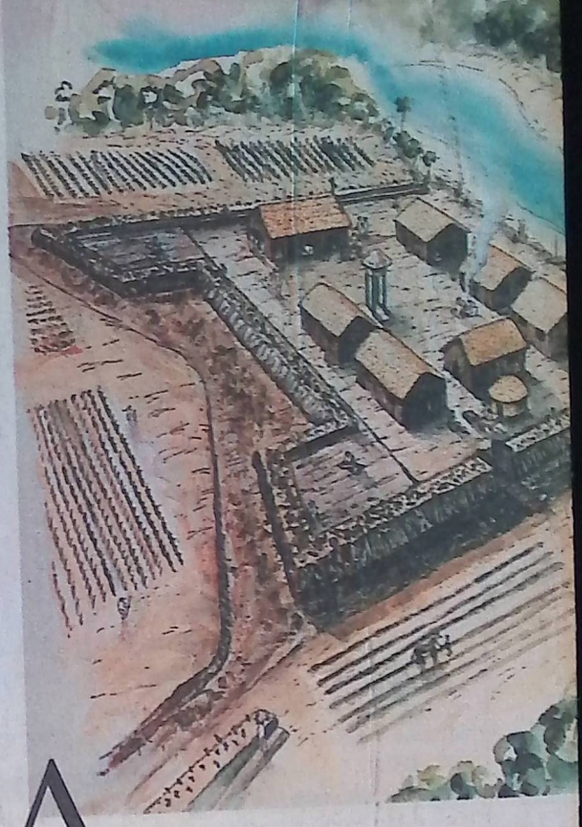
In 1741, the British recaptured him, gave

See ESCAPED, Page 3



Photograph by JAMES QUINE

Jean Claude Selime helps excavate the archaeological site.



The Florida Museum of Natural History has traveling exhibits on Fort Mose, the first black town chartered in the United States.

A fortress of freedom



Illustrations provided by the Florida Museum of Natural History

Escaped slaves found sanctuary in Florida's town of Fort Mose

■ From Page 1

him 200 lashes and ordered him sold into slavery. Records show he managed to return to Mose, at least by 1752.

Becoming Catholics

Before the founding of Mose, the Spanish created black towns in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Colombia, patterned on ones for newly converted Indians, Landers says.

"But none of them has been thoroughly researched, and they haven't been excavated at all."

Skin color was not the motive behind separate towns, she says. The Spanish kept Africans apart until they learned Spanish customs and Catholicism.

"They viewed them as not yet fully civilized."

Blacks already assimilated into Spanish society could stay in St. Augustine, but some chose Mose instead. A Franciscan priest moved there to teach the townspeople, most of whom had been born in West Africa.

"They did everything they could to be good Catholics. They knew it was to their advantage," she says, although they may have intertwined African customs as well.

Protected by yucca

A skirmish with the British destroyed Mose in 1740. Its residents lived in St. Augustine until 1752, when they were forced to rebuild Mose.

Stone bolstered the first fort, which was abandoned in 1740, Landers says. Satellite photographs indicate its location, but it has yet to be excavated. Highway construction has blocked tidal creeks, causing the area to flood.

The fort was rebuilt on higher ground. To deter attacks, spiky yuccas known as Spanish bayonet were planted in moats and on top of the clay-covered sod walls.

"Constant danger and deprivation" kept the population from growing, Landers writes. A census lists twice as many men as women. More men had been stolen from Africa, she explains, and women were less likely to flee because they cared for the young and old.

Some Mose men married Indians or St. Augustine slaves, even though the slaves could not live with them. She found no evidence of marriage between Africans and Spanish until one at the end of the century.

"But black women often had liaisons with very important Spanish men. The men recognized their children in church and would educate them."

Encouraged escapes

Men worked as carpenters and ironsmiths. Women earned money by baking pastries, cooking, washing and sewing clothes, cleaning homes and raising vegetables, chickens and pigs.

Excavations uncovered red clay pipes for smoking tobacco, bone buttons, metal buckles, musket balls and glass bottles, some gotten in trade from the English enemy.

Their wooden houses had thatched roofs. In the surrounding fields, they planted corn and maybe rice. Like the Indians, they ate deer, raccoon, opossum, turtle, fish and shellfish.

"If you're under constant attack," Landers says, "it's hard to raise livestock."

In 1763, Spain swapped Florida for Cuba, and the entire Mose population was resettled in the Cubar town of Matanzas. They were granted land and tools, and their leaders got an African slave each.

Influential blacks often had black slaves in Latin America, just as whites did, Landers says.

Spain regained Florida in 1784, but Mose was never re-established as a black town. She knows of only two Mose residents who returned.

But the Spanish continued to recognize religious sanctuary until 1790, when Thomas Jefferson, then secretary of state, pushed to end it, Landers writes. Sanctuary meant freedom for many slaves long after Mose was abandoned.

"Thus the determined fugitives who struggled so hard to win their own freedom inadvertently furthered the cause of freedom for others whom they never knew."

For more information, call the Florida Museum of Natural History at (904) 392-1721.



STEVE OTTO

Disorganization is all in the eyes of the beholder

Everything about summer isn't great.

For one thing, when you get up and dash outside to grab the paper, it's nearly daylight and you have to play dash-tag with the other neighbors, who all peer out their windows, waiting for an opening when they think nobody else is watching.

The other day the Frau was already up, but running out to the sidewalk in a bathrobe is not in her job description. At least, as official fetcher, I get to pick the section I want to read first.

So I made the run and plopped down to see what was happening in the world. "OK, you have a candy bar cut up into sections," she blurted out, just as I was wading into "Blondie." "Now tell me if that's a principle, a concept or a rule in explaining fractions."

I looked up. "Say what?" said I.

"I said, is it a principle, a concept or a rule in explaining fractions?"

"Is what a principle?" I said again. Usually before 6 in the morning, all she wants to know is why I haven't made her coffee.

"It's this stupid final exam in math!" she blurted, waving a yellow pad in the air. "I have to have this finished by tomorrow."

I should have remembered. If you think final exams are tough on students, try living with a teacher who not only has to put them together, but has to make sure she knows the right answers herself.

"Ahh, it's a concept," I said, dashing off to the kitchen to make coffee and avoid any embarrassing questions, such as "Why?"

"Daddy," said the 7-year-old, wandering into the kitchen, where I was dumping sugar into the Frau's coffee. "I can't find my socks."

"Did you look in your drawer?" I asked.



Tribune photograph by JOCK FISTICK

Alice McGill portrays Sojourner Truth in a one-woman show that she performs across the country.

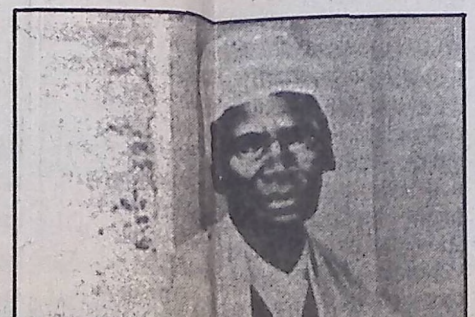
Speaking the Truth

Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns, and no man could [outwork] me. And aren't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man — when I could get it — and bear the lash as well. And aren't I a woman?

— Sojourner Truth, at a women's rights convention in 1851

By SUZIE SIEGEL
Tribune Staff Writer

ST. AUGUSTINE



She portrays Truth at age 83. When she quotes her, she throws a white shawl around her shoulders. Her body stiffens with age, yet takes on the strength of someone who knew hard labor.

"She couldn't read or write," McGill says, but her speeches were preserved in a book she sold to support herself. She asked children to read to her; she didn't trust adults.

"She said they put their 2 cents in."

A linguist helped McGill pick up Truth's

Watch TV and earn a degree

By WALT BELCHER
Tribune Staff Writer

Bob Foley, a 41-year-old U.S. Postal Service employee in Connecticut, wanted to get a master's degree to advance his career, but he couldn't find the time to attend classes. With a part-time teaching job and five children, his spare moments were sparse.

Tracy Smith, a 25-year-old utility company accountant in Homer, Alaska, was 250 miles from the nearest university. She wanted an advanced degree but to go back to campus would mean leaving her home and job.

Patti Hoffman, a junior college professor in Tulsa, Okla., wanted a master's degree in business to help her teaching career, but she had a demanding work load. And Chris Broz, a 41-year-old California-based business consultant, wanted to upgrade his education to "keep up with younger competitors," but his job, which requires a lot of travel, left him little time to attend classes.

Mind Extension University's symbol puts a new face on education.

All four of these people found a way to get their degrees without leaving their homes.

On Friday, they will meet for the first time when they attend graduation ceremonies at Colorado State University, where they will receive master's in business administration degrees without ever having set foot on campus.

They earned their degrees by watching television.

At a time when TV is blamed for destroying reading skills, these four pioneers are the first graduates of Mind Extension University, a nationwide educational cable televi-

bly wondering why someone would stick socks in a drawer instead of behind the door in a ball under the tape player with the rest of his clothes.

Nobody knows

I went looking for the 11-year-old to make sure he was up. He had been. He had moved from his bed into our room, where he was slumped on the bed, staring at the news. "Who's Ross Perot?" he asked from his prone position.

"Nobody knows," I said, looking for the trash basket. I could hear the big garbage truck rolling down the street a few houses away. They usually wait until I'm in the shower.

The way it works logistically at our house is, the Frau takes the two older boys to school on her way to school. Then, a few minutes later, I wake up the Screamer, get him ready and haul him off to preschool.

The first wave rolled out the door, and I slumped down into the chair. I still hadn't made it through "Blondie," but now there would be about 20 minutes before the last kid had to get up and on his way.

I was just sitting down when a horse snorted and there was the "DITTY-YICK DITTY-YICK DITTY-YICK" noise that a horse makes when he gallops out of town in a Western movie (look, you spell it if you think you can do better).

It was the Screamer. He was up and riding his horse, which is a metal pole with a horse's head on the end. You pull one ear and get a recorded horse snort. Pull the other ear and you get that "DITTY-YICK" noise. What a country!

He rode up to me on his horse. "I can't find Donatello," he announced. "I got Michelangelo."

Mock turtle art?

If you don't have kids, then I have to tell you we're not talking art here. We're talking Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

"Maybe you can find them after school," I suggested. "No!" he said. "I want to take them for show and tell."

I told him I'd find them after I made him a delicious breakfast out of some cereal loaded down with healthy sugar and marshmallows.

It wasn't easy. He sat down to eat his cereal and watch Popeye and Bluto duke it out over Olive Oyl. It can be violent, but at least the kid eats spinach at night.

I went looking for the turtles. It appeared as if Donatello had disappeared in the landfill near the kid's toy box.

Fortunately, I couldn't find one of the Screamer's shoes. They are red, yellow, blue and green and feature a picture of Ronald McDonald on each one. I finally found the missing shoe, stuck inside a cowboy boot. Inside the shoe that was inside the cowboy boot was the missing plastic Donatello.

Not bad. We were out the door, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles in one hand, Rescue Rangers lunch box in the other, and I was only 10 minutes late for an appointment.

Can it be there are still three more weeks before school is out?

The lack of rights for black people worried the preacher no more than a flea bite, he told Sojourner Truth. She smiled.

"If God's willing, I'll keep you scratching."

Alice McGill recounted the story as part of a one-woman show at the Gamble Rogers Memorial Storytelling Festival this month in St. Augustine. She portrays Truth, a former slave whose speeches brought fame in the 19th century.

"She was so courageous and witty," McGill says. "She was like an onion. Every time you peeled a layer away, you found another, each as surprising as the next. There was great innocence about her, and anger."

Those qualities shine in a familiar quote: "If women want more rights, why don't they just take them?"

McGill measures her words carefully, as if unrolling a bolt of velvet.



Photograph from "Notable Black American Women"

Sojourner Truth gained fame in the 19th century for her speeches.

She wears a dress of rough cotton that a costume designer copied from an old photograph of Truth. She has daubed gray paint on her eyebrows, and she knits them as she peers into an audience she addresses as "children."

In the stage lights, her eyes glitter over sweeping cheekbones.

Her first owners were Dutch immigrants in New York. They spoke only Dutch to their slaves so the slaves could not communicate with others if they escaped. She later spoke English with a Dutch accent, flavored by the African languages of her grandparents.

Truth was forced to marry an older man to bear children, McGill says. After nearly 30 years of slavery, she walked away, cradling the youngest of her five children.

"She said she was walking out of Egypt."

At the first house she approached, a woman offered her a room and money in exchange for doing chores. Truth slept under the bed the first night; she could not imagine the bed was meant for her, McGill relates.

Truth ended up on the lecture circuit.

See A GOD-GIVEN, Page 2

sion classroom service founded by Glenn R. Jones, owner of the Jones Intercable systems.

"It was a real challenge because I had to keep up with the class work and take tests, just like the students on campus," Foley said. "But one of the great things was that I could go anywhere and watch the classroom sessions on videotape."

Foley already had some college course credits from Harvard, but he was struggling to find the time to complete his M.B.A. degree. He learned about Mind Extension University from a newspaper clipping.

It cost him about $900 per course, and he had to be accepted into Colorado State's M.B.A. program. Colorado State is one of nearly two dozen universities that are members of the Mind Extension television campus.

See CLASS, Page 5

Light operas keep lyric tradition alive

By JOANNE MILANI
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA — Rafael Martinez-Ybor still is nostalgic about the sequin-studded operettas or *zarzuelas* that used to be performed on the stages of the Cuban Club, the Centro Asturiano and the Centro Espanol.

THEATER PREVIEW

"Prior to World War II, there were all these theaters, and we used to have all these plays," said the 63-year-old banker and civic leader. "In the 1950s, Ybor City went downhill, and there were no more productions for the Spanish community ... Today, it's the Spanish Lyric Theater that's kept alive the old Hispanic lyric theater tradition of Tampa," said Ybor, the great-grandson of Ybor City's founder.

On Saturday, the Spanish Lyric Theater will present Franz Lehar's "El Conde de Luxemburgo." It's a production performed in Spanish and filled with as many lavish costumes, waltzes and polkas as the *zarzuelas* or light operas that delighted the audiences at the social clubs of the Cuban and Spanish immigrants generations ago.

Unlike traditional operas, these works include spoken dialogue and have happy, often comic, story lines.

"After 'The Merry Widow,' it's the favorite Viennese operetta of the Spanish-speaking world," said 54-year-old Rene Gonzalez, the Spanish Lyric Theater's founder, executive director and one-man whirlwind whose lifetime obsession has been producing these *zarzuelas*.

Gonzalez started the company in 1958 when he was a University of Tampa student. He continued producing the shows in his spare time while teaching in the Hillsborough County school system.

Now retired, he's devoted himself full time to running the company as well as directing and performing. For "El Conde," he's coordinating a cast of 30, complete with Cuban-born tenor Pepe Urquiaga, soprano Esther Maria Talledo and the School of the Tampa Ballet.

"It's about a foppish Russian prince who wants to marry an actress, but the Czar forbids it because she has no title," said Gonzalez, who added that many of the *zarzuelas* are based on the turn-of-the-century Austrian operettas composed by Victor Herbert ("Babes in Toyland"), Sigmund Romberg ("The Student Prince") and Lehar, who also wrote "The Merry Widow."

See OPERA, Page 3



Tribune photograph by AUGUST STAEBLER

Pepe Urquiaga and Esther Maria Talledo star in the Spanish Lyric Theater's production of "El Conde de Luxemburgo."



Tribune photograph by CANDACE C. MUNDY

Mark Dowling, left, Deborah Oxley and Louis Greto, right, star in the Loft Theatre's production of "Sexual Perversity in Chicago."

'Perversity' indicts the swinging '70s

By JOANNE MILANI
Tribune Staff Writer

THEATER PREVIEW

TAMPA — Rat-tat-tat. "Sexual Perversity" is a fast-moving fusillade of cheap shots, near-lethal shots, shots to the heart and groin, and shots to the ego.

Monica Bishop Steele, the director of the Loft production who is a visiting professor at the University of South Florida, has her own war stories from the trenches of the swinging '70s.

She recalls the street of bars and discos in Dallas called the Greenville Strip. She can still see the flashy cars and the singles who were combing the killing fields.

"I remember being at a bar, putting quarters in a jukebox," said Bishop Steele, who was a graduate student at Southern Methodist University at the time. "This guy draped himself over the jukebox, sort of laid over it, and looked into my eyes and asked, 'Do you mind if I watch?' "

He was giving it his best shot, as any veteran of the singles wars will tell you. In fact, every disabled veteran of the swinging '70s will recognize the emotional gunfire in this 1976 play that's about getting some action, getting hurt and getting tough.

See SINGLES, Page 3

Residents seek help in saving tiny black town

The Tampa Tribune-Times, Sunday, February 23, 1992

By TRACY FIELDS
of The Associated Press

AMERICAN BEACH — Sandwiched between ritzy resorts, one of the nation's few remaining predominantly black seaside communities struggles to keep developers at bay and its history known.

American Beach is a legacy of the Jacksonville-based Afro-American Life Insurance Co. Now defunct, the company once had offices as far away as Texas and its founder, A.L. Lewis, was one of this country's first black millionaires, says his granddaughter, MaVynee Betsch.

A former opera singer, Betsch is a self-described "international environmentalist and eco-feminist," who has worked with the Green movement and been involved with tree planting in Kenya.

Now her fight is to preserve American Beach.

Some of the acreage on which it sits came from a land grant gained with the assistance of Eleanor Roosevelt; the rest had been purchased by the Afro-American Life Insurance Co. nearly 70 years ago, Betsch said.

"They were like our own little banks," she said of her grandfather's and other black insurance companies. "Black people did their own thing. We didn't have to ask white folks for nothing."

Throughout the era of official segregation, American Beach flourished.

Among its homeowners, Betsch said, were the first dental hygienist in Florida and other such professionals. But people of more modest means were their neighbors.

"They had cottages along here and even the working people could stay here," Betsch said, gesturing along the beachfront. "That's what I thought democracy was about. The average person could live here," she said. "That's why we fight so to keep it. There will be no gate up here."

That's in contrast to swank Amelia Island Plantation nearby. There, access is limited not only by security but also by the cost of the accommodations, which can range into hundreds of dollars for a single night.

In the early days, "the Afro" was the center of the American Beach community, offering social activities as well as free medical exams.

"We were like a little world to ourselves," Betsch said. That was required in the Jim Crow days of the town's heyday in the '40s and '50s.

But things changed. The doors of mainstream America began to creak open and African Americans, long denied the abundance all around them, raced to check out the wider world.

"They deserted this place," said William Watson, who bought his lot in 1976. "I wasn't really interested, but at that time all the blacks had gone to Jacksonville Beach."

Among his neighbors in the mile-long town are Florida A&M University marching band star Billy Moore and state Sen. Arnett Girardeau.

Watson, a retired teacher, worries about the town's future.

"Taxes are going up and the people who were here years ago don't have the income to keep up with it," he said. "They'll be property-rich — poor people with property."

Developers already have produced brochures anticipating the demise of American Beach.

But residents are working to have it included in the National Register of Historic Places, last summer it was listed on the state's Black Heritage Trail, and they hope to build support by drawing more visitors.

Betsch hopes black tourists will come to enjoy the jazz and heritage festivals held here. She also suggests it as a location for reunions or weddings.

Documentary looks at black man's lifelong quest to practice law

By RAMSEY CAMPBELL
of The Orlando Sentinel

OKAHUMPKA — A University of Detroit law professor began filming a documentary here Sunday that is aimed at transforming an unsung civil rights leader into a national hero.

Lawrence Dubin is creating the hour-long program for a Public Broadcasting Service station in Michigan on the late Virgil Hawkins, a Lake County man who was denied admission to the University of Florida Law School in 1949 because he was black.

Hawkins fought a lengthy court battle with the state that resulted in the integration of the university system in 1958, although Hawkins was never allowed to attend.

"Virgil Hawkins was an amazing man, but he's more than just a Florida figure," Dubin said. "He really is an American hero."

Dubin, who also writes a monthly column on legal ethics for the National Law Journal, is producing the documentary directed by Forest Godsey, a veteran PBS director who has done a number of programs focusing on civil rights issues.

Until three years ago, Dubin had never heard of Hawkins. And when Dubin first learned about him, it was purely by accident.

Dubin was skimming over a list of decisions rendered by state supreme courts around the country for ideas to put in his column when he saw that the Florida Supreme Court had agreed to posthumously readmit Hawkins to The Florida Bar.

"That was just unheard of, a very unusual case," said Dubin, a former chairman of the Michigan Attorney Grievance Commission. "I knew there had to be more of the story. And the more I found out, the more incredible it became."

In June 1989 Dubin devoted a column to Hawkins, who ultimately earned a legal degree from a law school in Boston but wasn't given permission to practice law in Florida until 1976, when he was nearly 70 years old and had been out of law school for 15 years.

Hawkins' legal practice was a failure, and he resigned from The Bar in disgrace in 1985 after being charged with stealing money from a client. He died of a stroke in 1988.

Leesburg attorney Harley Herman launched a successful drive to get Hawkins — who had once said he wanted to be a member of The Florida Bar when he went to heaven — posthumously reinstated because of his struggle to get blacks an equal education in law.

The court said Hawkins had "claim" on its conscience when it ordered him reinstated.

Dubin, 49, said he's been planning the documentary on Hawkins since he first heard about the case.

"There are a lot of lessons to be learned from Virgil Hawkins for everyone; it's not just black history," he said.

Godsey said they have interviewed about 20 people from all over the state who worked with or knew Hawkins.

"And they all tell us that here is a man who fought the system for years yet never was angry, always had a smile on his face," said Godsey, who has teamed with Dubin before to make documentaries on civil rights or legal issues.

Because Hawkins fought for equality in the courtroom, he didn't get the attention that came to other civil rights leaders of his era leading boycotts and marches, Dubin said. "But he was a precursor to Martin Luther King."

Racism, in addition to Hawkins' fall from The Bar, also helped keep his story from getting the public attention it deserved, Godsey said.

On Sunday afternoon, the documentary-makers were in Okahumpka, where Hawkins lived and is buried, interviewing relatives.

"I just wish this was happening when he was still alive," said Hawkins' niece, Gloria Barton.

Hallie Williams, Hawkins' only surviving sibling, said she was thrilled at the attention her brother is getting.

He was the only one in the family determined to get a formal education and had wanted to become a lawyer since he was a young boy, she said.

The team will wrap up filming this week, but Dubin said he doesn't expect the documentary to be ready for airing until spring. Although it is being done for the Flint PBS station, it will be offered to other PBS stations around the country.

Although the legal system failed Hawkins, his reinstatement shows the system still works, Dubin said. "It just takes too long sometimes."

The Tampa Tribune, Friday, August 14, 1992



FOR A WARRIOR

In recognition of Black History Month, we offer this dramatic Korean War episode involving Jesse Brown, the first black American to earn his Navy wings. For its part, the Navy recognized Brown's outstanding contributions by commissioning a warship in his name.



Tribune illustration by TIM PRICE

By HARRY CRUMPACKER
Special to the Tribune

She was a great, snarling beast of a machine. In 1940, when the prototype first flew she was the fastest propeller-driven aircraft in America. Her prop was so huge that the wings had to be inverted, gull-like, to allow the needed ground clearance.

Ten years later, Vought F4U Corsairs roared off pitching carrier decks near the coast of North Korea. They would be loaded to the gills, the pilots straining on the brakes as they ran up their monstrous 2,450-horsepower engines. The 1st Marine Division was in a horrible jam near the Chosin Reservoir, fighting one of the epic withdrawals in military history. Its lifeline was in the sky, a dawn-to-dusk whirlwind of air support.

Skyraiders, Shooting Stars, Banshees and Corsairs wove a fiery net around the beleaguered Marines. One of the Corsair pilots was Jesse Brown.

Ensign Jesse Brown was the first black American to wear Navy wings of gold. A native of Hattiesburg, Miss., and graduate of Ohio State University, he arrived at Pensacola for flight training in 1948. The obstacles placed in his way by a Navy still rife with bigotry and prejudice were enormous. But the sheer will that every graduate of Navy flight training must have to succeed was as evident then as it would be less than three years later in Korea. He was simply not to be denied.

One of the men impressed with the drive and determination of this young pilot was a tall, gangling lieutenant junior grade and graduate of the Naval Academy named Thomas Hudner. Now the director of Veterans Affairs for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Hudner in a recent telephone conversation recalled his relationship with Brown.

The two junior officers flew Corsairs for the Swordsmen of VF-32. Day after day through the bitter winter of 1950 they would zoom over the frigid Sea of Japan, find their targets and fight their way to them.

It was not dogfighting. There were no soaring air-to-air battles near the Yalu. It was vital, brutal and bloody business providing air-to-ground support to troops fighting in the harshest possible conditions.

Air to mud, they called it.

By December, Brown had flown 40 combat strikes and was experienced enough to lead his own section. "There's an old Navy saying that rank among ensigns is like virtue among prostitutes," Hudner recalled. He was flying Jesse's wing on Dec. 4, 1950, on a four-plane flight over the Marine lines on an armed reconnaissance mission.

A large Chinese troop concentration was spotted and, despite heavy ground fire, repeated attacks were made. On one pass, Brown's plane was hit and pulled off the target streaming white smoke. He immediately turned south but the stricken Corsair was obviously too badly hit to make it, or even to struggle into friendly territory. Too low to bail out, Brown spotted a sloped clearing on the side of a nearby mountain and elected to belly in.

Turning into the wind, while his wingman circled anxiously, he skillfully brought the smoking plane in for a wheels-up landing. Then something unseen in the drifting snow caught the belly of the still-speeding Corsair and turned a textbook crash landing into a spinning junk pile.

The plane came to a shuddering halt, the entire fuselage forward of the windscreen jammed upward at a steep angle. Inside the cockpit the hydraulics panel knifed down, pinning Jesse's leg to the wreck. He ripped his gloves off and released the latches on his parachute harness.

■ **MORE INSIDE**
History&Heritage has more on black history/ **Page 4**

Hudner was stunned. Since Brown had landed into the wind, he could clearly see the smoke from the crash blowing back over the cockpit area. He could also see Brown struggling to free himself. And he made an immediate and unique decision.

While his companions radioed for a rescue helicopter, Hudner jettisoned his remaining fuel and ordnance, lined his Corsair up on the field, and set it down in the snow next to his friend, five miles behind enemy lines.

Hudner first made Brown aware of his presence, then began to frantically shovel snow upon the still-smoking engine to quench the smoldering fires. Hudner then noticed that Jesse had dropped his gloves in his struggle to free himself. He ran back to his own wrecked Corsair, grabbed a first-aid pack and extra gloves and began tending to Brown.

For at least an hour Hudner worked desperately, first straining to lift the panel off his friend's legs, then returning to shovel more snow upon the smoldering metal. It was brutally cold, 10

See BROWN, Page 2

Black military history

Here are some significant events in the history of black men in the military:

■ **June 11, 1775:** Free black man Peter Salem shoots Maj. John Pitcairn of the British Army at close range during the Battle of Bunker Hill, demoralizing the charging redcoats. Two of the 100 American battle casualties are black.

■ **July 9, 1777:** In a daring raid led by freed slave Tack Simmons, the British Maj. Gen. Richard Prescott is snatched from his headquarters.

■ **Aug. 11, 1778:** Led by Col. Greene, the 1st Rhode Island Regiment, an all-black force, fights for the first time at the Battle of Rhode Island.

■ **1812:** During the Battle of New Orleans, black riflemen play a vital role in Gen. Andrew Jackson's thrashing of a superior force of British invaders. Jackson orders that his men be paid whether they are "white, black or tea."

■ **June 18, 1863:** "One Gallant Rush". The men of the 54th Massachusetts, an all-black Union Regiment led by Boston socialite Robert Gould Shaw, attack Fort Wagner in South Carolina. More than 1,500 of the regiment perish in the attempt. When told that enraged Confederates had dumped Shaw's body in a mass grave with the rest of his troops, Shaw's parents are reported to have said they were proud to have their son resting there. By the end of the Civil War, one of every four members of the U.S.

See BLACK, Page 2

evolutionary Era

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BLACKS IN BRITISH EAST FLORIDA

by J. Leitch Wright, Jr.*

Blacks began arriving in Spanish Florida in the early sixteenth century soon after the appearance of Europeans, and from that point on they constituted a significant minority of the population, if not an absolute majority. During the British era, 1763-1784, blacks outnumbered whites. Except for rare instances, scholars interested in Negro history at any time during Florida's lengthy colonial era will search in vain for published books and articles.[1] A stroll 200 years ago through rice and indigo fields and through sugar houses of St. Johns River plantations or a visit to St. Augustine's public market on the plaza and to the slave auction block would provide much information no longer available. Knowledge which was commonplace two centuries ago has been lost. Contemporary historians must utilize the few sources available, and be conscious that, if they are lucky, they may at least see the tip of the iceberg.

It is risky even to speculate concerning what language most East Florida blacks spoke. Qua appeared briefly in 1777 just before he was executed, and at least his name is recorded for posterity—which is itself a rarity. But even this fragment is meaningful. Africans named their children for the days of the week. "Qua" represented a male child who had been born on Thursday. Considering the African origins of the few other known East Florida slave names, and taking into account the large scale pre-Revolutionary slave importations into all southern colonies di-

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* Mr. Wright is professor of history, Florida State University, Tallahassee.

1. Those few authors who have made studies of blacks in colonial Florida are: I. A. [Irene Aloha] Wright, ed., "Dispatches of Spanish Officials Bearing on the Free Negro Settlement of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, Florida," *Journal of Negro History,* IX (April 1924), 144-95; Kenneth W. Porter, in his articles "Negroes and the East Florida Annexation Plot, 1811-1813," *Journal of Negro History,* XXX (January 1945), 9-29, and "Negroes and the Seminole War, 1817-1818," *Journal of Negro History,* XXXVI (July 1951), 249-80; and John J. TePaske, "The Fugutive Slave: Intercolonial Rivalry and Spanish Slave Policy, 1687-1764," in Samuel Proctor, ed., *Eighteenth-Century Florida and Its Borderlands* (Gainesville, 1975), 1-12.

rect from Africa, suggest that Qua was a typical East Florida Negro. Presumably he had been born in West Africa, retained a knowledge of his African tongue and culture, but had been forced to develop a pidgin in order to communicate with whites and fellow blacks alike.[2] The small number of surviving runaway slave notices also shed some light on language, but in no way can these few advertisements be considered a broad statistical sample. Relying on such notices as are available, runaways seemed to be young mulattoes able to speak both French and English.[3]

The problem of language is closely associated with where blacks were born and where they lived before arriving in East Florida. One can consider three major origins: Africa, the West Indies, and the other southern colonies. Though most native Africans presumably came from West Africa, this vast area encompassed many different peoples and cultures. Some, and probably a considerable number of blacks imported into East Florida, came from Jamaica in the West Indies. But where did the blacks described in the runaway notices learn to speak French? Guadeloupe, Martinique and especially Saint Domingue (Haiti) come to mind.[4] East Florida planters such as John Moultrie, master of Bella Vista, had moved into the new province from South Carolina. He had brought slaves with him, but the percentage of his slaves—numbering 180 at the end of the Revolution —which had been born in America and were acculturated and the number who were recent arrivals from Africa is unknown.[5]

2. General acc't. of contingent expenses, East Florida, June 25, 1777-June 24, 1778, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 5/559. Hereinafter cited as CO. J. L. [Joey Lee] Dillard, *Black English: Its History and Usage in the United States* (New York, 1972), 124. Approximately one-half of the fifty names which I was able to discover were clearly of African origin. This, along with the importation of slaves direct from Africa to East Florida and to adjoining colonies by Richard Oswald, Henry Laurens, and similar merchants, helps demonstrate the strength of the African culture in British East Florida.
3. *Georgia Gazette*, November 15, 1775; *Royal Georgia Gazette*, January 18, March 8, 1781.
4. Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison, 1969), 75-84.
5. Memorial of John Moultrie, London, March 24, 1787, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Audit Office 12/3. Hereinafter cited as AO. Most, but not all, of the East Florida loyalist claims are reproduced in Wilbur Henry Siebert, ed., *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774 to 1785: The Most Important Documents Pertaining Thereto, Edited with an Accompanying Narrative*, 2 vols. (DeLand, 1929), II.

There is another possible source of French-speaking slaves. During the Revolution French prizes were brought to St. Augustine, where at least some crewmen exchanged a French for a British master.

Yet after all these considerations the original uncertainty about the dominant language of blacks remains. A visitor to East Florida's slave quarters during the American Revolution might have heard English, French, Mandingo, Fulani, Hausa, and Mende, among other languages. In the Indian country there were black Hitchiti and Muskogee speakers. A pidgin, such as Gullah, was emerging and presumably was spoken with varying degrees of proficiency by a majority of East Florida blacks. Regardless of which were the most important languages, at least some blacks, simultaneously thrust into several cultures, became exceptional linguists. Whites employed them in their dealings with other Negroes and with Indians.

Despite the dearth of shipping and plantation records, more is known about the aggregate number of blacks in Florida. There were just over 2,000 Negroes in 1775, and by the end of the Revolution that number had increased to nearly 10,000. Throughout the British period blacks outnumbered whites approximately two to one.[6] This ratio was higher than in other southern colonies but considerably lower than the ratio in the British West Indies. In Jamaica there were at least fifteen blacks for every white.[7] In many respects, including a black majority and numerous absentee planters, East Florida had much in common with the British West Indies.

Population statistics reveal that there were few white yeomen farmers in East Florida. Whites were overseers, civil officials, in the military, or artisans and merchants who catered to their needs. Except for overseers they typically lived in or close by St. Augustine. The largest body of whites were the Minorcan, Greek, and Italian indentured servants at New Smyrna, but this settlement failed early in the Revolution, and the survivors moved to

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6. Charles Loch Mowat, *East Florida as a British Province, 1763-1784* (Berkeley, 1943; facsimile edition, Gainesville, 1964), 137; J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Florida in the American Revolution* (Gainesville, 1975), 13. Population figures are the best estimates available, though they do not include blacks living among the Indians.
7. Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York, 1965), 511.

St. Augustine. East Florida produced and exported indigo, sugar, rice, timber, naval stores, and barrel staves, and most of these commodities were grown or manufactured on St. Marys and St. Johns river plantations worked by slaves. One reason so little is known about Florida blacks is because little is known about the British plantation system. Surviving records would allow an enterprising scholar to locate those plantations which existed for some period and to discover more about the crops grown. This basic study has not yet been made, and more is known about plantations which failed than about those which did not.[8]

Some large plantations existed for many years. Governor James Grant, East Florida's first governor, left the province in 1771. He employed an overseer to supervise his sizable holdings, and he did not dispose of his numerous slaves until 1784.[9] The Scottish planter-merchant, Richard Oswald, who helped negotiate the 1783 peace treaty, owned two large East Florida plantations. In 1779 he moved over 100 slaves to his property in Georgia where royal authority had been reestablished, and near the end of the Revolution he returned 170 to Mount Oswald on the Tomoka River.[10] Henry Strachey, an absentee planter who also helped negotiate the 1783 peace, operated his East Florida plantation during the war through an overseer.[11] For seventeen years Robert Bisset and his son managed several plantations on the Hillsborough River employing more than 100 slaves.[12] Taking time out from feuding with his political opponents, Governor Patrick Tonyn periodically inspected his plantation on the St. Johns River.[13] Books have been written about the Minorcans and

8. Three separate books by Epaminondes P. Panagopoulos, Carita Doggett Corse, and Jane Quinn have been written about New Smyrna which survived for a decade. There are no published works about the respectable number of other plantations employing 50 to 200 slaves which lasted much longer. See E. [Epaminondes] P. Panagopoulos, *New Smyrna: An Eighteenth Century Greek Odyssey* (Gainesville, 1966); Carita Doggett [Corse], *Dr. Andrew Turnbull and the New Smyrna Colony of Florida* (n.p., 1919); Jane Quinn, *Minorcans in Florida: Their History and Heritage* (St. Augustine, 1975).
9. Patrick Tonyn to Strachey, St. Augustine, December 7, 1784, Henry Strachey Letters, Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library, New York City.
10. Memorial of Mary Oswald, November 11, 1786, AO 12/3.
11. Strachey to Tonyn, London, March 31, 1783, CO 5/560.
12. Memorial of Robert Bisset, London, March 27, 1787, AO 12/3.
13. J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *British St. Augustine* (St. Augustine, 1975), 15, 17, 39.

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14. Panagopoulos, *New Smyr*
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16. Charles H. Fairbanks, "T

other white indentured servants who settled in New Smyrna and about the approximately 500 who survived and in 1777 fled to St. Augustine.

Little is known of the blacks at New Smyrna except that 500 shipped over from Africa were drowned just off the Florida coast and that crews from Spanish privateers occasionally landed and spirited away slaves.[14] There is an absence of data on the plantations of Grant, Oswald, Strachey, Bisset, Tonyn, and others who employed 100 or more slaves.

Claims submitted by loyalists after the Revolution to secure compensation for their losses provide the best glimpse of life on an East Florida plantation. These documents reveal that slaves were used extensively in establishing the new British colony to build planters' and overseers' houses, Negro huts, kitchens, barns, fences, and to clear land. Two male field hands were expected to clear one acre every three weeks. Black artisans were in great demand. Perhaps twenty per cent of the slaves were skilled coopers, sawyers, squarers, carpenters, shipwrights, tar burners, and carters, and at times both skilled and unskilled slaves were hired out. Skilled male slaves were valued at between sixty and 100 pounds. Slaves worked in rice, indigo, and sugar cane fields, and operated sugar houses, indigo vats, and rice machines to prepare these crops for export. They boxed many thousands of pine trees to collect turpentine, and upon occasion they picked sweet and sour oranges and prepared juice for sale. Royal bounties for the production of naval stores and indigo served as a stimulus.[15]

Typical plantations employed from seventy to over 200 slaves. They lived in small wooden "Negro houses" holding three to four persons each clustered in a village. The overseer's residence was nearby. Though villages frequently had a common kitchen, it is not clear whether it was essentially an African or European one and whether food was prepared in the African, European, or New World style. Better quarters had built-in wooden beds. After the British period Florida slave houses sometimes were constructed of tabby, but archeologists will have to verify if any were built with this material during the British regime.[16] Based on a few

14. Panagopoulos, *New Smyrna*, 58; memorial of Robert Bisset, London, March 27, 1787, AO 12/3.
15. This information is based primarily though not exclusively on the loyalist claims published in Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, II.
16. Charles H. Fairbanks, "The Kingsley Slave Cabins in Duval County,

available samples, fifty-seven per cent of the slaves were male and forty-three per cent, female.[17] Because the colony had so recently been acquired by Britain, and because of wartime disruptions, Negro villages never assumed the stability and permanence of those in the West Indies where many black communities became almost a state within a state.

It is an understatement to assert that little is known about plantation slaves in British East Florida, but relatively speaking a veritable cornucopia of documentation survives as compared to sources about blacks in the Indian country. Blacks had lived among the Indians for many decades—probably well over two centuries—before 1763. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries Carolinians had engaged in a brisk trade in Indian slaves. As a result southern blacks and Indians had labored side by side, intermarried, and sometimes had escaped together to the Indian country. During the Revolution David Black was reimbursed £20 for bringing fugitive Negroes back to St. Augustine.[18] One can only speculate whether the Negroes in question had fled from some harsh East Florida overseer or were homesick and were returning if not to a *zambo* mother at least to *zambo* relatives.

Blacks in the Indian country were either slave or free and lived in separate communities or intimately among the Indians. Two loosely-structured factions seemed to have been evolving: a maroon society and another composed of recent fugitive plantation slaves. Maroons presumably had established themselves at an early date in separate communities and retained much of their African heritage, including agricultural techniques. They adopted some of the Indian culture and perhaps rendered the natives food in return for protection. Because of their superior knowledge of husbandry and ability as interpreters, maroons may have been a far more dominant force in the Indian country than has been generally realized. Maroons partially emerged from their obscurity in the nineteenth century during the course of the

Florida, 1968," *Conference on Historic Site Archeology Papers*, VII (1972), part 1, 62-93.

17. Memorial of John Graham, November 23, 1786, AO 12/3; memorial of Denys Rolle, September 10, 1783, Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, II, 291.
18. General account of contingent expenses, CO 5/559, 66.

Seminole wars. The other group of blacks among the Indians were recent runaways, at least some of whom were looked down upon and enslaved by Indians and maroons alike. *Zambos* were likely to adopt the culture of their mothers and count themselves as either blacks or Indians.[19]

In 1778 John Stuart, Britain's southern Indian superintendent, ordered Moses Kirkland, Seminole Indian agent, into the Indian country to help organize the Indians for the forthcoming campaign. Stuart assured Kirkland that Bully and the Black Factor, who lived near the forks of the Apalachicola River, would furnish horses.[20] At once one wonders about the origins of Black Factor's name. Was it on account of his pigmentation or for some other cause? Along the southern frontier blacks had been employed at cow pens, horse pens, and in various aspects of the Indian trade. Black Factor may have been a mulatto—possibly one of the numerous progeny of the Georgia Indian trader George Galphin—who for some time had raised horses and cattle and had been an enterprising merchant and land speculator.[21] Much of this is conjecture, as are Bully's racial origins and the number of other "black factors," if any, among the Indians.

East Florida had no formal slave code until 1782, but through custom and statutes the lives of slaves were regulated in detail. Blacks were outright chattels, and every Negro and mulatto who clearly could not demonstrate that he was free was deemed a slave. When Qua was publicly executed for robbery in St. Augustine, assessors estimated his value, and the state reimbursed his owner for his property loss.[22] Slaves in and around St. Augustine had their own garden plots and legally could sell their vegetables, fish, etc. only at stalls in the public market. Thirty-nine lashes

19. The best accounts concerning blacks among the southern Indians in the early nineteenth century are Roderick Brumbaugh, "Black Maroons in Florida, 1800-1830," unpublished paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Boston, 1975; Kenneth Wiggins Porter, *The Negro on the American Frontier* (New York, 1971), 182-358. These two scholars, however, do not concern themselves with British Florida.
20. John Stuart to Moses Kirkland, Pensacola, January 30, 1778, AO 13/36A. Bully was also known as Buly or Birli.
21. Tonyn to Stuart, September 8, 1778, CO 5/558.
22. General account of contingent expenses, East Florida, June 25, 1777-June 24, 1778, CO 5/559.

were to be meted out to violators and also to blacks who congregated and danced after 10:00 P.M.[23]

One searches almost in vain to know what blacks thought about the growing crisis between the American colonies and the mother country concerning taxation and parliamentary sovereignty. Probably these issues, so crucial for white American Whigs, had a low priority among East Florida blacks. Nevertheless, from the very beginning the war was brought home poignantly to East Florida Negroes, and they could not ignore that conflict regardless of what they thought of it.

In 1776, 1777, and again in 1778 Georgians stormed across the St. Marys River in unsuccessful efforts to capture St. Augustine. Exposed plantations on the St. Marys River and Amelia Island were ravaged. Floridians rushed their slaves toward St. Augustine for security, while Georgians captured others and whisked them away to the north. Jermyn Wright hurried his Negroes southward from his several plantations on the St. Marys River. In the ensuing weeks twenty-four slaves roaming about the woods with little to eat died of starvation.[24] After Spain came into the war in 1779 crews from her privateers landed above and below St. Augustine and carried off slaves.[25] Near the end of the Revolution Elias Ball from South Carolina brought 175 Negroes into East Florida and within one month alone over thirty died.[26] These mortality figures help justify the assumption that East Florida was like Jamaica and that the local slave population did not sustain itself in wartime, nor probably at any period.

But one merely has to look at the military sick list in East Florida or at the hundreds of Minorcan deaths at New Smyrna to realize that whites as well as blacks died at an alarming rate in British East Florida. In fact, the "sickle-cell trait," threatening twentieth century black children with anemia, gave Negroes in the eighteenth century a relative advantage over white indentured servants by affording more immunity against malaria.

Despite a high death rate, the scarcity of females, and wartime disruptions, the Negro population in East Florida almost quintupled during the Revolution. This was not due to any advantages of the "sickle cell trait" nor natural increase, but because of war time immigration. William Panton, a Georgia exile and Indian trader, Jermyn and Charles Wright, brothers of Georgia's last royal governor, James Spalding from St. Simons Island, and many other Georgians and Carolinians fled to East Florida with their slaves during the early years of the Revolution. Their blacks were immediately set to work building Negro houses, growing indigo, rice, and sugar cane, producing naval stores, and packing deerskins for export. Whether blacks also continued to reach East Florida from the West Indies and Africa in appreciable numbers is uncertain.

23. *East Florida Gazette*, February 22, 1783.
24. Jermyn and Charles Wright to Lord George Germain, n.d., CO 5/116.
25. Memorial of Bisset, March 27, 1787, AO 12/3.
26. Memorial of Elias Ball, London, August 1, 1784, AO 12/3.

One new source of slaves was from the sale of Negroes captured aboard ships flying the United States, French, or Spanish flags. St. Augustine had an admiralty court, for long periods the only one in the South, and condemned slaves were routinely auctioned off in the East Florida capital.[27] If any of the admiralty court records ever turn up it may be possible to estimate the numbers and to learn details about the background of the blacks involved and exactly where and how the auction was conducted.

Immediately after the fighting at Lexington and Concord broke out, East Florida lay exposed. Less than 100 untrained militia, neighboring Indians of unpredictable reliability, and a royal navy sloop or two represented the total available force. Minorcans comprised the largest single group of potential white militiamen. But they were Catholics, and it was unclear, particularly after France and Spain came into the war, on whose side they would fight. This made East Florida authorities more aware than ever that blacks were in the majority and that if the province was to be defended Negroes must assist.

One obvious way was by laboring on fortifications. In the neighboring southern colonies pre-Revolutionary laws had stipulated that all able-bodied male slaves between sixteen and sixty years of age must be listed with a local officer. In an emergency they could be called up for service. Owners were paid one shilling a day per slave or were relieved from having to provide labor for construction of public roads.[28] East Florida had no militia law

27. East Florida Commons House journal, St. Augustine, July 20, 1781, CO 5/572.
28. An act for repairing and rebuilding the forts, June 4, 1760, in Allen D. Candler, comp. and ed., *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, 26 vols. (Atlanta, 1904-1916), XVIII, 433-34.

must have accorded one another a measure of respect. East Florida blacks, fighting for the white man's liberty, despite the omission of a specific provision in the militia act, in a variety of ways had the opportunity of winning their own freedom.

With neighboring Georgia again under royal control in 1779, with the arrival of many loyalist refugees in East Florida, and with the crushing or expulsion of his most vocal political opponents, Governor Patrick Tonyn assumed that it was safe to hold elections for a representative assembly. It, along with the appointed council (the upper house) and the governor, would share authority. The first assembly was seated in the St. Augustine state house in March 1781, and it met intermittently until the end of 1783. The assembly concerned itself with a multitude of routine affairs—regulating markets and public houses, licensing pilots, building roads, collecting small debts, along with framing a militia law and a law authorizing the governor to impress slaves to work on fortifications. But drawing up a slave code took more time and engendered more controversy than any other issue. Governor Tonyn in a huff even dissolved the assembly in November 1781 on account of this quarrel.

Two centuries later this controversy seems puzzling, because in most respects East Florida's slave code was similar to South Carolina's and Georgia's. It provided that all Negroes, mulattos, and mestizos who could not prove they were free were to be regarded as slaves. Children followed the status of their mother. Negroes and mulattos who were not slaves were to wear a silver armband engraved with "free." Slaves needed a ticket from their master to be absent from the plantation or to carry a firearm in peace time, and masters were to be fined for cruelty to slaves. Authorities compensated any owner of a slave who was legally executed. Companion laws provided for white patrols to keep slaves in check.

The East Florida slave code differed from all others in North America concerning trials of slaves in capital offenses. In the other colonies an accused slave customarily could be tried by two justices of the peace and several local freeholders. They were to meet no later than three days after the commission of the felony, and they had the authority to impose the death sentence and to require that it be swiftly carried out. Based on their knowledge of practices in neighboring colonies, East Florida council members

argued that there was no assurance that justices of the peace or freeholders would know much about the law, that torture might be used, and that there was a serious risk of miscarriage of justice. The council demanded that in capital cases the accused slave be brought to St. Augustine and tried before a twelve-man white jury. The presiding judge could properly instruct the jury, and the defendant would be afforded more, but not all, of the protections under the English law.

Members of the lower house, a majority of whom were slave-owners, retorted this was unjust and that nowhere else on the American mainland were slaves afforded such guarantees. Assemblymen complained that the accused, representing a valuable investment, might spend six months or more in jail and that witnesses must make a costly trip to St. Augustine to testify. Whether they were white overseers or Negro slaves, the witnesses would not be able to work for long periods. Moreover, assemblymen charged such a lenient slave code would discourage loyalist slave-owning planters from immigrating into the province and might prod those already in the colony to leave.[34]

But members of the council were also slave owners, and it is confusing to explain their stance. Few possessed more Negroes than John Moultrie, president of the council and master of Bella Vista on the Matanzas River. The Reverend John Forbes, councilman since 1765, owned fifty-nine slaves, and councilmen Henry Yonge, James Hume, and John Holmes each owned considerably more.[35] All of them would be equally inconvenienced and would suffer financially if slave trials were conducted in St. Augustine. Thomas Brown, colonel of the East Florida Rangers and a slave-owning refugee who joined the council in 1778, might have been the one who suggested that a lenient slave code would help make blacks in his rangers and in the provincial militia more reliable.

There are a number of possible motives to justify the council's action. When the council criticized the assembly's slave code and charged that swift executions and the possible use of torture

34. East Florida assembly minutes, July 25, 1781, CO 5/572; East Florida council minutes, July 27, 1781, CO 5/572.
35. Memorial of John Murray in behalf of Dorothy Forbes, London, December 15, 1786, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Treasury 77/6. The totals of Yonge's, Hume's, and Holmes's slaves are based primarily but not exclusively on documents in Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, II.

gregation typical and were most East Florida blacks if not Baptists at least Christians? This again raises the fundamental issue of language and culture. Were East Florida blacks essentially transplanted Africans or acculturated Americans?

East Florida's Negro population spurted at the end of the Revolution after Britain evacuated Charleston and Savannah. In 1782 and 1783 ships laden with 100 to 300 Negroes each brought approximately 8,300 blacks into the province, a figure almost three times larger than the entire pre-war population, black and white combined.[41] The status of many of these blacks in East Florida was confused, though there was no doubt about their condition as far as South Carolina and Georgia Whig plantation owners were concerned. They charged that the departing British had spirited away thousands of Whig-owned slaves in violation of the peace treaty and basic justice. But it was not that simple, because British commanders had promised freedom to southern blacks who deserted their rebel masters and came into British lines to serve George III.[42] Thousands who had accepted the British offer regarded themselves as free and assumed they had won their liberty at the same time United States republicans had received theirs. Georgians and South Carolinians visited St. Augustine at the end of the Revolution to recover their property but with little success. East Floridians refused to return hardly any blacks partly as a matter of honor—because many slaves had been promised their freedom—and partly out of spite. Southern Whigs had confiscated large amounts of loyalist property, and East Florida loyalists reciprocated by ensuring that few blacks ever returned to Whig owners.[43]

The 1783 peace treaty stipulated that East Florida must be handed over to Spain, and this brought to the forefront the future of East Florida's 11,000 blacks. A majority left, and one can follow the broad pattern of the evacuation. The largest single group went to the neighboring Bahama Islands. Benjamin West, an American expatriate artist in London, painted the *Reception*

41. Mowat, *East Florida*, 137.
42. Alexander Leslie to Carleton, Charleston, June 27, 1782, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Sir Guy Carleton (Dorchester) Papers, 4916, microfilm copies in Robert Manning Strozier Library, Florida State University, Tallahassee.
43. James Clitherall to John Cruden, St. Augustine, May 25, 1783, *ibid.*, 7766.

of the American Loyalists by Great Britain in 1783.[44] Some of his figures were black, and it is safe to assume that at least a few East Florida Negroes ended up in the mother country. Whatever their previous status, they were definitely free after reaching Britain because of Parliament's abolition of slavery in 1772. That Florida masters could not retire with their slave property to the mother country's free soil posed a dilemma for some white loyalists. Other blacks, as slaves, freemen, and indentured servants, went to Nova Scotia, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and the Mosquito Shore in Central America.[45] At least some East Florida blacks who were sailors spent years at sea with no place to call home. A considerable number of Negroes and whites remained in East Florida after the Spaniards returned in 1784. John Leslie and Francis Philip Fatio both stayed, cooperated with the Spaniards, and employed blacks in their St. Augustine houses, on their plantations, and in their trading stores. An undetermined number of blacks fled into the Indian country—sometimes on the same day their surprised white masters sailed away—and the percentage of black "Seminoles" increased in the wake of the Revolution.[46] The fate of St. Augustine's black Baptist minister is unknown, though one might speculate that he moved to Jamaica or the Bahamas like Baptist ministers George Liele and Brother Amos who evacuated Georgia.[47]

One can hope that in the Bahamas, in musty attics or in public archives, papers have been preserved which will illuminate the black experience in British East Florida. Perhaps buried in some Scottish castle or manor house are plantation records and personal correspondence which will better disclose the rhythm of life on an East Florida plantation and tell more about the culture of East Florida blacks. The potential of oral history cannot be overlooked. Among black "Indians" in Florida and Oklahoma, black Bahamians, blacks in Nova Scotia (or Sierra Leone where many subsequently moved), or in black communities in scattered

44. Hugh E. Egerton, ed., *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of American Loyalists 1783-1785* (Oxford, 1915), reproduces this picture in the frontispiece.
45. The standard account of the loyalist evacuation of East Florida is Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, I, 137-79.
46. Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War, 1817-1818," 251-52.
47. "An account of Several Baptist Churches, Consisting Chiefly of Negro Slaves: Particularly of One at Kingston, in Jamaica: and Another at Savannah in Georgia," *Journal of Negro History*, I (January 1916), 70-73.

port cities there may be oral accounts of how their ancestors labored and fought for George III in East Florida.[48] From widely scattered written sources, oral traditions, linguistic studies, and archeological investigations scholars in time may discover more about those Floridians who during the American Revolution comprised a majority of the population. Whenever the story of blacks in British East Florida is fully told—and of Spanish Florida as well—it is likely to be an interesting one that will illuminate not only the history of colonial Florida but of the entire Southeast.

48. Alex Haley is an example of a writer who has utilized oral tradition in his unique forthcoming work, *Roots*.

Alcan Highway vets celebrate anniversary

Blacks who helped build 1,522-mile link recognized

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE — Representatives of the nearly 3,700 black soldiers who 50 years ago helped build the road that links Alaska to the rest of the country got their first taste of recognition Sunday.

The occasion marked the first official celebration of the 50th anniversary of the building of the Alaska Highway, as well as the first tribute paid to the black soldiers who worked on the project.

"It's quite, quite thrilling," Irving R. Smith of Philadelphia, one of the 13 vets on hand, said of the weekend reunion at Florida A&M University.

Some 10,600 soldiers built the 1,522-mile link across Canada between Alaska and the United States in just eight months during the middle of World War II. About a third were black soldiers who were never mentioned or photographed in the official history of the road, first known as the Alcan Highway.

Lael Morgan, a journalism professor at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, wanted to change that. Since many of the black soldiers came from the South, she turned for assistance to James Eaton, a historian at Florida A&M, the only historically black public university in Florida.

That was in the summer of 1990. Morgan and Eaton found about 70 black veterans who worked in swamps and on mountains building the highway, which Eaton said many have called the greatest engineering feat since the building of the Panama Canal.

"The depressing part about it is some of the fellows who served with us have gone," Smith, 72, said. "Why 50 years? The fellows that have gone — they'll never know anything about this."

Smith, who worked primarily in supplies, said he had three buddies at the reunion. Wesley Davis of Winter Haven was luckier. He knew about half the men at the reunion.

"It was just like seeing a long-lost brother," said Davis, 72. He's been trying for about 10 years to contact some of his old wartime pals from the 95th unit of the Army's Black Corps of Engineers.

"I tell you, the first thing that comes to your mind is the cold," Davis said, laughing.

The Rev. Edward Carroll, 82, a retired United Methodist bishop from Baltimore, had served as an Army chaplain in the 95th. He gave the invocation at Sunday's luncheon, but not before he made a statement of protest over the segregated celebration.

"This should be an opportunity for the United States of America, through its Corps of Engineers, to apologize for the lack of publicity to the more than 34 percent who constructed the building of the road," Carroll said.



Associated Press

Wesley Davis, 72, left, swaps war stories with fellow members of the Black Corps of Engineers Sunday in Tallahassee during the group's two-day reunion on the 50th anniversary of construction of the Alaska Highway — formerly called the Alcan Highway.

AROUND THE STATE

Martin Luther King followers fear agenda is fading

Associated Press

Floridians who worked with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said Monday that if he were here to celebrate his 63rd birthday, he would be dismayed with the current state of affairs and with how he is remembered.

In Melbourne, the Rev. Willie Lockett, who followed King during the 1960s, said the slain civil rights leader would urge Americans to take meaningful action.

"He would further tell America that it could create jobs," Lockett said. "And he would say, if you want to march in my name, march on Tallahassee and march on Washington and demand some solutions."

But Lockett, 60, does not see much civil-rights marching on the day set aside to honor King. He sees instead picnics, a day off.

"Sadly, that is what you will find from many black students today. Their assessment would be: 'Dr. King invented civil rights and school is closed.' Period.

"I know that you would hear that from too many students. And it saddens me. Dr. King's dream is on the back burner and the emphasis is on words instead of ideals."

> *"I know that you would hear that from too many students. And it saddens me. Dr. King's dream is on the back burner and the emphasis is on words instead of ideals."*
>
> **The Rev. Willie Lockett**

In the Tampa Bay area, parades, speeches, concerts, a jazz fest and a fish fry marked the day.

"We are living the dream," read a placard carried by a parade-goer in Clearwater.

Nearly 1,000 people attended the Tampa Organization of Black Affairs annual leadership breakfast at the Tampa Convention Center.

In Gainesville, Gov. Lawton Chiles said he was re-establishing the Martin Luther King Commemorative Commission, a panel he said was started by U.S. Sen. Bob Graham when he was Florida governor but disbanded by former Gov. Bob Martinez.

Chiles also talked about what the state could do to further King's aims.

"It's important to follow the spirit of the law concerning equal representation in state hiring," Chiles said.

"I think we're taking a lot of steps through our appointments to the judicial nominating commissions," the governor added, noting that 26 of his 27 appointments to those panels had been minorities.

Chiles was joined by Graham and Education Commissioner Betty Castor at a rally at the Uni-

Museum recalls the violence of the black struggle

By GREGG JONES
of the Dallas Morning News

MILWAUKEE — More than 60 summers have come and gone, but James Cameron still recalls with chilling clarity that terrible August evening in 1930.

The screams of the lynch mob. The crunching blows of crowbars and pick handles. The rough feel of the rope jerked tightly around his neck. The swarm of bloodthirsty faces. The specter of death.

Two black teen-agers died that August evening in Marion, Ind., hanged by a racist rabble — the last reported lynchings north of the Mason-Dixon line. Cameron lived, spared by an act of providence.

But he can never forget.

Now a 77-year-old great-grandfather, Cameron has devoted the latter years of his life to ensuring that others never forget the injustices suffered by black Americans. He is the founder and proprietor of America's Black Holocaust Museum — a discomfiting, if eclectic, collection of books, photographs, posters and other items recalling the most tragic aspects of the African-American experience in this country.

"This is important because people should know what has happened to them," says Cameron, a congenial man with white hair and a folksy manner. "When the slave traders brought us over here (from Africa), they took away everything from us — our customs, our religion, our language, even our names. We did have a holocaust here. Never again. That's my hope."

Museums and institutes commemorating the civil rights movement have opened in a number of cities in recent years, in places such as Birmingham and Montgomery, Ala., and Memphis, Tenn. But Cameron's museum is apparently the only museum focusing almost entirely on the violence directed at African-Americans in this country.

'A great deal of pain'

"We always hear about the Jewish Holocaust. But we have a tendency to forget the extent of the violence committed against African-Americans in this country," says Gail R. Hansberry, director of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History in Washington. "The important thing for me and others is to recognize the violence that took place. There was a great deal of pain and suffering and dedication to get to where we are today."

The museum is the realization of a dream for Cameron, a retired heating and air-conditioning engineer. By his own admission, it is a "mom-and-pop operation," scattered about a dimly lighted former tavern in a crime-ridden neighborhood of Milwaukee's North Side. The exhibits are disorganized and sometimes inelegant, but the effect is powerful.

The city of Milwaukee recently offered Cameron the rent-free use of an abandoned building as a permanent home for the museum — if he can raise the more than $50,000 needed to bring the building up to safety code standards.

"Lynchings haven't stopped in America," Cameron says. "They're merely different in their shape, form and fashion. If history were taught the way it should be, I don't think there would be as much racial friction in this country as there is today."

Throughout the building are gruesome photographs of lynchings, some blown up as huge posters. There are signs recalling the era of Jim Crow laws and segregation: For rent to colored. Colored Only. White Only. Colored seat in rear. We serve colored carry out only.

Cameron says he got the inspiration for a museum depicting the oppression of African-Americans during a visit to the Jewish Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem in 1979.

Cameron still looks back to that evening in 1930 as the defining moment in his life.

He was born in LaCrosse, Wis., in 1914, the son of a traveling barber, and the family later moved to Indiana. There, as Cameron recalls it, he "fell in with the wrong crowd."

On the night of Aug. 6, 1930, he and two friends — 19-year-old Abram Smith and 18-year-old Tony Shipp — headed to a lovers' lane outside Marion, Ind., to pull a robbery. At the last minute, Cameron lost his nerve and left for home. He hadn't gone far when he heard gunshots.

Later that night, the police arrested him and charged him as an accomplice in the murder of a white man and the rape of his girlfriend during the botched robbery.

A hotbed of Klan activity

Indiana was a hotbed of Ku Klux Klan activity at the time. Passions were running high the following day. That evening, a mob estimated at more than 10,000 people converged on the Marion jail. They dragged Smith and Shipp from their cells and hanged them from an elm tree on the courthouse square. The frenzied mob returned for Cameron, beating him badly before fitting a noose around his neck.

There are conflicting accounts of what happened next: Cameron says he begged God for forgiveness, and a booming voice commanded: "Take this boy back. He had nothing to do with any raping or killing."

Press accounts reported variously that a deputy sheriff, or a relative of one of the victims, persuaded the crowd to spare the 16-year-old boy. Whatever occurred, James Cameron lived.

While serving a five-year jail term, Cameron began a lifetime of scholarship and self-improvement. After his release, he attended evening classes at a technical school in Detroit, learned foundry and machinist skills and how to read blueprints. He took classes in shorthand, typing and accounting.

He worked as a waiter, truck driver, construction worker, drugstore clerk, salesman, janitor, shoeshine boy, ditch digger, rug cleaner and junkman. In later years, he earned a heating and air-conditioning engineer's license and went to work for a Milwaukee shopping center.

"I did everything I could to keep from stealing," Cameron says. "There was no way I was going back to prison."



Anna Murray fell in love with a slave and financed his freedom. She married the man — famed orator Frederick Douglass — and together they helped slaves escape to freedom through the Underground Railroad.

Black women of distinction

A weighty book details three centuries of dynamic black women, from a poet to an astronaut.

By SUZIE SIEGEL
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA

Jessie Carney Smith has made 500 new friends.

"I feel like I know all of them," says Smith, who edited their biographies for "Notable Black American Women." The 1,334 pages blanket three centuries, from a poetry-writing slave to the nation's first black female astronaut.

The book's size shocks some people.

"They say, 'You mean there were 500 notable black women?' I say, 'That's just a start.' "

Smith, who has been a librarian and professor at Fisk University in Nashville for 27 years, knows of no other tome with so many biographies of black women.

Books on women often give short shrift to blacks, she says, and books on blacks often leave out women. As an example, she cites the black classic "Men of

Notables, famous and obscure

By SUZIE SIEGEL
Tribune Staff Writer


Grimke


Reagon

TAMPA — In addition to famous names such as Harriet Tubman and Oprah Winfrey, "Notable Black American Women" includes those that are not widely known. Here's a sample from the book:

■ Lucy Terry Prince was born in 1730 in West Africa, where she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. In the United States, she married a free man who bought her freedom. She wrote poetry and spoke against discrimination.

■ Charlotte L. Forten Grimke kept journals that shed light on 19th century life. She loved to read, consuming up to 100 books a year. She was born into a wealthy family of abolitionists and feminists. Poet John Greenleaf Whittier wrote "To the Daughters of James Forten" about her mother and aunts.

Grimke attended integrated public schools in Salem, Mass. After the Civil War, she was among the first black teachers to head south to teach former slaves.

■ Mary Fields was born a slave around 1832. "She chose to honor herself whenever she wished" because she didn't know her actual birth date.

She became a stagecoach driver in her 60s, carrying mail and supplies in Montana. She was the only woman allowed to drink and smoke cigars in the saloons of Cascade, where she lived.

■ Annie Turnbo Malone became the nation's first black female millionaire with her hair products. Some credit her with inventing the pressing iron and comb. Her assets were reported at $14 million in the 1920s. Another black millionaire, Madame C.J. Walker, was one of her protegees.

■ Effie Lee Newsome, who died in 1979, was a writer, illustrator and librarian. She wrote primarily for children, and her work celebrates the beauty of nature.

■ Camille Nickerson, who died in 1982, was a piano prodigy who collected and preserved old Creole songs as well as publishing her own. She taught music at Howard University.

■ Bernice J. Reagon organized the popular folk group, Sweet Honey in the Rock.

She earned a doctorate from Howard in the songs of the civil rights movement. She worked for years as a cultural historian at the Smithsonian Institution before being promoted to curator of the National Museum of American History. She helped bring black studies into the mainstream.

■ Jewell Plummer Cobb, a biologist, has done pioneering research on drugs used to treat cancer. She has pushed for schools to give girls more encouragement in science.

■ Mae C. Jemison, a physician and the first black female astronaut, is scheduled for a shuttle flight this summer.

Mark," which lists women only in the appendix.

She recalls a newspaper interview with a minister last month.

"He was saying our youth need to know our black leaders, and he cited men only." She says she knows he didn't mean to slight women. "It's instilled in us to think male."

Some people still stereotype black women as maids or singers. But the book finds them in almost every endeavor, from stagecoach driver to cancer researcher. Educators predominate by far, their names marching down 3½ columns of the index.

"It was easier for a black woman to be employed in that field," Smith explains.


Jessie Carney Smith edited "Notable Black American Women."

Forgotten wives

Each biography brought insight, she says. She says the one on Addie W. Hunton illustrates how women did not always get the credit they deserved. Hunton edited a small newspaper at the turn of the century but had to put a man's name on the masthead.

Smith relished personal details, such as the love letters of Booker T. Washington, who co-founded Tuskegee Institute.

"You wouldn't think he had time for love. But I guess he did. He had three wives."

Washington buried two, but the third outlived him. The book includes his second and third wives, educators Olivia Davidson and Margaret Murray.

Smith wishes she could have met many of the women. She muses on Maggie L. Walker, who founded a weekly journal and became the first female bank president.

"She must have been a delightful woman. It comes through in her photograph."

Research was difficult sometimes when women changed names after marriage.

"We often had to go to the husband's biography to get details," she says.

Take Anna Murray. A free woman, she fell in love with Frederick Douglass and financed his escape from slavery. The couple tended more than 400 runaway slaves in the Underground Railroad. Smith contends the wife did most of the conducting because her renowned husband was so often out of town.

She feared a white woman would wind up in the book by mistake. Sure enough, someone called to say

See BOOK, Page 2

Tampa's oldest black nurse recalls career

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Columnist

TAMPA — Mary T. Cash displays a nursing school diploma on her apartment wall that carries the date Nov. 16, 1916.

Another framed certificate verifies her status as Florida's oldest black registered nurse.

Her journey to achieve that certificate was long and not assured.

She came to Tampa in 1906 as an only child with her mother from Ocala.

"They had railroad excursions then for $3 a round trip," she said. "Mama had a sister who lived here, and Aunt Maria told Mama she could get work here."

So, "that's how we got here."

Although she said that "nursing is all I've ever done," her start toward that calling was somewhat indirect.

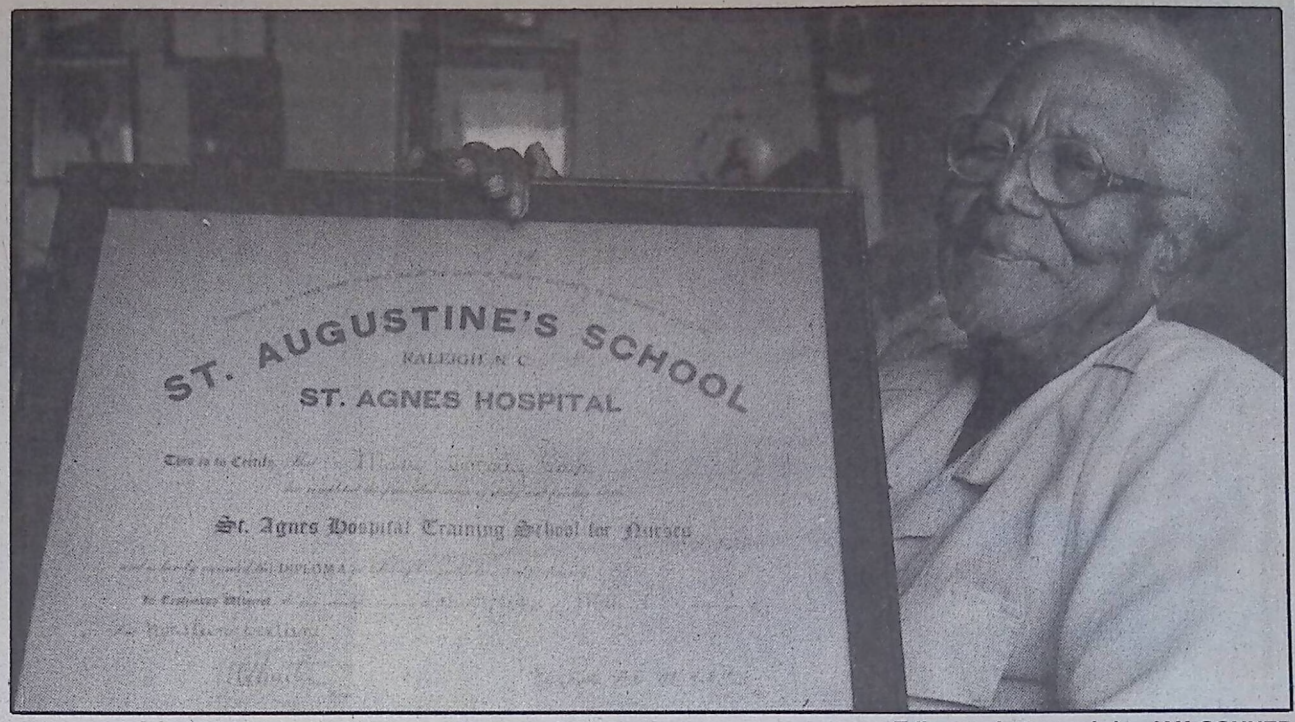
She worked as an "office girl" for a Tampa doctor, M.R. Winton, tidying up, answering the telephone, "things like that."

A patient of Winton's suggested to him one day that Mary Cash ought to get her nursing degree. He asked what she thought, and she wasn't sure at first.

"I was comfortable, working for $5 a week," she said.

But Winton wrote her application for a nursing school in Raleigh, N.C., and she rode the train for the second time. When she came back with her degree, Winton "gave me my first job," she said.

"That man had brains. If he looked at you and felt your abdomen, you knew he would do the right thing. He never charged a Negro over $50 for an operation, and a lot he didn't charge anything."



Tribune photograph by JAY CONNER

Mary T. Cash displays a diploma verifying her status as Florida's oldest black registered nurse.

Mrs. Cash still stores in her closet a wooden stool once used by the small-statured surgeon to reach high operating tables. She hopes to give it to a member of his family.

Along the way, she spent about four years working as the city of Tampa's school nurse and truant officer for black schools.

That brought her into frequent contact with Christina Meacham, Tampa's first black woman principal.

She also worked with Clara Frye, the woman who started the city's first hospital for black patients in her own home.

And she went on to become nursing supervisor at the municipally operated Clara Frye Hospital in West Tampa.

"I supervised the whole place," she said. "I had a station at the south wing so I could see out the back door for ambulances coming in."

She added: "The paper said I worked there 25 years."

Of her marriage, she said simply, "I married Mr. Cash. He lived two years. I let that be water under the dam."

Yet Mary T. Cash says, "I have a wonderful family." She's referring to a son and a daughter she considers her own. "They take good care of me."

They are Curtis Randolph, who has a doctorate in education and is principal of a school in Jacksonville, and Mrs. Patricia Doby, a nurse in a Tampa hospital.

Mrs. Cash is an active member of New Salem Missionary Baptist Church.

She said that she tries to help other residents in her apartment building with nursing advice, even though she's officially retired.

"I want my best days to be helpful days," she said.

3/26/90

Preserving a heritage

Historians aim to save black treasures

Though more than 200 black cultural centers and history museums across the country have been established to safeguard African-American history, the number of preserved original sites of homes and events important in black history is dwindling.

What is the best way to save those sites that are left? And how can we make sense of the fragmentary historical record?

Those questions will be on the agenda when several hundred members of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History meet in Chicago for their 75th annual conference Oct. 24-28.

Explanations for the disappearance of historical sites vary, says Thomas Battle, who directs a research center at Howard University in Washington, D.C. "I think many of the homes are just sold or continue to be used by families as residences. Another reason is a lack of recognition and appreciation for the importance of historic residences and artifacts."

Among the best-preserved sites (most are found in the South and the Midwest):

Indianapolis

Madame Walker Urban Life Center

This historic landmark originally housed the offices of Madame C.J. Walker's cosmetics company and beauty school. The ballroom and the boardroom have been renovated, and the theater has been restored. *617 Indiana Ave., Indianapolis, Ind. 46202. By appointment only. Adults, $2; children, $1. 317-236-2099.*

Columbia, S.C.

Mann-Simons Cottage: Museum of African-American Culture

Celia Mann was a slave who bought her freedom in Charleston, then walked 180 miles to Columbia, where she purchased this property. The midwife and seamstress had four daughters, one of whom married a Simons. The house stayed in the family for a century. Though it was slated for demolition, the local historical association bought it and turned it into a museum that includes family and period pieces, African exhibits and a gift shop. *1403 Richland St., Columbia, S.C. 29201. Open 10:15 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Adults, $3; students, $1.50. 803-252-1450/1770.*

Dayton, Ohio

Paul Lawrence Dunbar Historical Site

The birthplace of Dunbar, a poet, holds personal belongings such as books and his prized Remington typewriter, on which he produced all his manuscripts. *219 Summit St., Dayton, Ohio 45407. Open Labor Day-Oct. 31, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday; Dec. 1-Memorial Day by appointment only; Memorial Day-Labor Day, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Adults, $2.50; ages 6-12, $1; discount for senior citizens and groups. 513-224-7061.*

Atlanta

Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District

This neighborhood includes the birthplace, church and grave of the slain civil rights leader. The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change houses furnishings and personal belongings, manuscripts and commemorative artwork. *Historic site: 522 Auburn Ave. N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30312. Free. Open 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. daily. 404-331-5190. King Center: 449 Auburn Ave. N.E. Free. Open 9 a.m.-8 p.m. daily. 404-524-1956.*

Washington, D.C.

Frederick Douglass National Historic Site

The journalist and statesman, who was born in Maryland, spent the last 17 years of his life in this house. It contains furnishings, documents and other personal items, including more than 1,500 books. *1411 W St. S.E., Washington, D.C. 20020. Hours: Oct. 15-April 15, 8:45 a.m.-4:15 p.m.; April 16-Oct. 14, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Free. Large groups must reserve. 202-426-5961.*

By Leslie Ansley

Coincidence? Then what about this? This year "Henry V" is a royal contender

See OSCAR, Page 6F

3/26/90

Top judge fought bias, tradition

By BENTLEY ORRICK
Tribune Staff Writer

It has been a long fight for Leander Shaw, who will become the first black to head a branch of state government in Florida.

TAMPA — Once upon a time, in the dark ages not so long ago when Jim Crow was still the rule in the South, a not-so-experienced black lawyer ran up against a problem not so far away in St. Augustine.

The lawyer was at the courthouse trying to get 50 or 60 young civil-rights demonstrators released from the jail.

There weren't but a handful of black lawyers in Florida then. And the clerk at the courthouse wasn't about to take any papers from a black man unless the judge gave permission.

The clerk disappeared to check with the judge. Ambled back. Nope.

Can't even file any papers? the lawyer asked in disbelief. How can a lawyer do his work without access to the courts?

Well, you can't. But that's just too bad. The clerk shrugged, and slammed shut the window.

It was getting on in the afternoon. The lawyer already had been given some "friendly" warnings that it wouldn't be too healthy to be on the road back to Jacksonville after dark.

He had to do something. But what?

He had an idea. It wasn't in the law books he had studied. But it was a last shot at doing something for the song-singing kids in the jail.

He fished out some change and placed a call to the Florida Supreme Court in Tallahassee.

Right away, to his surprise, he got one of the seven justices on the line. He explained his problem.

Well, said the justice, I can't give you any advice. That's sure to be a case we end up with eventually, and I can't be prejudging it or favoring one side over the other.

But I might just be able to make a telephone call. So I can suggest to you that you wait a quarter of an hour, and then go back around to the courthouse to see if there hasn't been a change of attitude about letting you file your papers.

When Leander J. Shaw Jr., attorney at law, checked back in with the clerk, it was a different story.

Mr. Shaw, the judge would be glad to accept your filing.

Makes it to the top

That courthouse door in St. Augustine is open to everyone now. And the man who once was turned away isn't just an unknown black lawyer anymore.

He is a veteran justice of the highest court in Florida, and July 1 he will become chief justice in a traditional rotation of that post among the justices.

That will make him head of the court system in Florida; head of the judicial branch that, with the executive, headed by the governor, and the legislative, headed by the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate, is one of the three co-equal branches of state government.

It will be the first time since Florida became the 27th state in 1845 that a black has headed a branch of state government.

But Shaw's tenure will be brief if abortion foes have their way.

Shaw was appointed to the state's highest court by Gov. Bob Graham in 1983. He was confirmed by the voters for a six-year term in 1984.

Now he is up for reconfirmation in a merit-retention election in which the voters have no alternate candidate but do have the option of voting yes or no on his continuance in office for another six years.

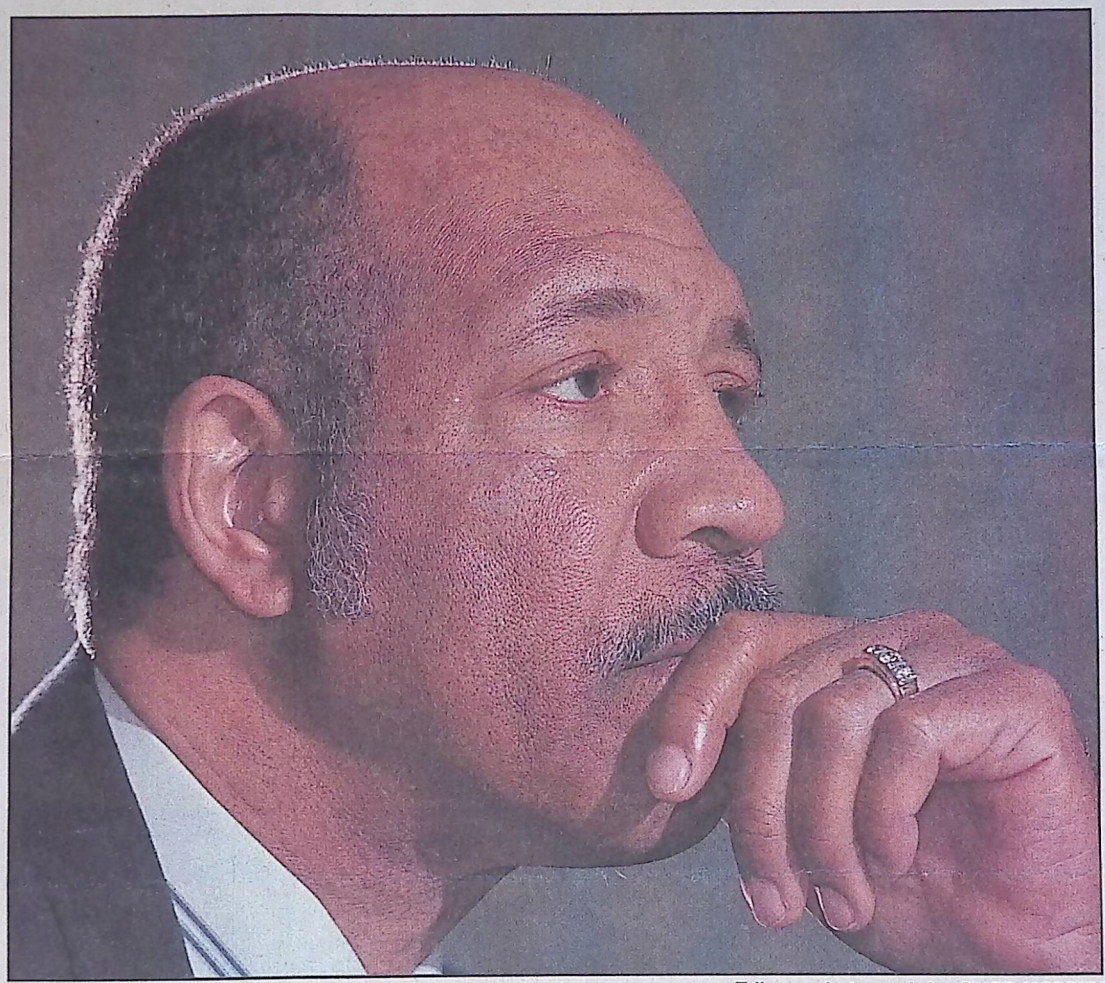
Shaw will be running on his record. And one tiny part of that record has raised the ire of abortion foes, one case among thousands that stream into the court each year.

Shaw was assigned the case by random draw and ended up writing the majority opinion.

Nothing unusual about that, except it was the case that struck down the Florida Legislature's 1988 parental-consent abortion law.

That law had required unmarried girls under 18 to get the written consent of a parent or guardian before she could get an abortion, unless she could convince a judge that she was mature enough to decide the issue on her own.

See JUDGE'S, Page 2F



Tribune photograph by CLIFF MCBRIDE

Leander J. Shaw Jr. will become Florida's chief justice in July.

New chief justice: 'A certain legal agility'

Name: Leander J. Shaw Jr.
Profession: Justice of the Florida Supreme Court; becomes chief justice in July
Salary: $97,518
Born: Salem, Va., Sept. 6, 1930
Family: Lives with wife Vidya and youngest of five children on Lake Iamonia near Tallahassee.
Education: High school in Virginia, undergraduate degree from West Virginia State College, law degree from Washington D.C.'s Howard University.
Career: After teaching with father at Florida A&M, became a public defender and then a prosecutor in Jacksonville. Became first black to run for a judgeship since reconstruction in 1972. Lost. Private practice until picked as workmen's compensation judge in 1974 and then appeals court in 1979. Appointed to Supreme Court in 1983.

Florida's Endangered Black History

2/10/89 – Tribune

By CANTER BROWN, JR.

Those of us who call the Tampa Bay area home can look back with fascination and respect upon the lives of the men and women who pioneered this land. Our heritage is rich, and its depths barely have begun to be explored, much less preserved.

Picture yourself, for example, in the wilderness along the Caloosahatchee River in mid-summer 1839. A truce has been agreed to with the Seminoles who, at the time, had been engaged in fighting the Second Seminole War for almost four years. A store is to be established deep in Indian territory, and a small detachment has been posted to the river to build it. Among the party is their guide, Sampson Forrester.

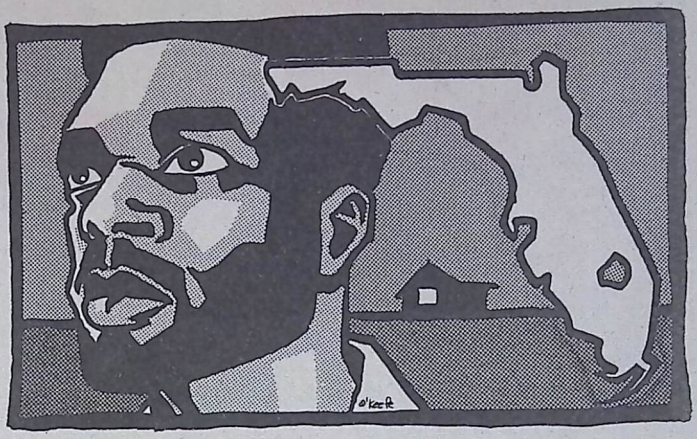
The night of July 23 is a stifling one, the mid-summer heat relieved only by an occasional Gulf breeze finding its way up the river. Across the Caloosahatchee a large party of Seminoles gathers for a dance. Fires are lit, rum is passed, and, as the hours slip away, the rhythm and intensity of the chants echoes into the lulled Army camp. Secure in his tent, Sampson Forrester falls asleep.

"Just at the break of day on the following morning," Forrester later recalled, "I heard the yell of Indians and discharge of rifles, and as I ran out, I found they were all around us. As I ran for the river, several rifles were discharged at me, a ball struck my leg, which threw me down, when the Indians brought me back to the store.

"The carpenter and the Negro interpreter Sandy were allowed to live four days. They then tied them to a pine tree and inserted in their flesh slivers of light wood, setting them on fire, and at the same time placing torches at their feet. In this way it was five or six hours before they died."

Eighteen men either were killed or captured that morning. Most of the captured eventually were put to death, although Sampson Forrester escaped to live almost another half century in the Tampa Bay area. A visitor to his Lake Thonotosassa farm in 1882 described him.

"Although over 99 years old," the man wrote, "Forrester preserves an elastic step, an erect carriage, and a remarkable memory in which is stored up many a chapter of the unwritten history of Florida which ought not to be allowed to die with him. A fluent talker, rich in original expression, accent partaking more of the Spanish or Italian (both of which languages he speaks fluently), it is a pleasure to listen to his account of his remarkable life, and the animation which lights up his features as an old man lives over in imagination the incidents of his early days and carries with it the conviction of truth."



Tribune Art by DAVID O'KEEFE

Contemporaries of Forrester as South Florida pioneers, and at times his neighbors, were Mills Holloman and Royal Read.

Holloman moved to old Hernando County in the early 1840s as a settler under the Armed Occupation Act. Denied the land to which he was entitled, he made his way to Simmons Hammock in Hillsborough where he established himself as a respected farmer. After the Civil War he came to prominence as a political leader, eventually serving as one of Hillsborough's county commissioners.

While Holloman was farming at Simmons Hammock during the war years, Read was attempting to survive on a plantation near Bartow. Virginia-born, he had come to the area in an ox-drawn wagon in 1862. Penniless at the end of hostilities, he married Harriet Varn in Polk County and worked to establish a family, but in the early 1870s vigilante violence drove him to Thonotosassa. Within 10 years he possessed an 80-acre

Please See BLACK Page 5

Canter Brown, Jr., is author of "The River of Peace," to be published by University Presses of Florida next year.

Blacks

From Page 1

farm, his children were receiving a good education at a school he helped build, and Reed, himself, was described as "well-to-do."

The experiences of these pioneers were by no means unique. They were repeated countless times in the lives of such individuals as Civil War blockade runner Thomas Valentine; Third Seminole War fighter Jim Seward; "Aunt" Fortune, for whom Tampa's Fortune Street was named; Hillsborough County reconstruction leader James H. Roberts; Manatee County voter registrar John Lomans and his Polk County counterpart, Stepney Dixon, Tampa policeman Levin Armwood; Fort Meade's enterprising businessman Paul Young; religious leaders such as the Reverend C.H. Wright; early educator Ellen Dixon; Punta Gorda postmaster Robert Meacham; South Florida cattlemen Sam, Corrie, and Lloyd Davis, and many, many others.

All of these men and women had at least two things in common. They lived in the greater Tampa Bay area in the 19th century and, perhaps surprisingly to most, they all were blacks.

"What?" you say. "I didn't know there were blacks down here way back then." Well, I can promise that you are not alone.

More than four years ago I began research on the settlement of Southwest Florida (particularly the Peace River Valley) in the 1800s. When I began I was told time and again that the role of slaves and freedmen in South Florida was minimal and that, of the few blacks present, little or no information remained. While I believe those opinions were given honestly, nonetheless they were dead wrong.

From the early 1810s until 1821 a substantial plantation was operated by blacks for blacks at Sarasota. Major incidents leading to the outbreak of the Second Seminole War in December 1835 were led by the black warrior chief, Harry, who lived just north of Bartow. Black slaves pioneered the Hernando, Hillsborough, Polk and Manatee frontiers. As freedmen, these individuals established churches and schools and, over time, cultivated prosperous farms and groves. Black workers built the railroads and, in great part, constituted the backbone of the early phosphate industry. They roamed the ranges as cowhunters, they suffered from vigilante violence.

In short, black men and women were deeply and intimately involved in the history of the Tampa Bay area. And, the story of these men and women, though difficult to come by, does not have to be lost to ourselves or to future generations.

As a beginning, many easily available informational sources contain valuable materials: census records, county tax lists, deed records, voter registration lists, and rosters of appointments to public office to name but a few. Particularly important are marriage records from the immediate post-Civil War period when newly freed slaves were forced by the state law to solemnize their relationships, a right theretofore denied them.

Newspaper files offer immense possibilities for black historical research, both as they relate to contemporary events and to historical ones, in the latter case D.B. McKay's "Pioneer Florida" page of the Tribune being a good example. The Work Projects Administration during the Great Depression of the 1930s collected much information on black history and black churches, data and narratives which remain available in Florida.

Hillsborough County at one time even boasted a "Colored Historical Society," the files of which, if still in existence, no doubt would prove a treasure trove of information. Likewise, the descendants of black pioneers remain a rich repository of historical and family materials. Sadly, a source who proved invaluable to my research, Vernice Williams of Fort Meade, passed away just last month.

Hillsborough County at present is contemplating the construction of a new county historical museum. That effort offers a perfect opportunity for the initiation of a properly organized effort to identify, preserve, and illustrate the important contributions of black men and women to the settlement and history of this area.

It is my hope that the museum's proponents, together with the county and city governments, will recognize their opportunity and accept the responsibility it entails. It would be a tragedy if this rich "unwritten history of Florida" were allowed to die, as Sampson Forrester's "remarkable memory" and Vernice Williams' concern and enthusiasm already have been lost to us forever.

2/4/90

DO YOU KNOW THESE FAMOUS AMERICANS?

ONE DAY MY SON CAME HOME WITH A report card containing a D-minus in physics. He offered this explanation: Black people don't do well in science.

When I calmed down, I reminded him that black scientists and inventors have been serving this nation for generations. For example, George Washington Carver saved the soil of the land that had enslaved him by teaching farmers to rotate their cotton crops with peanuts. Elijah McCoy invented a lubricating cup to oil trains in motion. And Garrett Morgan developed a gas mask that saved thousands in World War I. My son got the message. On the next report card he had an A-plus.

I grew up, as he did, ignorant of the *range* of contributions by black Americans. Oh, I cheered Jesse Owens, Joe Louis and Jackie Robinson, and I listened to Nat "King" Cole and Louis Armstrong. There is nothing wrong with running fast and having rhythm—unless that is the *only* perception of the black contribution.

When I read my schoolbooks or went to the movies, I didn't find the black soldiers, cowboys, explorers, entrepreneurs and scholars—the black American heroes and heroines.

Black History Month is an annual reminder of what has been missing from our movie and TV screens and from the pages of our textbooks. Celebrating Black History Month can help us all wipe away ignorance and arrogance until the time comes when all history is one.

Like most of us, I grew up ignorant of the range of contributions made by black American men and women...

How much do you know about the black Americans who made history? Try this quiz. How many can you name? (Not all are pictured.)

1. She was bought for a trifle, but she became a national treasure. Her owners soon discovered that the little African girl was a prodigy who would study Milton and copy his style. George Washington read her poetry. On a visit to England, she was invited to the court of George III and given a copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost* by London's Lord Mayor? She was?

2. At Bunker Hill, John Pitcairn, the British commander, shouted: "Surrender, you rebels! The day is ours!" A black soldier fired his musket. Pitcairn fell dead. Impressed by his marksmanship, his comrades raised a reward for their hero and presented him to General Washington. He was?

3. An unlettered man of uncommon genius, he manufactured one of the first clocks made in America, charted the movement of the stars, worked as a surveyor and helped lay out Washington, D.C., published an almanac and challenged Thomas Jefferson to free his slaves. A member of President Washington's Cabinet said he was living proof that intelligence has nothing to do with race. He was?

4. Trader Jean Baptiste Point Du Sable started a settlement that became Chicago. York, a manservant, helped the Lewis and Clark expedition get along with the Indians. Another trailblazer scouted for John Fremont, rode with Kit Carson and became a chief of the Crow nation. He discovered the pass through the Sierra Nevada mountains that bears his name. Thousands poured through the pass to search for gold in California. The scout was?

...I knew about the athletes and musicians but not about the black explorers inventors, poets, scientists and scholars.

5. With a price on her head, Harriet Tubman carried out 300 slaves on the Underground Railroad. "Liberty or death," she vowed after her own escape from slavery. "If I could not have one, I would have the other, for no man should take me alive." Meanwhile, another former slave woman astounded the nation with her deep voice, fiery intellect and dramatic power. "I felt so tall within," this abolitionist said. "I felt as if the power of the nation was with me." When a heckler dared her to prove she was a woman, this mother of five ripped her blouse to the waist. She was?

6. He reigned as a Shakespearean star for 40 years. He played Othello at London's Covent Garden, gave command performances in Germany and Russia and became the friend of Jenny Lind and Hans Christian Andersen. One night this native New Yorker so startled an audience in St. Petersburg that a young Russian jumped to his feet and cried aloud, "She is innocent, Othello! She is innocent!" A chair bearing the actor's name rests in the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon. He was?

7. They were children of an Irish immigrant and an African slave. One became a priest, earned a Ph.D. at a university in Belgium and in 1874 was appointed the first black president of a major white university. He made Georgetown University a model for Catholic schools. His brother was ordained in Paris and appointed the first black bishop in America. They were?

8. A new folk hero emerged after the Civil War: the cowboy. After winning a roping and shooting contest in South Dakota, Nat Love took the name that became legendary: Deadwood Dick. Another black cowboy, nicknamed the Dusky


Bettmann Archive

A. Philip Randolph


Culver Pictures

Harriet Tubman


Frederic Lewis

James P. Beckwourth


AP/Wide World

Percy Julian


Culver Pictures

Duke Ellington


Culver Pictures

Phillis Wheatley


Historical Pictures Service, Inc.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett


AP/Wide World

Dr. Charles Drew


Historical Pictures Service, Inc.

Jan Matzeliger


Culver Pictures

Matthew Henson

BY WALLACE TERRY

ing a moment. "The Spiegel catalog!" he announced with a flourish. "It had two pages of musical instruments, and I was looking at that every day for a year or more. I wanted to play an instrument. I don't know why, to tell you the truth. When I got 14, I lied about my age and got a job—$6 a month for sweeping out the school in Mount Airy. And I ordered a slide trombone from the catalog: $36. Used. Reconditioned it was called. I had that horn for two months. I didn't know how to read music or play the damn thing."

"At the furniture factory, my dad's foreman knew of a preacher up at the Moravian Church that taught kids how to play horns," Griffith continued. "Well, I took my cousin's bicycle and my trombone and rode up there. This preacher knew valve horns but not much about the slide trombone. But he started working with me, and by the time he left, I knew how to play every horn they had. He talked me into studying voice, and singing too, and soon I was singing solos in every church in that town."

I asked what had dissuaded him from a singing career.

He laughed. "Another preacher. The new preacher, a fine musician, told me I'd never make it as a singer."

Griffith went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1944. He soon joined the university's drama group. He graduated in 1949 and that same year married the drama group's leading student actress, Barbara Edwards. For the next three years, he taught high school and worked up an act where he told comic monologues, played guitar, sang and danced, performing in small clubs and for civic groups.

"Once I was booked to appear before the same group twice," Griffith said. "And I couldn't do the same act for them again, obviously. So while driving the 75 miles from home to the second go-round, I made up a new monologue and called it 'What It Was, Was Football.'"

The monologue was a parody of a Carolina preacher's drawled impressions of his first football game, and it would be the vehicle for Griffith's initial rise to fame. In 1953 Capitol Records signed him and released *What It Was, Was Football*. The record sold more than 800,000 copies, an unheard of amount for a comedy record in the '50s.

What was it, I asked, that had drawn him to comedy?

"Well, now, as a child," he began, "I *hated* being laughed at, and I was laughed at all the time. They'd call me Andy Gump, Amos and Andy. And then, once when I was in the third grade—we had assembly every Friday—and a friend and I were walking along, and one of us said to the other, 'I'll sing if you will.' We agreed that we'd sing. Now I knew one song, 'Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet.'

"When it came our room's turn, I got up to let my friend out, and he didn't move. Now my hair was as white as this chair, but without saying a word, I walked up to the center of that stage and sang 'Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet' two times, the second faster than the first. The auditorium came apart with laughter, and I was dying, *dying*! Then, at a certain point, I discovered that I could *control* why they laughed by doing something overt to make them laugh. I was being laughed at, I hated it, so I made an adjustment to control the situation. All comics learn that. If you don't know how to do that, forget it. Nobody's gonna teach you."



Globe

With his third wife, Cindi, who helped him pull through a bout with a paralyzing illness.

In October 1955, Griffith opened on Broadway as the lead in *No Time for Sergeants* to rave reviews that made him a star overnight. Two years later, he appeared as Lonesome Rhodes in Budd Schulberg's *A Face in the Crowd*, directed by Elia Kazan, generally considered his greatest film performance. It was followed by the movie *No Time for Sergeants*. In 1959 he starred in another Broadway show, *Destry Rides Again*, his first musical comedy. Then, in 1960, *The Andy Griffith Show* made its debut with Griffith starring as the sheriff of rural Mayberry, N.C. The show lasted eight years, and when it went off the air, it was the highest rated program on TV. What followed were three more series, a number of specials, TV movies and, four years ago, the new series, *Matlock*.



Photofest

A sitcom classic, *The Andy Griffith Show*—featuring the down-home, comic but wise sheriff of Mayberry and his son, Opie (movie director-to-be Ron Howard)—ran for eight years.

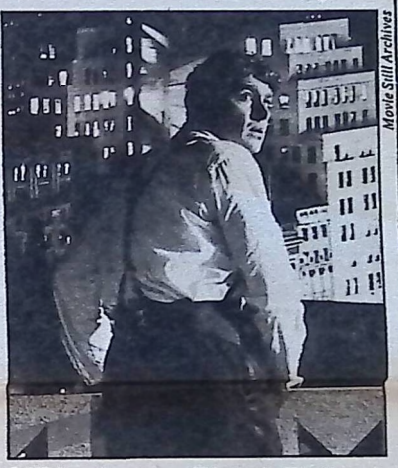
His married life didn't fare as well. In 1972, his first marriage ended in divorce. Three years later, he married Solica Cassuto, and that too ended in divorce, in 1981. Two years after that, he married his present wife, Cindi Knight, now 34. Six weeks later, he woke in bed next to her a very sick man.

"The pain in my legs was terrible, the worst I ever knew," he recalled, wincing. "I was paralyzed." Hospitalized, he was diagnosed as suffering from Guillain-Barre syndrome, a rare neurological disease that can result in paralysis of the legs, face, arms and ultimately the respiratory system. There is no known cure.

"I was too sick to work," Griffith went on, "and I thought I'd never work again. I had atrophied legs, looking about as old as my dad's when he died. It took about seven months of intense physical therapy for me to regain the use of my legs. Cindi really took care of me. I truly don't think I could have done it without her."

After he was released from the hospital, Griffith still had difficulty walking and was forced to wear full-leg braces.

"When I started filming *Matlock*, I wasn't sure I could go without my braces. I was afraid I couldn't. Then one day," Griffith said softly, "I decided to try. To tell the truth, it took some courage. I took them off and made it through the day. Then I did it again, and in a few months time I kept them off for good."



Movie Still Archives

Griffith as Lonesome Rhodes in Elia Kazan's 1957 film *A Face in the Crowd*.

"I was given a gift, and I try to respect it and hone it. I'm a thankful man. I absolutely love what I do. I owe God a lot."

He was quiet a moment. Then he said, "I owe God a lot. Beating that illness and being able to work again. I absolutely love what I do. I was given a gift, and I'm a thankful man, and I try to respect and hone it and work on it, help it and know it. That's how I try to pay the Good Lord back."

Demon, was credited with inventing the rodeo sport of bulldogging. He was?

9. In 1889, lynch law ruled the South. In the next 30 years, more than 2500 blacks were lynched in the U.S. White racists defended the practice as a response to criminals and rapists. In her newspaper, she dared suggest that most stories of black men raping white women were lies. A mob wrecked her office, but she would not quit. She went from town to town, documenting lynching after lynching. She was?

10. Lewis Temple developed a revolutionary harpoon. Jan Matzeliger invented a machine that changed the shoe industry. Norbert Rillieux invented a sugar-refining process. Granville T. Woods patented electrical relay switches. And a former office boy became an associate of Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison. A co-inventor of the carbon filament for an electric light bulb, he was the only black member of the Edison Pioneers. He was?

11. When he went to Greenland, he was told that black people could not survive the cold, but he flourished. He built better sleds and drove as well as the Eskimos. In 1909, in an astounding feat of courage and physical endurance, he and Adm. Robert E. Peary conquered the top of the world. He was?

12. Washington, D.C., produced two great black composers. James Bland left nearly 700 compositions, including "Oh, Dem Golden Slippers" and "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny." The other composer opened the ears of the world to jazz, using his orchestra like a painter's palette. He wrote hundreds of scores, concert compositions and "jazz Masses." More ideas were borrowed from him than any other jazz musician. He was?

13. Dr. Daniel Hale Williams—without wonder drugs, blood transfusions or X-ray machines—performed open-heart surgery in 1893. Dr. Charles Drew pioneered processes for storing blood plasma, thus saving thousands of lives in World War II. And one scientist graduated at the head of his class at DePauw University, earned his Ph.D. at the University of Vienna, discovered an inexpensive way to relieve inflammatory arthritis with cortisone and conducted research in the mass production of sex hormones and drugs used to treat glaucoma. He was?

14. He challenged Presidents for 50 years, from Wilson to Kennedy. FDR and Truman responded to his demands to integrate war industries and the armed forces. When he led the March on Washington in 1963, JFK agreed to join his cause for jobs and justice. Some say the working man, black or white, had no greater friend than this humble organizer of sleeping-car porters. He was?

Answers: **1.** Phillis Wheatley. **2.** Peter Salem. **3.** Benjamin Banneker. **4.** James P. Beckwourth. **5.** Sojourner Truth. **6.** Ira Aldridge. **7.** Patrick & James Healy. **8.** Bill Pickett. **9.** Ida B. Wells-Barnett. **10.** Lewis Latimer. **11.** Matthew Henson. **12.** Duke Ellington. **13.** Percy Julian. **14.** A. Philip Randolph.

Golf tournament . Sumter Scholarship Benefit upcoming in Wildwood..... **Page 4**

Alachua Levy Marion Citrus Sumter

Citrus/Marion

Serving Sumter, Alachua and Levy

The Tampa Tribune, Sunday, April 15, 1990

Blacks' political voice a mere whisper

Church is key ladder for blacks

By DEAN SOLOV
and LYLE McBRIDE
Tribune Staff Writers

OCALA — There's only one way to get Marion County's black community on an even keel politically, socially and economically: enlist the help of the white community, according to the Rev. Eugene Broxton.

And, Broxton said, the most effective way to create a united front to help blacks is through the church.

"It's got to be done through the church," said Broxton, who heads the 26-member, all-black Ministerial Fellowship of Marion County.

"You just don't get anything to go in the black community unless you get it to go through the church," he said.

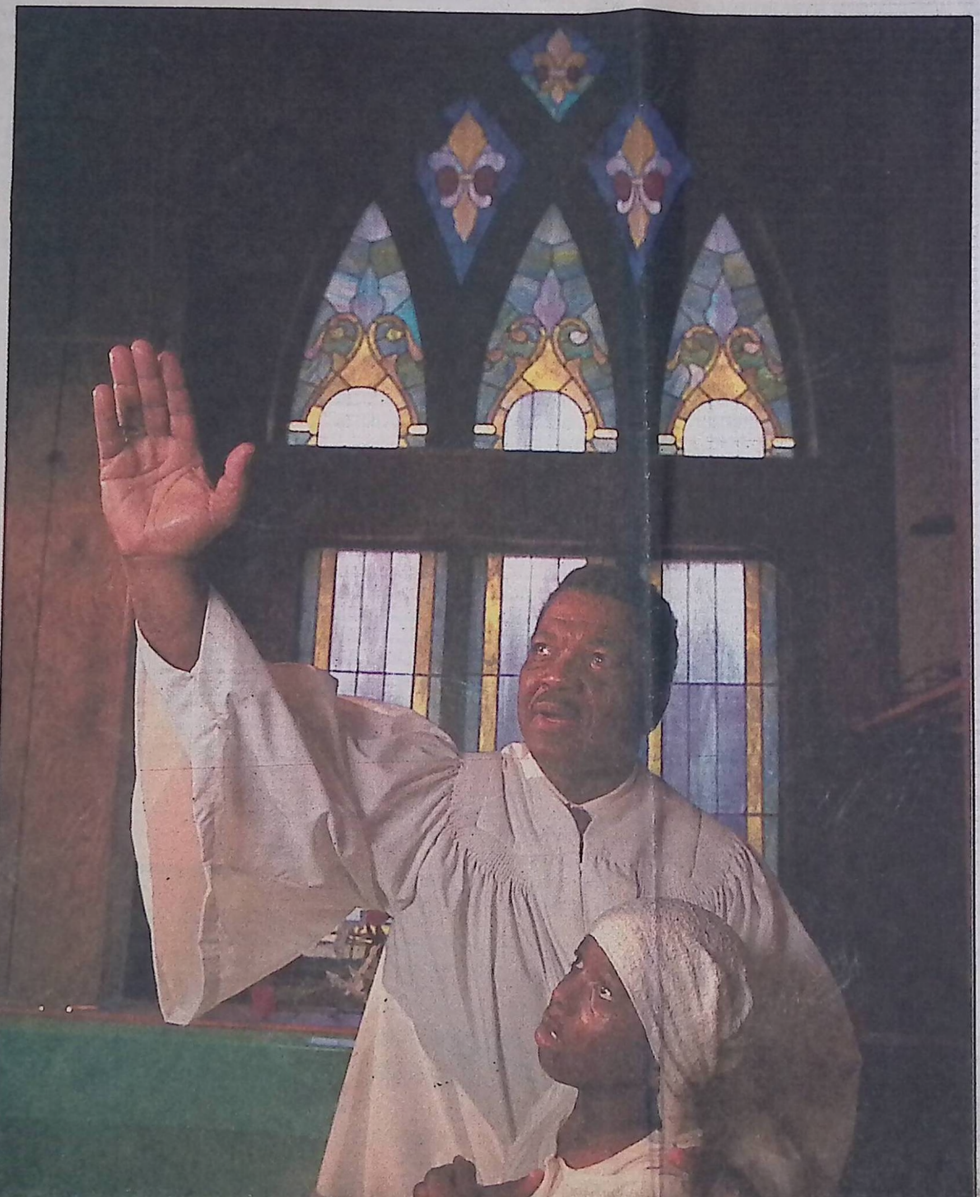
As is the case historically with blacks in America, the church and its leaders are the primary voice for blacks in Marion County.

"They are the main organization that speaks for the black community," said Ocala City Councilman Lorenzo Edwards, pastor of Mount Moriah Baptist Church. The ministers are major political influences in the community, he said.

Former Ocala Mayor Craig Curry said he thinks the church leaders are much more powerful and unified than the NAACP.

The reason for that, Broxton said, is that the ministers are in touch with the people on a continuous basis. "We address more people every Sunday than any other organization," he said.

The strength of the church stems from slavery, said Broxton.



EDITOR'S NOTE: As Citrus, Marion and Sumter counties grow, blacks are not fully sharing in that growth — with just a handful sitting in elected offices and with few becoming successful business people, leaders in the black community say. While progress has been made, much is left to be done to improve poor housing, to bring black voices onto elected boards and commissions and to raise the standard of living for blacks. This is the first of a three-day series of articles on the status of blacks in the area, and it focuses on blacks in politics.

By LYLE McBRIDE
and DEAN SOLOV
Tribune Staff Writers

INVERNESS — For blacks to improve their financial and social standing, they need to have a stronger voice in government, black leaders say.

There are only a handful of black elected officials in Citrus, Marion and Sumter counties. That makes it difficult to attack the problem of poor housing in impoverished black areas or to bring about the kind of economic growth blacks need to help themselves and to improve their educational opportunities.

Real and perceived obstacles stand between blacks and elected office, black leaders say.



BLACKS TODAY
POLITICS

Many blacks who would make good officeholders won't run because they are resigned to the idea that no whites will vote for them, said John Bostick, who is in his 15th year on the Dunnellon City Council.

"They're saying 'I'm black and I don't have a chance against a white candidate,' " said Bostick, who is the first and only black to serve on the council. "We sell ourselves short. We can accomplish anything we want, if we really want it."

There are legitimate reasons for blacks to be tentative about running for office, said Lorenzo Edwards, the second black elected

nomics than with race, Sumter County Commissioner Tom Dixon said.

It's hard to get people who are struggling financially to register and vote, much less to convince them to run for office, he said, and much of the black population in the three areas is poor.

In 1980, when Dixon made his first run for the commission, he discovered that once he had a chance to talk to people about issues, they quickly got over the fact he was black. Though he lost that election by a narrow margin, he won on his second try in 1984.

"If you're willing to pay your dues and work hard and go door-to-door, you're going to be rewarded," he said.

"You have to educate yourself about the issues and have an idea how to address the problems. Seriously, the only trouble we had was leaving one house and going to another. People wanted to keep us there talking all night."

There was still that initial barrier to overcome, Dixon admitted, with whites and blacks seeing him first as black and second as a candidate.

In Marion County, where 15 percent of the population is black, there are no blacks on the School Board or County Commission. The cities of Belleview, Reddick and McIntosh also have no black board members.

Citrus County, where blacks

pastor at New Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Ocala. The black man, he said, "left much of his practices in Africa and he had to conform to a lifestyle that his captors forced on him.

"The only thing that gave him just a semblance of what he was accustomed to in his homeland was the experiences that he got in church," Broxton said.

"It gave him a real sense of belonging. We have a history of accomplishing whatever we got through the church, and it has followed us through the years."

Some feel the black church does not play the same role in Citrus and Sumter counties, where there is no unified black voice.

"Most of our ministers come in on the weekend and they leave within hours," said Frederick Copeland, who has been a leader in Crystal River's black community for decades. "That's not leadership."

Nonetheless, the Rev. Leroy Bellamy, a 76-year-old lifelong resident of the Inverness area, said church leaders have helped race relations in Citrus County.

Broxton said there has been increasing cooperation and dialogue between black and white clergymen in Marion County over the past few years, but he'd like to see some interracial activities between the congregations.

Some white ministers are sincerely interested in bettering race relations and want to help lift up the black community, he said, but the support apparently isn't there from their congregations. "When they go back to their congregations, something happens ... and they seem to drop off," Broxton said.

"I don't believe we're going to accomplish very much until the ministers of west Ocala and east Ocala come together," Broxton said, adding, "A lot can be done from the pulpit."



Tribune photograph by JEFFREY CAMP

Rev. Eugene Broxton baptizes Ladarrell Shields, 8, at the New Zion Church in Ocala. Broxton is the president of the 25-member Ministerial Alliance.

"The numbers are always against us. I can't win with just the black vote. I have to have white support. And, because there are fewer blacks, there are fewer blacks with the ability to raise money to run," Edwards said.

Racism is still a problem, he said.

"This is the South. People will look at the hue of your skin and make some judgments."

Bostick and Edwards are among the handful of black elected officials in the three counties.

Sumter County, with 19 percent of its population black, has one black county commissioner and no black School Board members. There are two black city council members in Coleman and none in Wildwood, Bushnell, Webster or Center Hill.

Some of the problems finding blacks who are willing to run for office have more to do with economics, Edwards said.

"Most blacks can't afford to run for office. It takes money to run a campaign," he said.

Edwards said that although blacks make up 3 percent of the population, there also are no black School Board members or county commissioners. The cities of Inverness and Crystal River each have one black city council member.

Edwards said part of the problem is that blacks and whites don't mix much. Integration put black and white students in the same schools, but there is little contact otherwise. Most of the blacks in Ocala still live on the west side, shop on the west side and go to church there. And most whites conduct their lives on the east side.

Eugene Broxton agreed with Edwards. He is pastor of New Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Ocala and head of the 26-church Ministerial Fellowship of Marion County, the group that most black leaders said has the most political clout in the black community.

"We've been segmented. We

See BLACKS, Page 3

County will consider hold on development

By GEORGE WILKENS
Tribune Staff Writer

INVERNESS — An ordinance creating a moratorium on commercial development along much of U.S. Highway 19 is to be considered Tuesday by the Citrus County Commission.

The moratorium is in response to concern expressed by the state Department of Community Affairs over congestion on U.S. 19. During the moratorium no building permits will be issued for general commercial, professional service, and office development requiring access to the four-lane highway.

The moratorium covers both sides of the highway from County Road 488 to the north city limits of Crystal River, and from County Road 490 in Homosassa Springs south to U.S. Highway 98.

The moratorium, the proposed ordinance states, "is beneficial in preventing the degradation of the level of service on these sections of highway until such time as the county may complete an engineering design study to provide a continuous system of frontage/reverse frontage access roads."

Commissioners have conceded they do not know how the frontage roads will be financed and do not know the cost.

The state agency and the county have been haggling over the comprehensive plan, commercial strip development — especially on U.S. 19 — for months. A frontage road is intended to reduce congestion on the highway it parallels.

Commissioners are expected to schedule May 8 and 22 public hearings on the proposed ordinance.

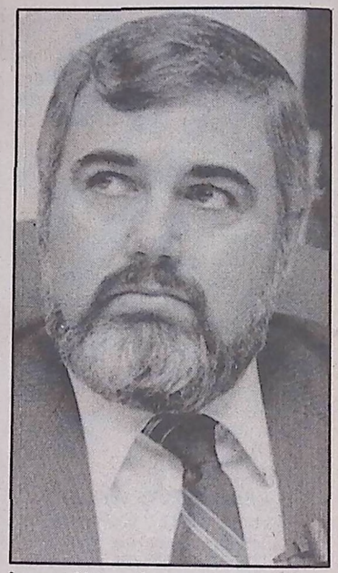
Another ordinance scheduled to be considered Tuesday was first discussed a year ago.

After an April 25, 1989 presentation by Marion County's litter enforcement supervisor, commissioners instructed County Attorney Larry Haag to prepare an ordinance making it simpler to prosecute those who illegally dump garbage on private property.

The resulting ordinance allows officers to issue citations if illegal litter is found to include identifying trash, such as letters, bills and other items addressed to an individual.

The presumption is that the individual dumped the litter or knows who did. Anyone convicted of violating the ordinance can be punished by a fine of up to $500 or up to 60 days in jail, or both.

Also, Commissioner Wayne Weaver will ask the board to consider an ordinance making it illegal to allow weeds to get out of control on certain lots. The proposed ordinance says weeds are a fire hazard and public nuisance, and promote rodents and mosquitoes.



Larry Haag has prepared an ordinance making it simpler to prosecute illegall dumping.

The ordinance applies to platted lots of less that .45 acres, or those in subdivisions, with half of the weeds or grasses taller than 18 inches. The county Division of Zoning and Permits would enforce the ordinance.

Owners of offending property would be notified and have 30 days to mow the lot. If they didn't within 30 days, the county would and put a lien on the property until the cost was paid.

Tuesday's commission meeting on the second floor of the courthouse begins at 1 p.m.

Convicted poacher faces sentencing

By KEITH MORELLI
Tribune Staff Writer

> "I was going to be pinned between the boat and a cypress tree. I was fixing to be smashed."
>
> — Jim Smith
> Game officer

INVERNESS — A Lake Panasoffkee man found guilty of poaching wildlife is scheduled to be sentenced Monday, and prosecutors are seeking the maximum penalty under state sentencing guidelines.

Assistant State Attorney Lisa Porter said Thomas L. Williams, 32, should serve one year in the Citrus County Jail followed by four years probation.

According to Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Officer Jim Smith, Williams was shooting at wildlife at about 2 a.m. on April 6, 1989, in the Flying Eagle Ranch. The state preserve is a 10,000-acre ranch east of Inverness bounded by the Withlacoochee River to the east.

Williams was arrested in October on a warrant charging him with attempting to take game at night with a gun and a spotlight. He also was charged with fleeing an attempting to elude a police officer, resisting arrest without violence, culpable negligence, trespass and violating a Citrus County airboat curfew.

Smith testified at the trial that he ran through the woods and jumped on Williams' airboat identifying himself as an officer.

Williams gunned the airboat and Smith went overboard. The boat passed by the wildlife officer, nearly pinning him to a cypress tree, according to Smith's testimony.

Smith said he looked up from the muddy bank after he had gone over the side and saw the airboat coming at him.

"I was going to be pinned between the boat and a cypress tree," Smith testified. "I was fixing to be smashed." The boat then veered away from him, he said.

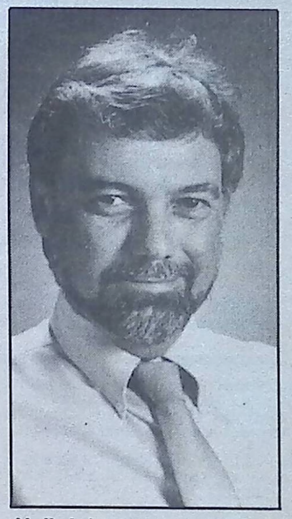
The defendant testified he was startled when Smith jumped on the boat and hit the accelerator. He said he had no idea the man was a law enforcement officer.

"It could have been any crazy lunatic out in the swamp," Williams testified.

Porter said she made a plea offer prior to the trial of one year in jail and four years probation. It is the maximum under the sentencing guidelines, which say Williams is eligible for probation.

Williams has been in the Citrus County Jail since Feb. 27, when a jury found him guilty of the six charges.

Coming Monday



Neil Johnson

Starting Monday, The Riverwalker, a column about the politics of the region by Neil Johnson will begin. The column will run Monday through Friday, examining the people and the politics of Pasco, Hernando, Citrus, Marion and Sumter counties. Johnson was a reporter for 10 years before being named the Tribune's bureau chief for Hernando County three years ago.

Blacks need strong political voice

■ From Page 1

are put in certain areas," Broxton said, and that has to be overcome in order to solve economic and social problems for the whole city. "We're going to have to get the thing done with east Ocala and west Ocala working together."

The white establishment is beginning to recognize that, as the drug problem on the west side filters into the east side and as poor economic conditions among blacks affect the overall city economy, former Ocala Mayor Craig Curry said.

"People are realizing that and are willing to work together," he said, adding that one of his goals while mayor from September 1988 to December 1989 was to work as a liaison between his east side neighbors and black leaders.

Curry said he thinks blacks have excellent opportunities to win elections now if there were more black candidates, but he said he understands the problem of campaign money.

"It's not as much that they lose as they just don't run," he said. "Of course, they have problems doing that. They're not in the mainstream economically, and that hurts them politically."

The Rev. Leroy Bellamy, a 76-year-old, life-long resident of Citrus County, agreed that attitudes are changing.

"I don't really feel like we got no problems we couldn't settle," he said. "I think that a whole lot of that old stuff is fading out."

If black candidates are knowledgeable about the office sought and have something to offer, Bellamy said he's confident white voters would accept them.

"I really think some of them would make a good run of it if they'd go for it." he said. "The white folks will vote for you before they vote for a white."

Patrick Thomas, a 22-year-old assistant manager in state Sen. Karen Thurman's Inverness office, said he hopes to be one of the blacks taking on some political challenges.

"People in the black community more or less, at times, allow themselves to be victims of circumstances instead of taking 100 percent responsibility for what happens to them," he said. "The opportunity exists equally for us all."

Thomas said there are still racial battles to be fought.

He sited the case of his grandmother, Lillian Weaver, as an example, saying that problems she experienced with the city of Inverness wouldn't have happened if she had been white.

In late 1988, a developer complained that a dirt road commonly used by residents as part of Ella Avenue was on his property and not on the city-owned right of way.

City officials checked and found the developer was right and that part of Weaver's house sat where the road should go. The 70-year-old widow had lived there 30 years and did not want to move.

After several months of negotiations, Thomas and other family members reached an agreement whereby Weaver was paid $23,000 for her house and about 20 feet of property that she owned adjacent to the right of way.

"I went in and got involved and resolved it," Thomas said, and that is a good sign to come from the situation.

Not all black leaders are as optimistic.

Leonard Barriner, head of the Marion County chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said he doesn't believe white voters accept most black candidates. Though he did say some progress has been made.

"I think that we are finally getting to the point where we're beginning to have some honest dialogue" with the white establishment, he said.

In addressing Barriner's group recently, state NAACP President T.H. Poole turned their attention to the small town of Center Hill in Sumter County.

In a March city council meeting there, Mayor Ivey Berry used the term "n-ger" several times during a meeting.

"If you think we have arrived, let me share with you Center Hill," Poole said.

There was a positive side to the incident, however, he said.

Three of Center Hill's five city councilmen, all of whom are white, voted Tuesday to impeach the mayor because of the remarks. The mayor held his seat because impeachment would have required four votes in favor of it. The two councilmen who voted to keep Berry are his nephews.

"The city is much more advanced than a lot of metropolitan areas" because it held the impeachment proceedings rather than just letting the incident pass, Poole said. "The town did not exemplify what the mayor exemplified."

Dixon, the Sumter County commissioner, also saw the council's impeachment hearing as a positive sign.

"It says that they were embarrassed, and they wanted to do something about it," he said, and he called that progress.

Dixon also pointed out that the city has a black police chief and that a black was elected in November to serve on the City Council. That candidate never took his seat because it was discovered he had felony convictions that prevented him from serving.

Population by race for Citrus, Marion, Sumter counties

1990	White	Black	Total
Citrus	91,000 or 97%	3,000 or 3%	94,000
Marion	168,000 or 85%	28,000 or 15%	198,000
Sumter	25,000 or 81%	6,000 or 19%	31,000

Source: 1989 Florida Statistical Abstract

Tribune graphic

Totals of blacks and whites elected to offices in Citrus, Marion and Sumter counties

	White	Black
Citrus	21	2
Marion	31	2
Sumter	32	3

Source: 1989 Florida Statistical Abstract

Tribune graphic

OBITUARIES

Alachua

ETHEL WALKER PUGHSLEY BERRY, 83, of Jacksonville died April 4 in Gainesville. She was born Aiken, S.C. She attended the Friendly Missionary Baptist Church where she was a member of the Deaconess Board and a member of F.B. Get Together Club. She is survived by one daughter, Catherine B. Mickle; ternal grandparents David Thompson of Chiefland and Mr. and Mrs. Otis Glover of Vienna, Ga. Duncan Brothers Funeral Home, Gainesville.

SHYKIA V. MONDS, 4, of Chiefland died April 5. She was born in Gainesville. She is survived by her mother, Wanda Fay Thompson of Chiefland; her father Gabriel Monds Jr. of Atlanta; a sister, Kentrese of Cross City; four brothers, Gabriel er Board and the Hospitality Club. She is survived by her husband, Ernest of Gainesville; her mother, Ivory Johnson Hall of Gainesville; two daughters, Geraldine Washington and Rutha Mae Washington both of Gainesville; two sons, Alphonso Washington of Paulsboro, N.J. and Booker T. Washington of Gainesville; three sisters, Mable Lee Washington of Charleston, S.C., Katherine Hardge of Tampa and Juanita J. Powell of Orlando; a brother John Jersey. He was a member of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Beverly Hills and the Sunshine Club of Beverly Hills. He is survived by his wife, Gertrude A. of Beverly Hills; a son, Michael of Cairo; a daughter, Maureen Fruhling of Paramus, N.J.; a brother, Thomas of Beverly Hills; one sister, Marie Tucker of Beverly Hills; five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and several nephews and nieces. Fero Funeral Home, Beverly Hills.

York, N.Y.; 15 grandchildren; and 28 great-grandchildren. Duncan Brothers Funeral Home, Gainesville.

EMANUEL Q. WARD, 1, of Chiefland, died April 5. He was born in Gainesville. He is survived his mother, Wanda Faye Thompson of Chiefland; his father, Willie James Ward Jr. of Tampa; one sister, Tamekia Harris of Tampa; one brother, Antwan Ward of Tampa; paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Huston Lett of Tampa and Mr. and Mrs. William James Ward Sr. of Lacrosse; and maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Otis Glover of Vienna, Ga. and David Thompson of Chiefland. Duncan Brothers Funeral Home, Gainesville.

NATOSHA S. THOMPSON, 2, of Chiefland, died April 5. She was born in Gainesville. She is survived by her mother, Wanda Faye Thompson of Chiefland; her father, Gabriel Monds Jr. of Atlanta; one sister, Kentrese Monds of Cross City; four brothers, Gabriel Monds III, Dequan Monds, Jermorra Monds and Carlos Monds all of Quitman, Ga.; paternal grandparents Gabriel Monds Sr. and Idella Hall; and maternal grandparents Gabriel Monds Sr. and Idella Hall; maternal grandparents, David Thompson of Chiefland and Mr. and Mrs. Otis Glover of Vienna, Ga. Duncan Brothers Funeral Home, Gainesville.

SIMON COOPER, 60, of Pomona, N.Y., died April 5 in Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern, N.Y. He moved to New York from Gainesville over 30 years ago. He was a veteran of the Korean War and a Baptist. He is survived by his wife, Margaret Rice Cooper of Pomona; his mother, Ethel Welch Johnson of Gainesville; two sisters, Mary Lee Williams and Freddie Mae Irvin, both of Gainesville; two sons, Darrell and Michael; one stepson, Bernard Rice; three daughters, Juanita Owens, Wanda and Frieda, all of St. Petersburg; and six grandchildren. Duncan Brothers Funeral Home, Gainesville.

CARRIE BELL WASHINGTON SMALL, 60, of Gainesville, died April 7 in Grove Park. She moved to Gainesville from Lacrosse 48 years ago. She was a member of Williams Temple Church of God in Christ where she served on the Usher Board. Survivors include her husband, Willie Small; two sons, George Berry of New York and Willie Small Jr. of Gainesville; two daughters, Mary Small of Gainesville and Ruby Small of Philadelphia; seven grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. Duncan Brothers Funeral Home, Gainesville.

Citrus

FRANK J. MCCARTHY, 80, of Beverly Hills died Thursday at the Seven Rivers Community Hospital in Crystal River. Born in Union Hill, N.J. he came to Florida five months ago from Cairo, N.Y. He was a retired manager for the Public Service Electric and Gas Co. of New

CARL C. HALTERMAN, 77, of Crystal River died Friday at Seven Rivers Community Hospital. A native of Tawas, Mich., he came here 65 years ago. He was a retired commercial fisherman and a member of the Crystal River First Baptist Church. He was a veteran of World War II, serving in the U.S. Navy, and was a member of the Crystal River Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8189. He is survived by his wife, Ruby Halterman; and a daughter, Wanda Faye Duffy. Strickland Funeral Home, Crystal River.

Program needs volunteers

SENIORS

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is looking for volunteers to share their talents and experience with the community. You've learned a lot in 60 years or more of living. Don't keep it to yourself. Call 373-7814.

Senior Center News

■ **Ken Christiansen** will bring his stamps and old coins in for viewing Thursday at the Multi-Purpose Senior Center in Lecanto. Ken loves to talk about his favorite hobby, so join him at 10 a.m.

■ Also on Thursday, **Bob Dunning** will feature his Magic Easel game series at noon. The games always feature audience participation and are great for a group.

The center is located on County Road 491, one-half mile south of the intersection with State Road 44, and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Send news of senior citizen activities to Seniors News, The Tampa Tribune-Citrus/Marion, 118 N. Pine Ave., Inverness 32650. Telephone: 726-3156.

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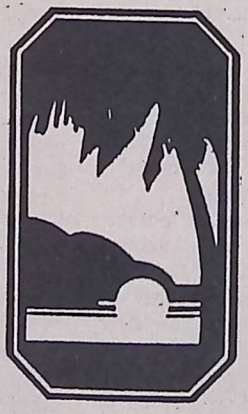

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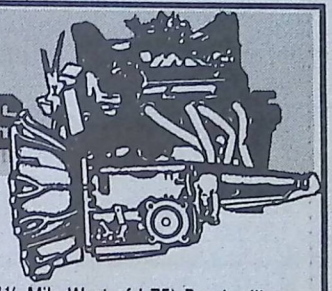
ENGINES & TRANSMISSIONS INSTALLED



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PASCO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY 1973

The Pasco County Housing Authority

is excepting bids for stucco work at Hudson Apartments in Hudson, Florida until 5:00 pm April 18, 1990. Specifications may be obtained at 507 Acorn Circle, Dade City, Florida 33525 or at 9600 Call Court, Hudson, Florida 34667. 904-567-0848.

1816 United States forces destroyed the Negro fort on the Apalachicola River in Spanish territory. Black and Indian forces were led by a black commander named Garcia.

1817-1818 First Seminole Indian War.

1819 United States bought Florida from Spain.

1822 United States General Andrew Jackson demanded that runaway slaves be removed from Florida and returned to Northern slaveowners.

1823 Treaty of Moultrie Creek agreed that Seminole Indians would capture and deliver runaways into United States custody.

1824 Florida became a United States Territory. United States settlers with slaves moved into Florida.

Some Seminole Indians removed from Florida to the western United States.

1827 Disputes between white slaveowners and Indians began over ownership of blacks who were living with the Seminole Indians.

1830 United States decided to solve ownership problem by removing all Seminole Indians from Florida.

1832 Free blacks prevented from entering Florida by an act of the Florida Territorial Government.

Treaty of Payne's Landing: In this treaty, the United States wanted to remove all the Indians from Florida and send them to lands west of the Mississippi River. A problem arose when the Seminoles refused to go without taking the ex-slaves with them. Some of these blacks were relatives (wives, husbands, children). This lead to the Second Seminole Indian War.

1835-1842 Second Seminole Indian War.

1842 Armed Occupation Act. Settlers came with slaves to the Central Florida area to claim 160 acres of land. Settlers had to stay on land for five years, develop it, and defend it against Seminole Indians still in Florida.

1845 Florida entered the Union as a slave state.

1861 Florida seceded from the United States and joined the Confederate States of America.

1861-1865 Civil War. Florida blacks served on both sides.

1863 President Abraham Lincoln issued Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves.

1865 Emancipation Proclamation read in Tallahassee, Florida.

In October, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution that prohibited slavery was passed.

1866 Reconstruction began. Freedmen's Bureau established.

1868 The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution granting black men full citizenship was passed.

1885 New Florida law, requiring all voters to pay a fee (poll tax) to vote, eliminated most blacks from voting.

1914-1918 World War I.

1941-1945 World War II.

Floridians

SIR LANCELOT JONES

This is another in an occasional series that looks at noteworthy Floridians. Today's subject is Sir Lancelot Jones, the sole resident of Porgy Key. Jones' reputation as a fishing guide has lured even U.S. presidents to seek his help.

No one knows exactly how old he is or where he was born, but he "keeps history alive by having lived it."

By JOHN F. SUGG
Tribune Staff Writer

PORGY KEY

This expedition is to find Sir Lancelot Jones; not a knight, but a princely piece of history.

A living relic who has seen it all — at least all that's happened on a mostly overlooked gaggle of pinhead-size islands nestled in a serene backwater just off the main course between Florida's past and future.

"No, not a great man," Jones softly says of himself. But, of his 92 years — well, maybe only 90 ed Jones regularly since the 1960s.

Great men have sought Jones' knowledge, first about the ways of fish in Biscayne Bay, later about the ways of the world as they trolled for fame and power or healed from the hooks of public scorn.

"He knew so much, he was right about many things," Smathers says.

Four men who had been or would become president, plus senators and others in the innermost of inner circles, have argued life and legislation with Jones. He told them how to catch the feisty bonefish, and he reminded one, a then-senator with Texas-as-big ambitions named Lyndon Johnson, when to mind his tongue.

Finding Jones is a quest of the spirit as well as a journey of distance. Go south to Miami, go south again, past the crush of U.S. 1, the trendy lair of hucksters and harlots called Coconut Grove, on past Coral Gables, the well-guarded city of the fearfully wealthy.

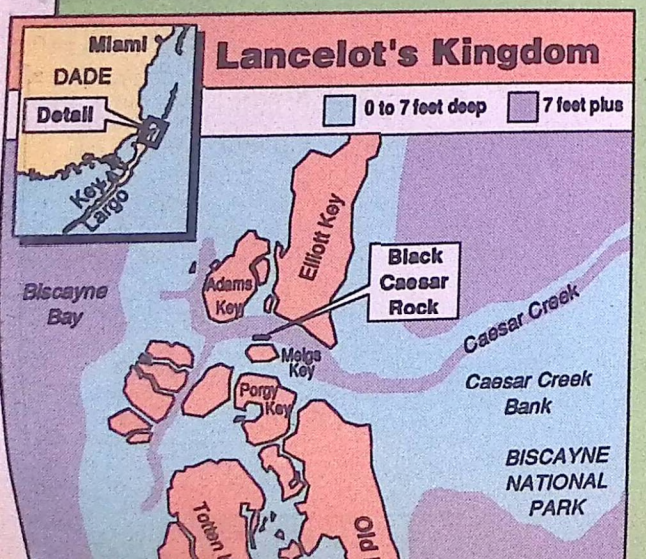
Go to Homestead, still mostly farmland that bribery hasn't transformed into condominiums. Find a marina, rent a boat and head, um, about 150 degrees southeast. The best compass is the soul, however, for the course leads to islands as exotic in their way — and as vanishing — as the storied isle of misty Avalon.

Water's color is the aquamarine of tarnished copper. Throw a million diamond sparkles onto the blue-green. This is the southern end of Biscayne Bay. It's the best part of Dade County — oh-so-good because the swollen city of Miami, corrupted and corrupting, lies out of sight, only a few bony fingers of its skyscrapers rising to grip the horizon.

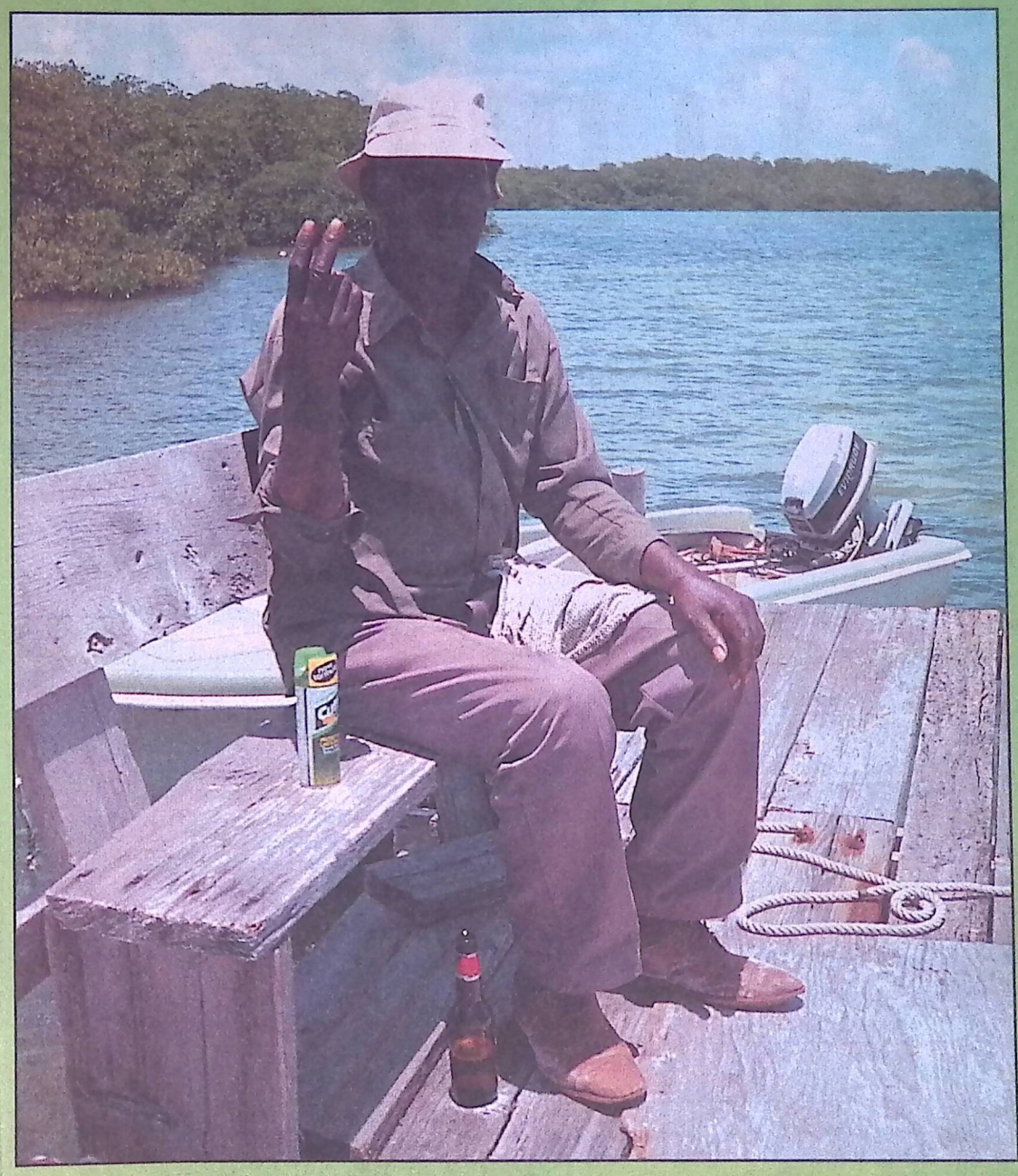
Almost no people here, few boats.

Leaving Black Point on the mainland, the sun's brilliance hides the boundary between sky and bay. A tiny whiff of vertigo until, a half mile out, black dots blossom ahead, then turn to smudges, then focus into a staccato chain of islands. Soldier Key, the Ragged Keys, Boca Chita Key, Sands Key, then the seven-mile-long snake of Elliott Key, Adams Key, Rubicon Keys.

At the south end of Elliott Key lies Caesar Creek, a tortured current that twists among smaller islands, a valve between Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. A fisherman in a nearby boat yells that his name is Bud. Aren't most fishermen in the Keys named Bud?



Render unto Caesar ...



Tribune photograph by JOHN F. SUGG

Sir Lancelot Jones' reputation as a fishing guide has earned him powerful friends.

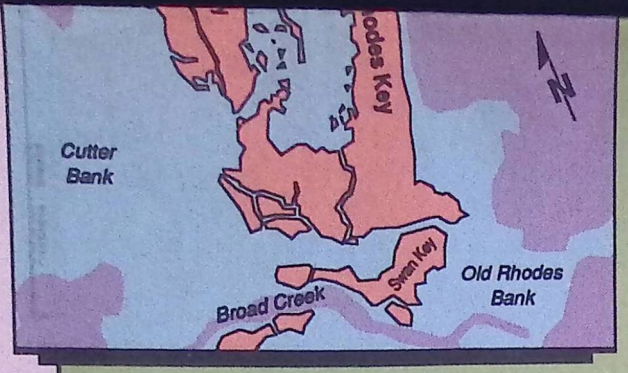
"fight was violent," but in 1970, the federal government created Biscayne National Park, now 181,500 acres of pristine bay and islands. Jones sold his 277 acres in 1976.

Jones shakes his head. "I never thought commercialization of this land was right. ... I have always felt that this land was not right for development, that it should stay as it is."

On the north side of the fast-running Caesar Creek is Adams Key and an enclave once called the Coco Lobo Club, built in 1921 by Miami Beach founder Carl Fisher, later owned by stellar speed-benches, Jones' thrones from where he reviews the world. Creaky blue-and-white skiff tugs at its tether. Jones says he's waiting for a mechanic to come bang on the irascible antique engine so he can go into the mainland again. He owns a house there for days when being a living Florida treasure grows tiresome.

Above the dock stands the ruins of a great house — once, two floors of rock walls nigh on two-feet thick — built by Jones' father, Israel Lafayette Jones, who styled himself Parson.

In 1897, Parson Jones paid five bucks an acre



Tribune map by VAUGHN HUGHES

years — his summary is succinct: "It's been a great life. I've certainly enjoyed the whole darned thing."

Jones was born on the waves of Biscayne Bay, according to one tale. His life has spanned a time during which Dade County kept multiplying, from a few hundred people to millions. He has weathered hurricanes of winds and seen the gales of greed nearly destroy an almost-paradise.

Along the way, Jones' reputation as a fishing guide has earned him the friendship of some of the most powerful men in America: presidents, senators, power brokers. He's watched his house blow up in a propane explosion. He's tucked away in banks just a little money from when the government bought his islands, an 11th hour and 59th minute rescue from developers. He's harvested stone crabs and fed them to Firestones and Honeywells. He's been a lime grower, a fisherman.

He decided to rest his bones 20 years ago. But he's still a philosopher and a lecturer on sponges and lobsters to those willing to endure the take-your-breath-away heat and battalions of bugs to find him.

Sir Lancelot Jones: the sole resident of Porgy Key, and one of two civilians that remain citizens of what is now called Biscayne National Park. Don't dare label him a hermit or eccentric.

"It makes me angry to be called that," Jones fusses. "I'm alone here, but people come to see me. A lot of people. Good people. Schoolchildren, fourth- and fifth-graders. They're sharp, good to talk to. I'm not lonely."

Jones' eyes are fading, but when a pilgrim returns after an absence of two or three years, the old man remarks: "I recognize your features."

His tones are patiently slow and, taking into account the wild surroundings, strangely out of place in their culture and refinement.

"He had a wonderful voice," recalls former U.S. Sen. George Smathers, who in the 1950s and 1960s often hired Jones as a fishing guide.

"We loved hearing him talk. The accent was almost Bahamian," says Smathers, guessing correctly. Lancelot's mother was from the Bahamas, his father from North Carolina.

Priceless wisdom

Jones, an endearing collection of contradictions: A legend who lives in a too-modest cottage. Humble in looks but well-educated, some at college, more by nature. Nine decades of wisdom that are a priceless treasure — but sadly, one largely ignored by Miami's nearby masses.

"It's remarkable the link he creates with people who have been dead since the first part of the century," says physician John Nordt, who has visited Porgy Key with his family. "Lancelot shakes his head and ruefully concedes that he was foolishly inspecting a propane tank with a match one day in 1982. The tank blew, the house burned. In past years, he's talked about rebuilding it. That won't happen.

Walk down a path running east of the old house to a shack. No, not a shack. Too much pride here. Hand-fashioned neatness everywhere. Solar panels for 12-volt electricity. Runs a radio, fans. It's all Jones uses, but, then, there's no Florida Power & Light bill to pay. Damp wood burning in a rusty bucket near the door. Smoke keeps the mosquitoes away.

Yell: "Lance! Hey, Lancelot! You there?" No answer. "Lancelot! I brought some ice. Heard you might need some." Screen door cracks. A face darker than the purple shadows inside peers out. Cautious. Park rangers keep an eye on the old man, bring him things. But you can't be too careful. Pirate waters, you know.

Meet the old man Jones. The sun and wind have tried for most of a century to defeat his ebon skin. But it's the elements that have been vanquished. They win in the end, but not yet. If looks are a gauge, Jones has lopped 30 years from his age. A broad-brimmed hat with a flap on the back; he's either worn that same hat for decades or he has an endless supply of replacements.

The day's heat doesn't burn away Jones' penchant for correctness. Once he's decided to chat, he tucks in his shirt, buttons it up.

Those hands. Marvelous tools that have held 10,000 sponges, baited a million hooks. Arthritis, yes, but still supple, no trouble briskly knotting lines on the dock.

Maybe it's time to explain his name. The "Sir" is not a joke. Jones' father, the Parson, was a black Miami pioneer who named his first son King Arthur, his second Sir Lancelot.

Sen. Smathers: "Wonderful names, weren't they. Lancelot and Arthur. Their dad loved the fables of Camelot. That's where the names came from."

Eddies of the past

Jones' accounts of his age have differed over the years. In previous visits, he has usually decided that his birth year was 1900, sometimes 1899. But a friend, Miami lawyer James Woodard, says, "Lancelot turned up a birth certificate that says 1898. Who knows?"

Exactly where Jones was born is also a little uncertain.

Mary Bouterse, Bebe Rebozo's sister, has known Jones since the 1950s. She retells this bit of Lancelot lore:

"The way I understand it, Lance's mother knew he was coming the night before. She wanted her husband to take her to Miami for the birth. There was a doctor there. But Lance's dad decided to wait until morning. The weather wasn't cooperative, so Lance ended up be born on a boat on the bay."

Jones' eyes crinkle in amusement at the question of his birthplace. "Just say I was born on Biscayne Key."

In the little turn-of-the-century community around Caesar Creek, people harvested both the land and water. For a time, it thrived and even nurtured enough kids to have its own school district. Jones' family had 65 acres planted with lime

See SIR, Page 5

Creek?" He shrugs: "Someone liked Julius Caesar, I guess."

Wrong, Bud. The creek's name echoes history about as old as Miami can boast. Learn carefully the facts and fish tales of the area before meeting Jones, because he'll allow: "These are the events and people that have influenced my life. These waters are my home. I'm not so inclined as I once was to repeat things."

The Caesar was Black Caesar, an enslaved African prince who survived a shipwreck to become a fearsome pirate, and for a time partner to Tampa's own buccaneer, Jose Gasparilla.

Black Caesar infuriated the deep-hulled navies of the early 1800s by sliding his shallow-draft ship through the creek into the thin waters of Biscayne Bay, and, according to legend, he moored his boat on a tiny island in the channel called Black Caesar's Rock.

Some wags snicker that Black Caesar's spirit has been rekindled many times here. The drug runners, most recently. The creek was their highway during the 1970s and 1980s.

Pirates in silk ties and tailored suits also have swashbuckled hereabouts. Oil billionaire D.K. Ludwig in the early 1960s planned the pillage of all of south Biscayne Bay in an effort, thankfully stillborn, to build a port and refinery.

Lesser devils created a city here called Islandia; it still exists, legally but impotently, population 12, mostly park rangers. And Jones. The wilderness smashers envisioned a causeway from the mainland and a new Miami Beach gagging the tiny keys.

They failed, but just barely. Jones says the Richard Nixon's buddy, C.G. "Bebe" Rebozo.

Nixon came here to fish and soothe his bruised ego after his 1962 defeat for governor of California. He kept coming for 12 years.

LBJ, too, when he was a senator, fished and swore at Coco Lobo. Another line in the water belonged to George Smathers. What a crew! Yo, ho, ho.

Continuing the quest

History lesson over, back to the hunt for Sir Lancelot. For a visitor, it's important to find that rock named after Black Caesar. These waters are treacherous, but once past the islet, a turn to the south leads safely to Porgy Key. And there, if you're tenacious and lucky on any given day, you'll find Jones, aging with the stateliness of a sequoia but still very much alive.

A final question to Bud before rounding the rock.

"Hey, you know who lives over there on Porgy Key?"

"Nah, didn't know anyone lived there."

Neither did other fishing pals passing through the creek that June day: Jim, Mary Alice, Jack, two Bills, Sarah, and three people who didn't give their names.

Too bad that they've never met Sir Lancelot Jones, Mr. Jones or Lancelot to first-time visitors, Lance to old hands.

When you come up to Porgy Key — damn, watch those shallows, the prop just dug up some muck — there's a rickety wooden dock with two



Photograph provided by George Smathers

About 1958, Jones guided some Democratic dignitaries. They are, front from left, former U.S. Sens. George Smathers, Richard Russell and Earle Clements and, in the rear, C.G. "Bebe" Rebozo and former U.S. Sens. Lyndon Johnson and Stuart Symington.

Digging for the Facts About Benjamin Banneker

by Harriet Jackson Scarupa

Banneker's funeral was held two days after his death, on Tuesday, October 11. Just as his body was being lowered into the grave a few yards away, his house caught fire. . . . It seemed almost as if an act of fate was determined to destroy every earthly vestige of the Negro sage. . . .

—Silvio Bedini
The Life of Benjamin Banneker, 1972

On a sun-dappled hillside clearing near the tiny town of Oella, Maryland, about 15 miles west of downtown Baltimore, six archaeologists and an enthusiastic group of volunteers have been seeking to uncover some of the "earthly vestiges" of Benjamin Banneker's homestead.

Often dubbed "America's first black man of science," the self-taught astronomer, mathematician and naturalist has three familiar claims to fame. He published six popular almanacs between 1791 and 1797. He participated in the 1791 survey that established the boundaries of what is now Washington, D. C. And in 1753 he built a wooden clock that worked—a dazzling mechanical feat at the time.

But Bannèker also was celebrated by abolitionists of his time—and later admirers—for a letter he penned to then-Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson in which he challenged the alleged intellectual inferiority of his race and urged the abolition of slavery.

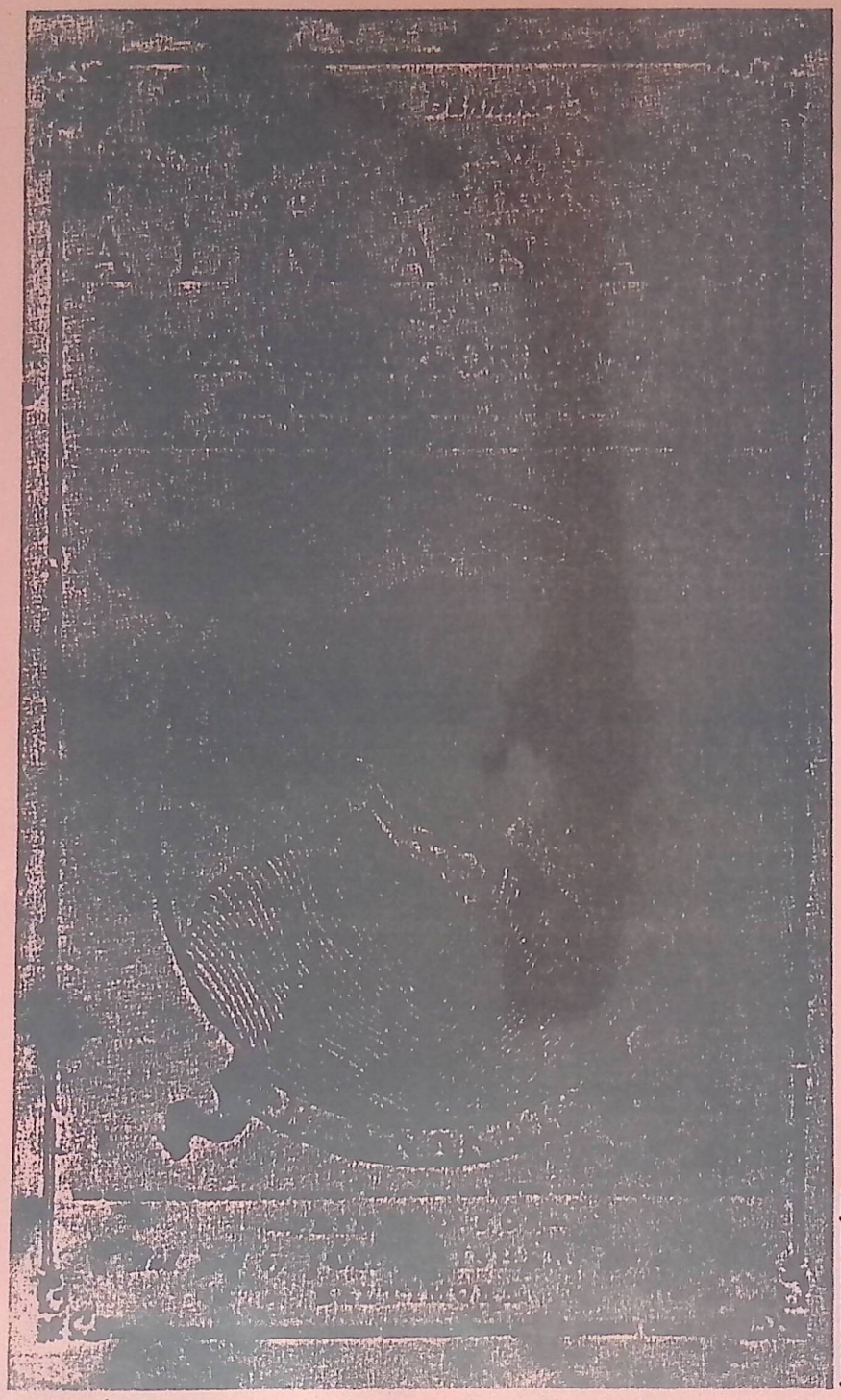
Banneker once owned 100 acres of this hilly expanse, inheriting the land from his father, Robert Banneky, who purchased it in 1737. Robert Banneky had been born in Guinea in West Africa, was captured and sold into slavery in Maryland and eventually awarded his freedom. Not having a surname of his own, he took that of his wife, Mary Banneky. She was one of four daughters of an Englishwoman, who first came to Maryland as an indentured servant, and the African-born slave whom she later purchased, then freed and then married.

From the age of six until his death at age 75 in 1806, Benjamin Banneker, a lifelong bachelor, lived on this land, a still lovely spot not far from the once-raging Patapsco River.

Here, he and his father developed a thriving farmstead out of the wilderness. They grew tobacco, grain and vegetables, raised livestock, maintained beehives and an orchard. For the Bannekers, as members of one of the first black landowning farming families in the area, this land represented far more than a livelihood. It was a symbol. A symbol of freedom and independence. As Bedini writes:

Banneker had been a small boy when the land was purchased, but he still remembered the walks with his father during the leisure hours on Sunday afternoons, during which Robert Banneky expressed his pride of possession. Again and again he told young Benjamin that it was the land that made the difference between independence and slavery. And Benjamin was stirred by his father's words, so that he devoted the major part of his life to developing and preserving what his father had created.

For almost two centuries the land Banneker and his father had so cherished seemed to disappear off the historical map. As subsequent owners plowed the fields again and again, few people in the area remembered that these fields once had been owned by the famous Benjamin Banneker. And even those who dimly remembered that, yes, Benjamin Banneker had lived "somewhere near



Maryland Historical Society

This woodcut engraving of Benjamin Banneker is on the title page of his 1795 *Almanac.*

Oella" couldn't pinpoint the spot.

All this changed in 1976 when John McGrain of the Baltimore County Landmarks Preservation Commission found the original deed, which unequivocably established the boundaries of the Banneker property. Six years later, in 1983, the Maryland Historical Trust (a division of the state's Department of Economic and Community Development) identified the general location of the Banneker homestead itself, through the presence of the only eighteenth-century artifacts found on the land.

On the basis of this finding, a group of community activists took steps to save the site. "We were afraid that the land would be developed and history would be lost," explains Jean Walsh. "We thought it was a special place. After all, no other buildings—except Banneker's—had ever stood there. So it presented a real opportunity for research. Indeed, the site has been described as 'like a buried time capsule.' "

By 1985, the group had persuaded Baltimore County to buy 42.8 acres of the original property, including the probable site of Banneker's one-story log house.

Since then, the Maryland Historical Trust has had archaeologists conducting intensive research on the site—trying to determine the exact foundations of Banneker's house and an outbuilding and to draw some conclusions about Banneker's personal lifestyle based on artifacts they have uncovered: bits of pottery, bottle glass, buttons, nails, straight pins, hooks, gunflints, hatpins, pipe stems, thimbles, even a Jew's harp (a small lyre-shaped instrument played with the mouth and fingers).

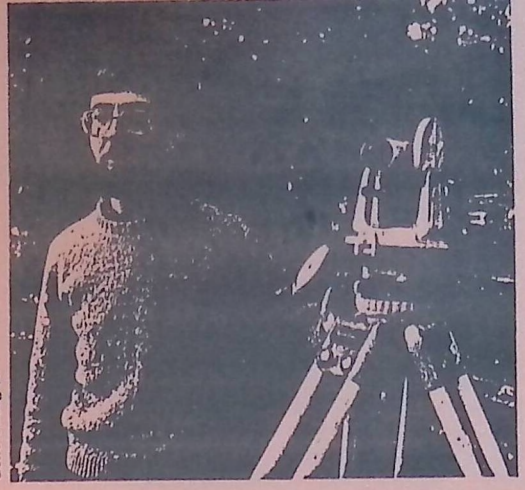
"We hope the project will give us a much better understanding of Benjamin Banneker and of his parents than we can get from the public record," explains Robert Hurry, the project director. "We also hope it will give us some window into the life of early free blacks in Baltimore County and of eighteenth

century rural lifestyles, in general."

Adds assistant project director Kate Dinnel, "Very little is known about the actual living conditions of free blacks in the eighteenth century except through documents. Archaeology can answer different questions than written records, because not everything gets written down. Especially not the little day-to-day stuff."

On a crisp, clear day last fall, the archaeology team held a special field techniques workshop on the Banneker site to explain what they were trying to uncover and how they were going about it. The workshop was part of the project's educational outreach efforts, explained education coordinator Heidi Minken. These efforts have also included a similar workshop on laboratory techniques, visits to schools to talk about Banneker and the dig, group tours on the site and a lecture series.

About 25 people of varying ages came out for the fall workshop. Among them was Wallis Washington, from nearby Columbia, Maryland, who was there with her five-year-old daughter Rasheida and a friend, Arlene Tate. "I'm laying the groundwork for my daughter," Washington said. "Knowing about black scientists gives black children something to aspire to. And it's good for them to see how many people are really interested in Benjamin Banneker, in where and how he lived, and in finding things he used."



Gene Young (6)

Project director Robert Hurry explains the use of a transit to workshop participants.



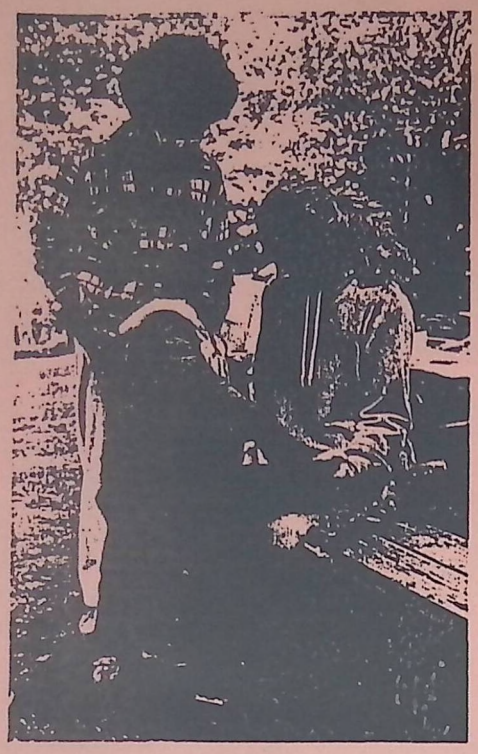
Referring to the ironic absence of black archaeologists on a project aiming to find out more about "America's first black man of science," she observed: "Blacks should go into these fields. We need to go in and find out about how we lived back then, about what was passed down from Africa, what happened in the diaspora, the mixture of races, and how different cultures were intermixed."

Ralph Doyle, a teacher at Johnnycake Middle School in Baltimore County, had brought students who were already "old hands." They had actually helped out on the dig. Camera in hand, Doyle was videotaping the students at work on the site. They will write up a narration about the project as part of a unit in American history on colonial life. "The kids are very excited about it," he said. "They've found about 100 artifacts so far."

As for what else his students have learned, Doyle said, "Revelation number one was that there were blacks at that time who weren't slaves. Revelation number two was that Banneker's 'house' is no more than a collection of rocks. At first they couldn't understand this; they were looking for a half-burned-out shack or something they could see."

John Nissenbaum, whose official title is "site interpreter," led the workshop. Indicating the large, partially excavated bare expanse before him, he commented, "I can't honestly say, 'This is Mr. Banneker's house.' What I can say is, 'This is his land.' That's been established through deed research. And through soil tests we've found only one site on this land which has artifacts from Banneker's time. And this is it. So if you put two and two together, it's pretty conclusive."

Putting it another way, Dinnel said, "We're not going to find anything out here that says, 'Ben Banneker lived



Heidi Minken, education coordinator for the project, shows Rasheida Washington and her mother a framed display of some artifacts uncovered in the dig. At left, archaeologists Dinnel (left) and Coker (right) map rocks in the excavation site, with help from volunteer Al Jodrey.

here.' This is the only eighteenth-century site we've found on land once owned by Banneker. So it fits."

After giving a brief rundown of the systematic techniques used by modern archaeologists, Nissenbaum invited the workshop participants to see for themselves by rotating among six stations set up on the site. Every ten minutes he blew a whistle to indicate it was time to move on.

At station one, Hurry stood beside a leggy-looking surveying instrument and explained how he used it, along with measuring tapes, to set up a grid that mapped out the area in five-foot by five-foot squares, so that when artifacts were found, their exact location could be pinpointed.

At station two, Dinnel showed how one such square looked when archaeologists begin to dig and search for artifacts. Nearby, volunteer Donald Dunsmore sifted dirt from the plot through windowscreen, pausing to show some of his findings: mostly bits and pieces of English ceramics.

At station three, Camille Juliana showed the end stage of digging out a square. The floor of the area was completely bare, enabling her to note any dark areas of the soil, which would indicate intrusions, such as an animal burrow or a house post.

At station four, Betsy Coker and volunteer Al Jodrey were excavating the southeast quadrant of what the archaeologists believe is the actual Banneker house. With framing setting off the area, they mapped rocks they had uncovered, rocks that showed evidence of burning. They might be from the burning dwelling itself, Coker theorized, or perhaps from its fireplace.

"The actual digging is a very small part of what's involved," explained Coker, sounding a theme of the workshop. "Because you're tearing things apart, you have to make reams of notes about what you do and what you see. In a sense, you're putting history back on paper, creating a record in case somehow you misinterpret what you've found or someone comes along later and can interpret it more accurately."

At station five, Edie Wallace stood deep inside what is believed to be a root cellar, creating a portrait in keeping with her smiling admission that she likes "playing in the dirt." "Normally a root cellar is for vegetables," she said. "This one is different. Because of this burned area, we're theorizing it was a below-hearth cellar used to store seeds and other things for the planting season. The fire above would have kept the seeds warm and dry.

"We're not sure if there was more than a cellar here, if there also was a dwelling," she added. "We're planning to remove five-by-five [squares] all around here to see if there is any evidence of posts in the ground. All I can say at this point is 'might have' and 'if there was' because we don't know yet."

Finally, at station six, Ann Curtin, wearing sturdy rubber boots, was flushing dirt samples through a thin mesh screen in a large water-filled can. "Water screening is a way to find minute things in the soil you can't get with a dry screen or see with your eyes," she said. Among the things she's found with this technique: pig teeth, fish scales, tiny pieces of charcoal (indicating burning), ceramics and waste from gunflints. "Artifact distribution is very important," she remarked. "It's often not what you find, but where you find it that helps you identify where a structure was."

As the workshop drew to a close, some of the observers expressed surprise that archaeology was so precise, so technical, so, uh, unromantic. They wondered, too, how the archaeologists would be able to make the jump from the tiny artifacts they were collecting to a reconstruction of the lifestyle of a particular man, Benjamin Banneker.

But that's precisely what archaeology does.

Comments Theresa A. Singleton, one of an almost miniscule number of black archaeologists in the country (see her story in the April 1986 *American Visions*): "For most of this century, archaeology has been pretty technical. And in more recent years, quantification has been very important. But archaeology also has become more interpretive. Archaeologists do try to interpret what went on. They do try to reconstruct past lifeways."

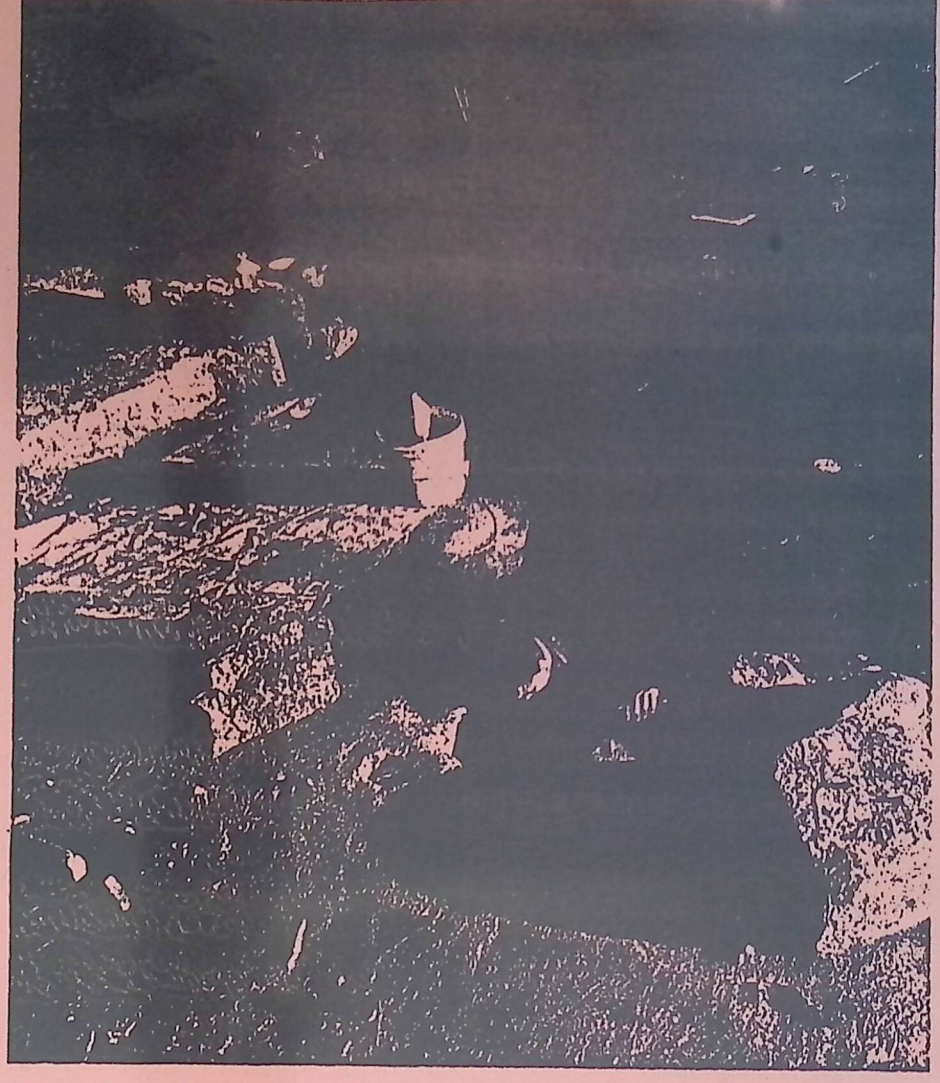
Among the research questions the Banneker dig is attempting to answer, for instance, are these, says Hurry:

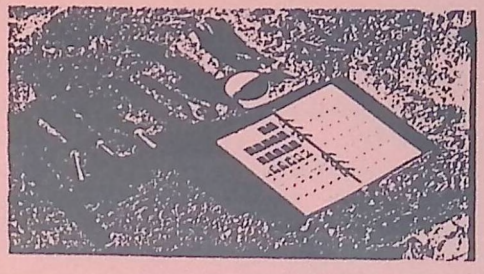
❑ How was Banneker's farm laid out? How was one building put in relation to another? Can we detect any survivals from African building techniques that might have been transmitted by his father?

❑ When you compare the artifacts found on this site with probate inventories of other farmers living at the same time in the area, can you find any differences in the lifestyles of black and white farmers?

❑ What can the artifacts tell us about Banneker's pattern of consumption as he acquired more wealth from selling off parcels of his property and from almanac royalties? Did he buy more things? What kinds of things? Do the artifacts also reflect the growth of nearby Ellicott City, once a thriving mill town, and of Baltimore, a bit further away?

❑ What sort of diet did the family have and how did it change over time? For instance, did Banneker's parents and their children eat more wild meats, such as deer, in the earlier period when the area was more akin to a frontier? If so, did they gradually change over to cuts of meat from domesticated animals?





Edie Wallace is barely visible, as she excavates root cellar, above. These tools at right are typical of those used in the delicate task of exposing artifacts.

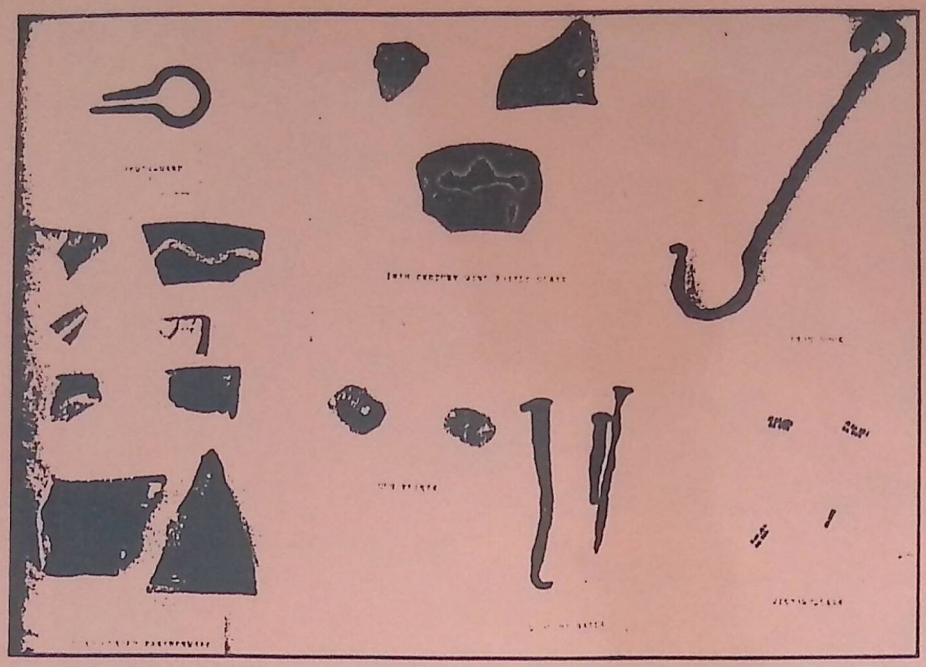
The dig part of the project is over for now; it may resume again at some later date, pending funding. ("Archaeologists would dig forever if you let them," observes McGrain, dryly.) Meanwhile, the archaeologists have retreated to a nearby laboratory set up in a former school to wash, identify, catalog and, yes, interpret what they have found. It will all come together in a report to the Maryland Historical Trust, due out this summer.

"The report will be sort of a collage. We'll draw on different sources and combine those with what we've been able to find here, to make a reasonably reliable picture of what Banneker's day-to-day life was like and how his farm was organized," explains Hurry. Most likely, he adds, it also will raise a whole new slew of questions for further research.

The report will be used to help the county develop an historical park on the property. Jean Walsh and her colleagues have banded together to form the Friends of Benjamin Banneker Historical Park. The group wants the county to convert the lower level of a mid-nineteenth-century stone house that sits within view of the archaeological site into a museum that would display artifacts from the dig and tell the story of Banneker and perhaps of other blacks from the area. Nor does their vision end there. With a bow to Banneker-the-naturalist, they'd like the park to include nature trails with interpretive signs. And, most ambitious of all, they hope a replica of Banneker's house can be built.

Considering Banneker's place in history, they—and others—consider such commemoration only fitting.

Remarks Carroll Greene, former director of the Banneker-Douglass Museum in Annapolis, and a 14-year veteran of the Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture: "Benjamin Banneker is known all over the United States. Schools have been



In this display case are artifacts recovered from the Banneker site.

If you want to know more. . .

The Benjamin Banneker Archaeology Project has prepared the following bibliography for those interested in learning more about Benjamin Banneker, eighteenth-century black history and the discipline of archaeology.

Bedini, Silvio. *The Life of Benjamin Banneker,* Charles Scribners' Sons, New York, 1972.

Berlin, Ira. *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South,* Pantheon Books, New York, 1974.

Deetz, James. *In Small Things Forgotten,* Doubleday, New York, 1977.

Kaplan, Sidney. *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution: 1770–1800,* New York Graphic Society in association with the Smithsonian Institution Press, New York, 1973.

Noel Hume, Ivor. *Historical Archeology,* Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1969.

Noel Hume, Ivor. *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America,* Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1969.

Wright, James N. *The Free Negro in Maryland, 1634–1860,* Octagon Books, New York, 1971.

Those interested in learning more about The Friends of Benjamin Banneker Historical Park should write to the organization c/o The Catonsville Recreation and Parks Council, 106 Bloomsbury Avenue, Catonsville, MD 21228.

named for him; a postage stamp has been issued in his honor. This park should be a place which will help to illuminate both Afro-American and Afro-Maryland history."

Historian Silvio Bedini, an advisor to the project who holds the rather enigmatic title "keeper of rare books" at the Smithsonian Institution, hopes the dig and historical park will spark renewed appreciation of Banneker—for his *real* achievements. "He was one of the first black men of science in a period when there were very few black men of [known] achievement and he deserves an awful lot of credit," says the author.

"Unfortunately, he was often misrepresented, especially through the nineteenth century. Legends were developed by nineteenth-century writers who didn't have the information. One was that Banneker was able to restore Pierre L'Enfant's plans [for Washington, D. C.] from total recall. He never even met L'Enfant! Another was that Jefferson invited him to lunch at the White House. Hell! They hadn't even cut down the bushes [to build the White House] yet! But the thing is, this man deserves a tremendous amount of credit for his *mathematical* ability.

"If you've ever seen the books that he taught himself from, they're very complicated; they're almost impossible even for someone with a scientific background to understand. And just by himself, with absolutely no guidance, he was able to assimilate all of this and to actually calculate ephemeries for an almanac. [An ephemerie is a table indicating the positions of the heavenly bodies from day to day throughout the year.] There were very few in this period who were able to do this. This is the thing that is always overlooked. People will say that, yes, 'Banneker published an almanac.' But the fact that he did the *calculations* is the thing. I have a copy of his astronomical journal and it is a fantastic document.

"There's so very little that is tangible about the early black people of achievement, Phillis Wheatley and any of the others," he adds. "This is why this project, I think, is so important."

It may well be important for another reason as well. It has exposed five-year-old Rasheida Washington to a group of grownups "playing in the dirt." And maybe it's imprinted on her mind that archaeology—a supersophisticated form of "playing in the dirt"—might be a pretty interesting thing to explore one day. ●

Harriet Scarupa wrote about the opera X *in the September issue of* American Visions.

STORY

1527-1991

Frutti" at Specialty Recording Studio, Los Angeles.

■ **1955** — Bo Diddley, an inspiration for Jimi Hendrix and the 1960s psychedelic rock 'n' roll movement, records "Oh, Bo Diddley" at Chess Records.

■ **1955** — Chuck Berry, another rock 'n' roll pioneer, records "Maybellene" at Chess Records.

■ **1956** — Chicago teen-ager Emmett Till is murdered and disfigured in Greenwood, Miss., after being accused of whistling at a white woman.

■ **1956** — James Brown records "Please, Please, Please" at WDRW studios, Augusta, Ga.

■ **1956** — Nat "King" Cole becomes the first African-American to headline a television variety show, "The Nat 'King' Cole Show."

■ **1957** — Executive Order 10730, signed by President Eisenhower, ends segregation at Central High School, Little Rock, Ark.

■ **1957** — Althea Gibson wins the Women's Tennis Singles Championship at Wimbledon.

■ **1957** — Jim Brown, considered one of the greatest offensive backs in the history of football, joins the Cleveland Browns.

■ **1959** — "Hitsville U.S.A.," better known as Motown Records, is established by Berry Gordy and friends.

■ **1959** — Lorraine Hansberry's play "A Raisin in the Sun" opens at the Barrymore Theatre in New York. The play later became a film starring Sidney Poitier.

■ **1959** — Wilt Chamberlain, considered one of the greatest offensive players in the history of basketball, joins the Philadelphia Warriors.

■ **1960** — African-American college students begin the sit-in movement.

■ **1960** — Clarence Forte, barber and president of the local NAACP Youth Council, leads the first sit-in in Tampa, at Woolworth's Department Store.

receives the Nobel Peace Prize.

■ **1965** — Malcolm X — Muslim leader, revolutionary, author and prophet — is assassinated in the Audubon Ballroom, New York City.

■ **1965** — Sidney Poitier becomes the first African-American to receive an Oscar for best actor, for "Lilies of the Field."

■ **1966** — Bill Russell becomes the first African-American to coach a major professional athletic team, the Boston Celtics.

■ **1966** — Edward W. Brooke of Massachusetts becomes the first African-American to be elected to the U.S. Senate in the 20th century.

■ **1966** — Stokely Carmichael, revolutionary and one of the first to popularize the term "Black Power," is appointed president of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

■ **1966** — Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale found the Black Panther Party.

■ **1967** — Carl Stokes is inaugurated mayor of Cleveland, and Richard Hatcher is elected mayor of Gary, Ind.

■ **1967** — Muhammad Ali is stripped of his WBC heavyweight boxing title because he refuses to fight in Vietnam. He reclaims the title in less than 10 years.

■ **1967** — Thurgood Marshall, former NAACP lawyer, is named to the U.S. Supreme Court. He becomes the first African-American to hold such a post.

■ **1967** — Tampa experiences a major race riot in response to a police officer's shooting of a robbery supsect, Martin Chambers.

■ **1967** — Bill Cosby, first black actor to be featured in a television network drama, receives an Emmy Award for the TV series "I Spy."

■ **1968** — Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated.

■ **1969** — Nikki Giovanni, poet, product of the Black Power '60s

James Jr. becomes commander-in-chief of the North American Air Defense Command and is promoted to four-star general, the first African-American to achieve such status.

■ **1975** — WGPR, the first black-owned, black-operated television station in the United States, goes on the air in Detroit.

■ **1975** — Alice Walker, novelist and feminist, presents her novel, "The Color Purple."

■ **1975** — Jake Gaither, legendary FAMU football coach, becomes the only coach in history to receive the football Triple Crown Award. Gaither also is elected to the National Football Foundation Hall of Fame.

■ **1977** — Alex Haley is awarded a Pulitzer Prize for his novel, "Roots."

■ **1979** — Sir Arthur Lewis — Princeton Economics Professor — is awarded the Nobel Prize for his work in the subject of problems of developing nations.

■ **1983** — Lt. Col. Guion S. "Bunny" Bluford, aboard the space shuttle Challenger, becomes America's first black astronaut in space. An earlier Soviet space shot earns a Cuban cosmonaut the title of the first black man in outer space.

■ **1984** — Carl Lewis receives four gold medals during the Los Angeles Olympics. He ties the record Jesse Owens set almost 50 years before.

■ **1984** — Vanessa Williams becomes black America's first Miss America. When she abdicates her crown, she is succeeded by African-American Suzette Charles.

■ **1984** — Jesse Jackson — pastor, activist, television personality, statesman — makes the first of two bids for the Democratic presidential nomination.

■ **1987** — Doug Williams, former Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback, leads the Washington Redskins to an NFL

BayLife
The Tampa Tribune
Saturday, February 23, 1991

Brought here in chains aboard slave ships, the first African-Americans persevered until their descendants took their rightful place in every segment of American society: athletes and authors, inventors and governors, entertainers and academics.



■ **1960** — Wilma Rudolph becomes the only American woman athlete ever to win three gold Olympic medals.

■ **1960** — Arthur Ashe Jr. becomes the first African-American to win the U.S. Open.

■ **1961** — Alvin Ailey forms the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre.

■ **1961** — Operatic soprano Leontyne Price makes her debut with the New York Metropolitan Opera. She becomes the second African-American to do so, 11 years after opera singer Marian Anderson.

■ **1963** — Medgar Evers, leader of the Jackson, Miss. NAACP, is assassinated.

■ **1963** — The march on Washington, involving more than 200,000 people, becomes "the largest single protest demonstration in the history of America."

■ **1964** — Martin Luther King Jr. and 70s, publishes her first book, "Black Judgment."

■ **1971** — Dudley Randall, poet and publisher, publishes an anthology, "The Black Poets," including the works of poets Haki Madhabuti (Don L. Lee), Imamu Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones), Nikki Giovani, Sonia Sanchez and others.

■ **1971** — Marvin Gaye releases the album "What's Going On?"

■ **1972** — Frank Wills, security guard at the Washington, D.C., Watergate office complex, foils an attempt by burglars to infiltrate the Democratic Party National Headquarters.

■ **1974** — Frank Robinson is named manager of the Cleveland Indians, the first black in that position in baseball major league history.

■ **1974** — Henry "Hank" Aaron of the Atlanta Braves bats his 715th home run, breaking Babe Ruth's record.

■ **1975** — Gen. Daniel "Chappie" championship. In his autobiography, "Quarterblack," Williams criticizes his treatment by the Bucs.

■ **1988** — Ron H. Brown becomes chairman of the Democratic Party. He is the first African-American in history to hold that position.

■ **1989** — Art Shell of the Los Angeles Raiders is the first African-American to coach an NFL team.

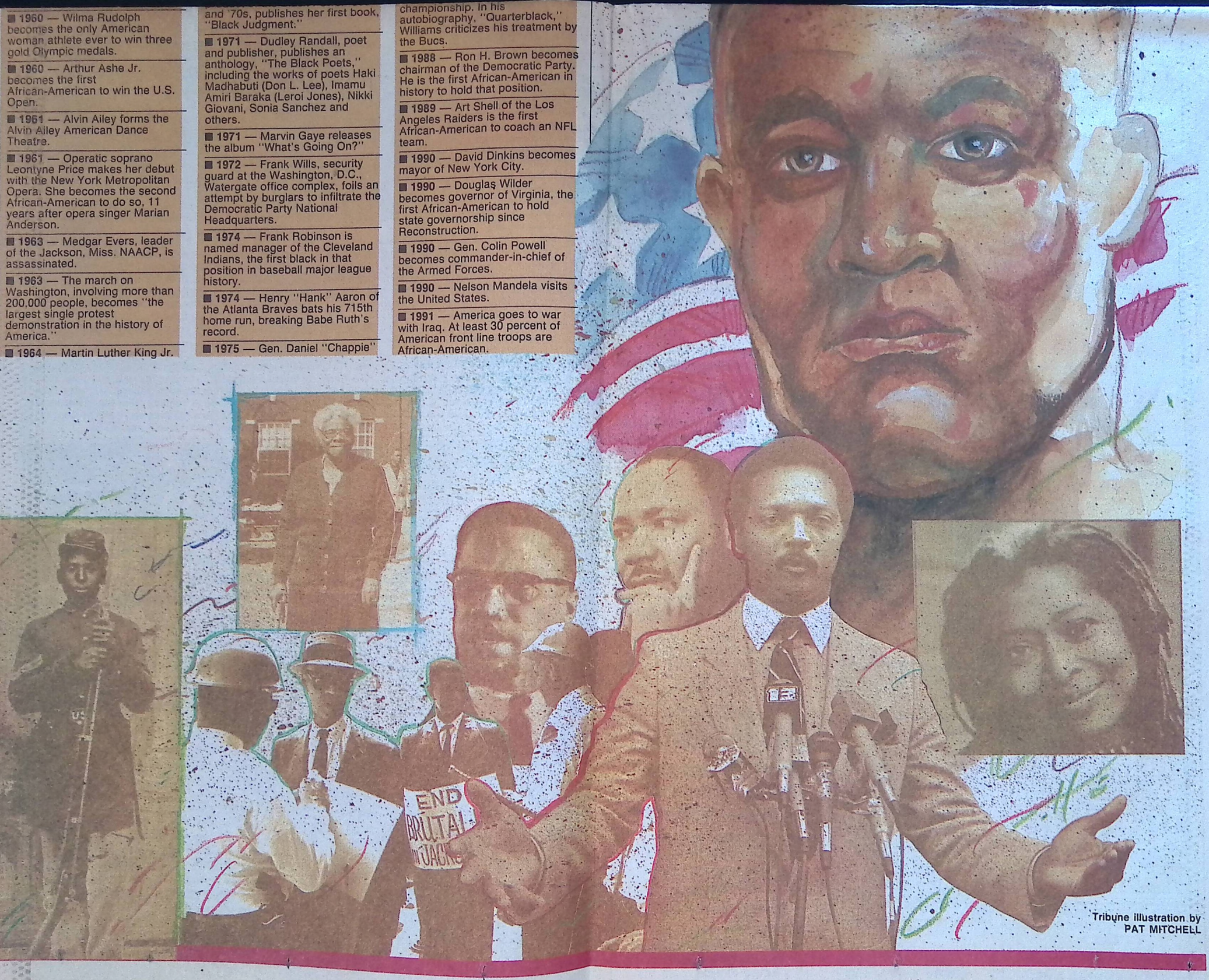
■ **1990** — David Dinkins becomes mayor of New York City.

■ **1990** — Douglas Wilder becomes governor of Virginia, the first African-American to hold state governorship since Reconstruction.

■ **1990** — Gen. Colin Powell becomes commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces.

■ **1990** — Nelson Mandela visits the United States.

■ **1991** — America goes to war with Iraq. At least 30 percent of American front line troops are African-American.



Tribune illustration by
PAT MITCHELL

The Legacy of BLACK HIS

Significant dates in the African-American experience —

By JAMES TOKLEY

■ **1527** — Estevenico D'Arrantes, who accompanies Narvaez, becomes the first black man to set foot on the shores of what was to become known as Tampa Bay. He later discovers what is now Arizona and New Mexico.

■ **1619** — The first African slaves arrive at Jamestown, Va. However, the first slaves in Jamestown were British prisoners.

■ **1662** — The Colony of Virginia decrees that the status of children (slaves or free) shall henceforth depend on the status of the mother (slave or free).

■ **1687** — Fort Negro (also known as Fort Moosa) is constructed by more than 300 Africans and their Indian allies at the mouth of the Appalachicola River. The fort prohibits English and American expeditions from entering that part of Florida in search of runaway slaves.

■ **1761** — Jupiter Hammon publishes his poem "An Evening Thought, Salvation by Christ and Penitential Cries" and becomes the first black person to be published in America.

■ **1761** — Benjamin Banneker, born free, constructs what probably is the first clock in America. Banneker later completes blueprints for the layout of Washington, D.C.

■ **1772** — Slavery is abolished in Great Britain. Furthermore, any slave who is taken to England will be freed.

■ **1773** — Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, black fur trader, founds what will become Chicago.

■ **1775** — Peter Salem stops the British charge at Bunker Hill by shooting the British commander.

■ **1776** — Phoebe Francis, black waitress, foils an English attempt to assassinate Gen. George Washington by warning him that the chef has poisoned his bowl of peas.

■ **1781** — On Aug. 13, Nicholas, a author, lecturer, abolitionist, arguer with presidents, "indispensible man in the events that culminated in freeing young America from slavery" — publishes his autobiography.

■ **1845** — Norbert Rillieux, freedman from Louisiana, invents and patents the sugar-refining process.

■ **1849** — Harriet Tubman, the "black Moses" and head conductor of the "Underground Railroad," escapes from slavery.

■ **1854** — Ashmun Institute, now Lincoln University — the first black college — is founded in Oxford, Pa.

■ **1852** — "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by Harriet Beecher Stowe is published. Many have given this novel credit as the single-most influential argument against slavery before the Civil War.

■ **1853** — William Wells Brown's "Clotel, or the President's Daughter" is supposedly based on the life of Thomas Jefferson's mulatto daughter, who is sold into slavery in New Orleans. Brown's work is the first novel to be published by an African-American.

■ **1854** — The Kansas-Nebraska Act admits Kansas and Nebraska as "free" territories. This is in direct contradiction to the Missouri Compromise, which is based on the Mason-Dixon Line.

■ **1859** — John Brown of Kansas attacks the armory at Harper's Ferry, Va.

■ **1860** — Abraham Lincoln becomes president of the United States.

■ **1860** — In Hillsborough County, there are approximately 2,415 whites and 564 black slaves. Each slave is valued at approximately $750.

■ **1861** — Civil War breaks out.

■ **1863** — President Lincoln authorizes black enlistment for military service.

■ **1863** — Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation, which frees the slaves.

■ **1881** — Louis Latimer invents and patents the first incandescent electric lamp with a carbon filament.

■ **1884** — T. Thomas Fortune, Florida-born entrepreneur, publishes the first issue of The New York Age, a successful black newspaper.

■ **1884** — John Roy Lynch, an African-American and former Reconstruction congressman, is elected temporary chairman of the Republican Convention. As such, he becomes the first African-American to preside over a national political gathering.

■ **1890** — Henry Ossawa Tanner, black painter, completes "The Banjo Lesson."

■ **1891** — Daniel Hale Williams founds Provident Hospital in Chicago. He also establishes the first training school for black nurses. In 1893, at Provident Hospital, Williams performs the world's first successful heart surgery.

■ **1891** — Ruperto and Paulina Pedroso save both Jose Marti's life and the Cuban Revolution. The couple nurse Marti back to health after he is poisoned by a Spanish agent.

■ **1893** — Paul Lawrence Dunbar publishes his first collection of poetry, "Oak and Ivy." One of Dunbar's most avid readers is Jefferson Davis, ex-president of the Confederacy.

■ **1895** — Booker T. Washington delivers his "Atlanta Compromise" speech and is cheered by whites, jeered by blacks.

■ **1896** — U.S. Supreme Court decision Plessy vs. Ferguson upholds the concept of "separate, but equal."

■ **1897** — Scott Joplin, known as the "Father of Ragtime," publishes "Maple Leaf Rag."

■ **1898** — Tampa witnesses its first and only "official" lynching with the hanging of Harry Singleton, a black man, convicted of killing police officer John

■ **1915** — "The Birth of A Nation" by D.W. Griffith becomes one of the first feature films to portray African-Americans as villains. The film's heroes are members of the KKK.

■ **1917** — The United States declares war on Germany; 700,000 African-Americans register for the draft.

■ **1918** — "The Birth of A Race," made in Sulphur Springs by black filmmaker Richard Norman, is a feature film intended to rebuff D.W. Griffith's earlier film.

■ **1920** — The "Harlem Renaissance" begins.

■ **1920** — Warren G. Harding becomes 28th president of the United States. Various historians argue that Harding is the son of a black father and a white mother.

■ **1920** — The first National Negro Baseball League begins. From its ranks will come legends such as Josh Gibson "Diablo" Wells, "Satchel-foot" Paige and Jackie Robinson.

■ **1920** — Mamie Smith's "Crazy Blues" becomes the first recording of a blues vocal by a black artist.

■ **1921** — Langston Hughes, known as America's black poet laureate, introduces his first published poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." It becomes an anthem of the black experience.

■ **1921** — "Shuffle Along," which included "I'm Just Wild About Harry" and was created by Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle Sr., becomes the first black show on Broadway after World War I.

■ **1922** — Claude McKay, regarded by many as the "Poetic Herald of the Harlem Renaissance," completes "Harlem Shadows."

■ **1922** — Blanche Armwood Beatty Washington, a Tampa native and a Renaissance woman, becomes the first executive secretary of the newly established Tampa Urban League.

■ **1922** — Central Life Insurance Co., one of America's oldest black

■ **1929** — Stepin' Fetchit of Tampa is featured in the all-black film, "Hearts in Dixie."

■ **1930** — Fard Mohammed founds the Temple of Islam. Later, Fard is replaced by the Hon. Elijah Muhammad, who will establish the Islamic organization known as the "Black Muslims."

■ **1932** — Duke Ellington's musical production, "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing," begins the Swing era.

■ **1934** — Gospel contralto Mahalia Jackson makes her first record "God Gonna Separate the Wheat from the Tares."

4

■ **1934** — Zora Neale Hurston, born in Eatonville, publishes her first book, "Jonah's Gourd Vine." Later subsidized by the Work Progress Administration Writers' Project, Hurston collaborates on the landmark "Florida Papers," some of which will be housed at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

■ **1935** — Leon Claxton's "Royal American Show," later the "Harlem Revue," begins its highly successful annual run on Tampa's Central Avenue.

■ **1935** — The National Council of Negro Women, organized to serve as a beacon and clearinghouse for African-American women, is founded by educator Mary McLeod Bethune.

■ **1935** — The International Longshoreman's Association is organized by black Tampa resident James Lavelle.

■ **1936** — Jesse Owens, known at Ohio State University as "The Ebony Antelope," wins four gold medals at the Berlin Olympics.

■ **1938** — Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton, also a "Father of the Blues," records the History of Jazz Series for the Archives of American Folksong, Library of Congress. In all, Morton records 116 records.

■ **1938** — Billie Holiday, star-crossed "Lady Day" and "Queen of Jazz," appears with Artie Shaw's jazz orchestra. She

nuttin' 'bout birthin' babies" in the film "Gone With the Wind."

■ **1940** — Richard Wright publishes the first of three novels, "Native Son."

■ **1940** — Charles Drew develops and perfects the techniques for separating and preserving blood plasma.

■ **1940** — Hattie McDaniel becomes the first African-American to win an Oscar for best supporting actress, for her role as Mammy in "Gone With the Wind."

■ **1940** — Benjamin O. Davis Sr. becomes the first black general in the history of the U.S. Armed Forces.

■ **1943** — Nat "King" Cole, musical idol for millions of Americans, markets his first record. It is an original piece entitled "Straighten Up and Fly Right."

■ **1943** — Paul Robeson appears as Othello in New York, receiving "one of the wildest and most prolonged ovations ... in the history of the New York Theatre."

■ **1944** — The 99th Pursuit Squadron, provided with Mustang fighter planes and commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., flies more than 500 combat missions, has more than 3,000 sorties against the Germans and doesn't lose a man.

■ **1945** — Jazz pioneers Charlie "Bird" Parker (tenor saxophone) and Dizzy Gillespie (trumpet) launch the "Bop" movement.

■ **1947** — Historian John Hope Franklin publishes "From Slavery to Freedom," a chronicle of America's black experience.

■ **1947** — Jackie Robinson joins the Brooklyn Dodgers. He becomes the first non-Latin black player in the baseball major leagues.

■ **1948** — "Ray Charles" Robinson joins Charlie Brantley of Tampa in a local jazz combo. Featured singer is Clarence Jolly, also of Tampa.

black patriot of Kent County, Delaware, rides to Dover, the state capital, to warn that the British are coming.

■ **1793** — Eli Whitney, with assistance from at least one of his slaves, invents the cotton gin. The invention saves the South and prolongs the dying institution of slavery.

■ **1800** — Gabriel Prosser, black slave, plans to lead thousands of slaves in armed rebellion against their masters. He is betrayed by one of the worst storms in Virginia history and by two nervous house slaves.

■ **1804** — Alexander Hamilton, a light-skinned mulatto born in the Virgin Islands, according to historian J.A. Rogers, and considered the father of the Federalist system of government, is killed in a duel with Aaron Burr.

■ **1804** — William Henry Lane perfects the tap dance. Unlike slaves in Latin America, the slaves in North America are prohibited from making, or playing drums. Hence, tap dancing is invented, and will become a vital source of communication as well as a lively source of entertainment.

■ **1816** — Richard Allen and Absolom Jones organize the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

■ **1820** — The Mason-Dixon Line is established. The boundary line between Pennsylvania and Maryland separates free states from slave states.

■ **1822** — Liberia is founded in Africa by African-Americans (freedmen and former slaves) of the American Colonization Society.

■ **1831** — Nat Turner, leader of what many term "the greatest slave rebellion in American history," is captured Oct. 30 and hanged 12 days later in Jerusalem, Va.

■ **1832** — Augustus P. Jackson, Philadelphia confectioner, invents ice cream.

■ **1835** — The Second Seminole War in Florida allegedly is provoked by two American "Federal agents," who arrest Chief Osceola and seize his black wife.

■ **1839** — Cinque and his African followers hijack the slave ship Amistead on the high seas. They are arrested, but later awarded their freedom by the U.S. Supreme Court and returned to the coast of West Africa as freedmen.

■ **1844** — Jim Beckworth finds a pass through formerly insurmountable Sierra Nevadas mountains on his way to California.

■ **1845** — Frederick Douglass —

■ **1863** — The Battle of Olustee in Florida sees the all-black troops of the First North Carolina and the 54th Massachusetts sustaining heavy casualties, but "inflicting heavy losses on the Confederate enemy."

■ **1865** — Jefferson Davis authorizes the enlistment of black troops into the Confederacy.

■ **1865** — The South surrenders to the North at Appomattox Court House, and the Civil War is over. About 179,000 African-Americans served in the Union force (9 percent to 10 percent). Three thousand are killed in battle, and 26,000 died from disease.

■ **1865** — Beulah Baptist Church, Tampa's oldest black church, is established.

■ **1865** — Abraham Lincoln is assassinated by John Wilkes Booth.

■ **1865** — The Ku Klux Klan forms in Tennessee.

■ **1866** — Congress passes the 13th Amendment to abolish slavery.

■ **1866** — Edward G. Walker and Charles L. Mitchell of Massachusetts become the first African-Americans to serve in a U.S. legislative assembly.

■ **1866** — The Civil Rights Bill is ratified.

■ **1867** — Morehouse College is established in Atlanta. Among its future alumni are Benjamin E. Mays, Martin Luther King Jr. and the Rev. Leon Lowery of Tampa.

■ **1867** — Howard University (Washington, D.C.) is established. It becomes the first and only federally subsidized college for African-Americans.

■ **1870** — Hiram Revels becomes the first black senator in the history of America.

■ **1870** — St. Paul A.M.E. Church, Tampa's second-oldest black church, is established.

■ **1872** — T.J. Marshall invents and patents the fire extinguisher.

■ **1875** — Oscar Lewis wins the first Kentucky Derby, on Aristedes.

■ **1876** — Nat Love — "Indian-fighter, bronc-buster, gun-fighter, range-rider" — is named "Deadwood Dick" in a contest in Deadwood, S.D., to find the best "all-around cowboy."

■ **1881** — Tennessee enacts a "Jim Crow" railroad law, which prohibits African-Americans from riding first class. Other Southern states, including Florida in 1887, follow Tennessee's example.

■ **1881** — Booker T. Washington opens Tuskegee Institute with a $2,000 loan from the Alabama Legislature.

McCormick.

■ **1898** — The Spanish-American War sees four black Army regiments dispatched to Tampa.

■ **1899** — George F. Grant invents the golf tee.

■ **1900** — James Weldon Johnson and his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, compose "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," popularly known as the "Negro National Anthem."

■ **1901** — Booker T. Washington, recognized spokesman for the African-American at the turn of the century, publishes the compelling story of his life: "Up From Slavery."

■ **1902** — Bert Williams, called "the greatest vaudeville performer in the history of the American stage," is featured on the vaudeville show, "In Dahomey."

■ **1903** — W.E.B.DuBois, critic, editor, scholar, author and activist, asks in his famous work "The Souls of Black Folk,": "Would America have been America without her black people?" From most historians comes a resounding reply: "No!"

■ **1904** — Mary McLeod Bethune founds Bethune Cookman College in Daytona Beach on the site of a city dump.

■ **1908** — Jack Johnson, nicknamed "Lil' Artha," destroys Tommy Burns in Sydney, Australia, to become the world's first undisputed black heavyweight champion.

■ **1909** — The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is founded in response to increased brutalization and disenfranchisement of African-Americans.

■ **1910** — The National Urban League is founded in New York City.

■ **1910** — According to some historians, Matthew Henson ignores a cursing, frostbitten Admiral Robert E. Perry to become the first human being to stand on the North Pole.

■ **1914** — Garrett A. Morgan invents the "gas inhalator." It is known by a different name to the thousands of soldiers whose lives it will save. They will call it the "gas mask."

■ **1914** — Marcus Mosiah Garvey, Jamaican visionary who will succeed more than anyone else before or since in preparing for full-scale black repatriation of Africa, forms the Universal Negro Improvement Association.

■ **1914** W.C. Handy, "Father of the Blues," publishes "The St. Louis Blues." Its popularity helps make American blues a household word worldwide.

insurance firms, is founded by seven black Tampa businessmen.

■ **1923** — Garrett A. Morgan, inventor of the gas mask, produces the automatic traffic light.

■ **1923** — Bessie Smith, the "Queen of the Blues," records "Down-Hearted Blues."

■ **1923** — The Renaissance becomes the first black pro basketball team in the United States.

■ **1923** — Jean Toomer publishes the novel, "Cane," hailed as "the most impressive product of the Negro Renaissance."

■ **1924** — Congress passes the Immigration Act, excluding Africans and Caribbean blacks from entering the country.

■ **1925** — Dancer Josephine Baker gains international stardom.

■ **1926** — Negro History Week, later extended to a month, is introduced by scholar Carter G. Woodson.

becomes one of the first black entertainers to be featured regularly with a major white American orchestra.

■ **1938** — Joe Louis, "The Brown Bomber," defeats German heavyweight champion Max Schmeling in a New York rematch. Blacks on Tampa's Central Avenue reportedly celebrate by carrying a casket down the middle of the street.

■ **1939** — George Washington Carver — creator of more than 800 inventions extracted from the peanut, sweet potato, common weed and soybean — receives the Roosevelt Medal for distinguished service in the field of science.

■ **1939** — Contralto Marian Anderson is denied the use of Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution. This act will cause Eleanor Roosevelt — friend of Mary McLeod Bethune — to resign her membership from that group.

■ **1939** — Butterfly McQueen of Tampa says, "Ah don' know

wins a Pulitzer Prize for her work, "Annie Allen." She becomes the first African-American to receive the award.

■ **1950** — Ralph Bunche receives the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in organizing an Arab-Israeli cease-fire.

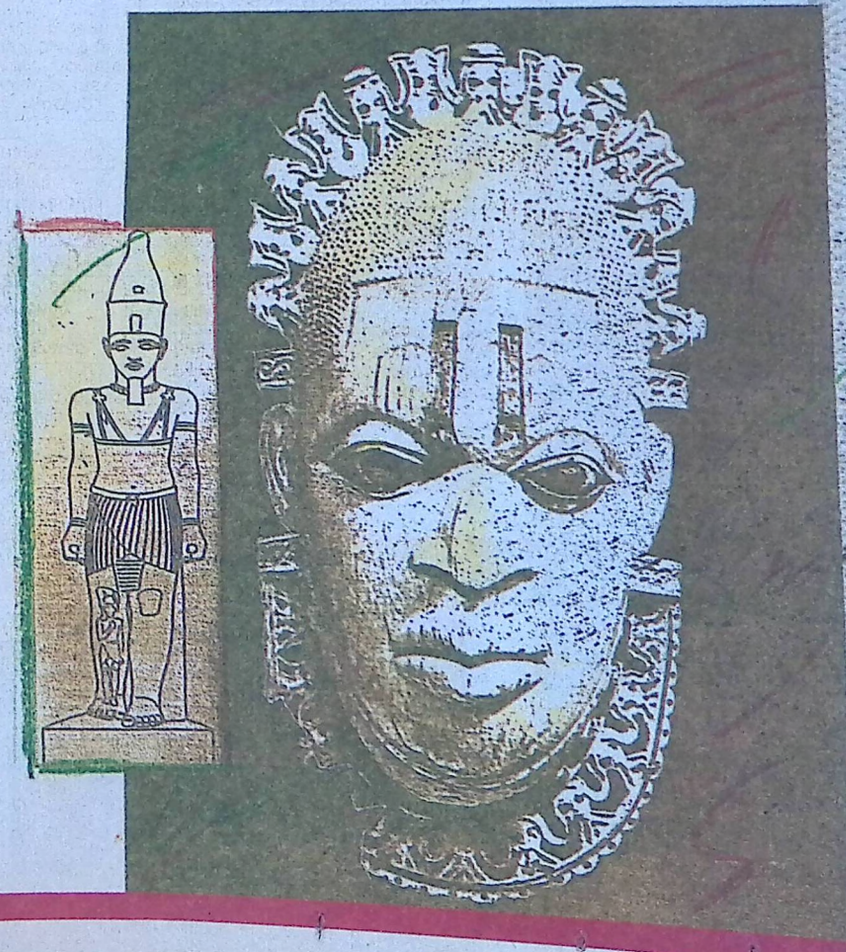
■ **1952** — Ralph Ellison publishes his critically acclaimed and socially compelling novel, "Invisible Man."

■ **1953** — James Baldwin, a black writer of the 1950s, publishes his first novel, "Go Tell It on the Mountain."

■ **1954** — Brown vs. Board of Education strikes down the constitutionality of school segregation.

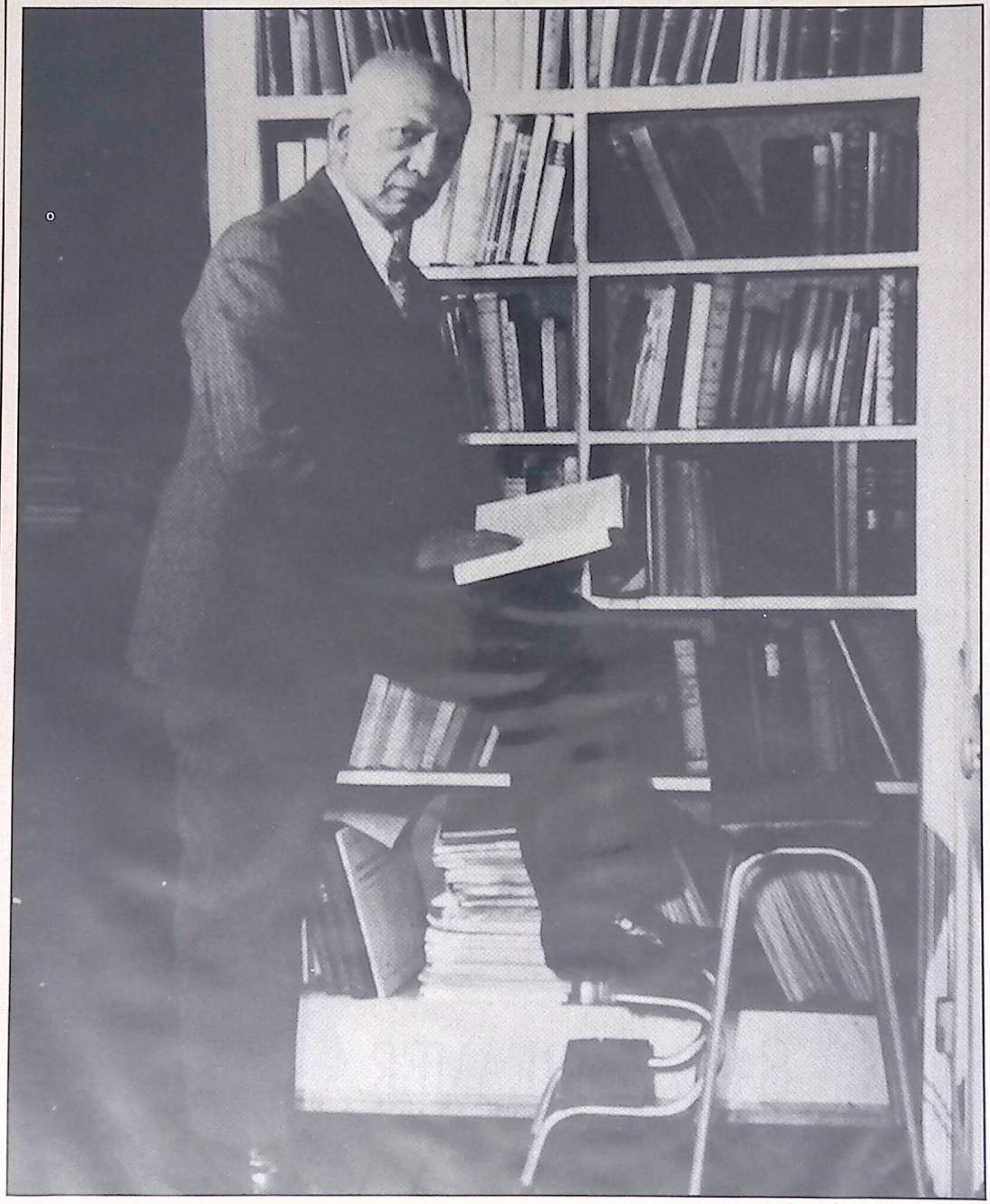
■ **1955** — Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Ala., public bus, sparking the Montgomery bus boycott in 1956 and becoming the spirit of the renewed civil rights movement.

■ **1955** — Little Richard, a pioneer of rock 'n' roll, records "Tutti



Memorable Photos

FROM THE EBONY FILES



"Father of Black history," *Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founded the first annual Black history celebration in February 1926.*

How do you see the road in front of you?

The opportunity to get ahead isn't always a matter of red or green. Historically, it's often been a question of black and white.

Luckily, Garret A. Morgan didn't



see color as an obstacle.

Instead, this son of a former slave overcame tremendous prejudice to become one of the most important American inventors of this century. His creations ranged from a hair-straightening cream to the gas mask which saved thousands of lives during World War I.

But it was Mr. Morgan's development of the traffic signal which perhaps best symbolizes his life. In 1923, automobiles were increasing in number, and so, unfortunately, were automobile accidents.

After witnessing one down the street from his house, he developed and sold his patent for a traffic safety light to General Electric—the forerunner of the traffic light we see on practically every corner in the world.

It typified his concern for the safety of people everywhere. His perseverance. And his refusal to let the color of his skin color anyone's perception of his ability.

Which brings us the true lesson of Garret A. Morgan. He may have invented the traffic signal.

But he never saw a red light.

Amtrak



Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.
Facing the rising sun, of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

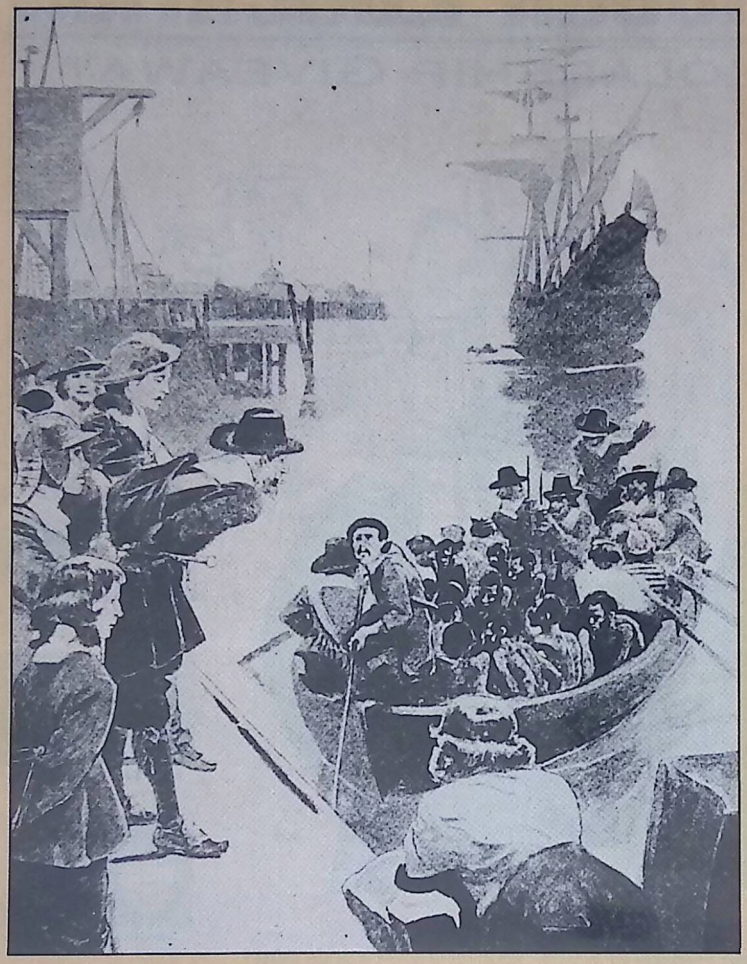
—Lift Every Voice and Sing





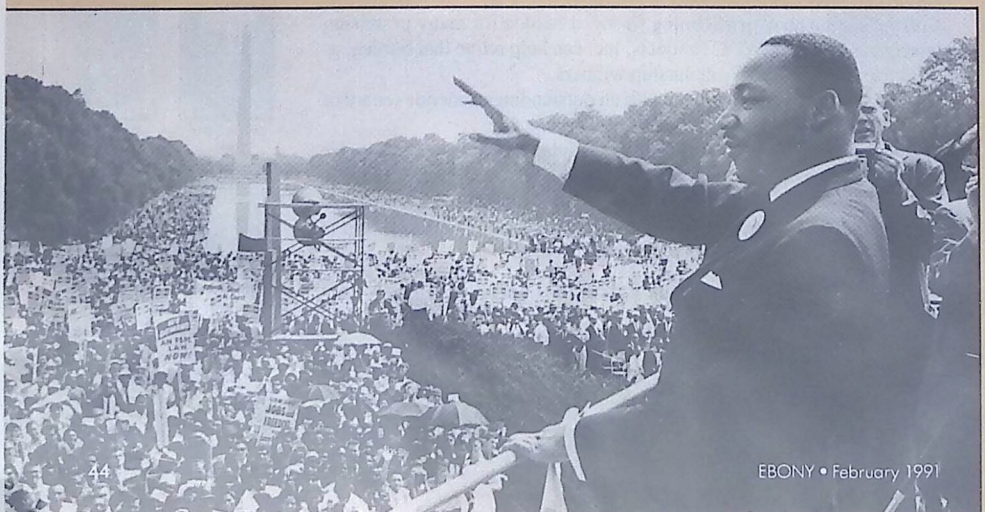
Transcending cotton fields and Jim Crow laws, Blacks created the foundations of American music and wealth and produced great leaders like journalist Ida B. Wells-Barnett and singer-activist Paul Robeson.

BLACK HISTORY



IN WORDS AND PICTURES

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty.
—Lift Every Voice and Sing

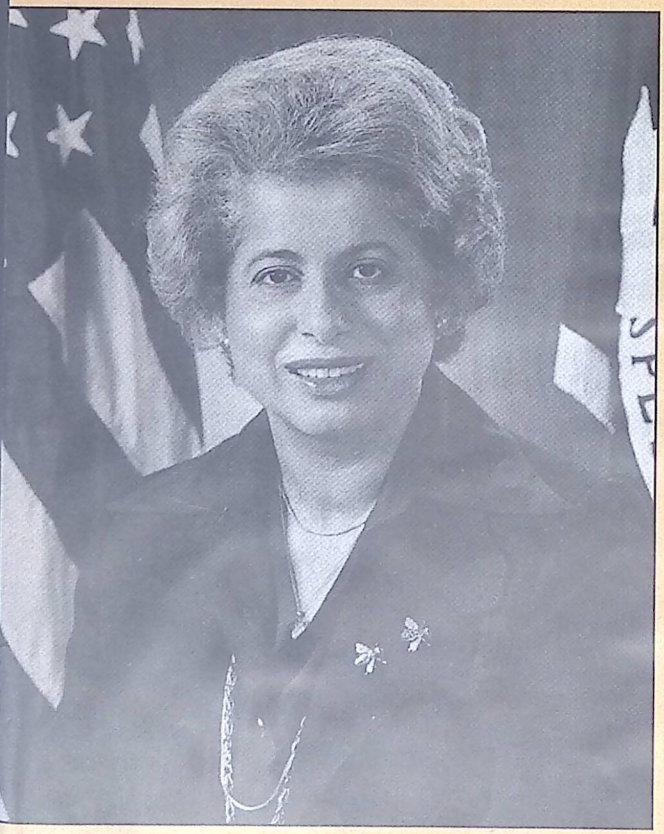


From arrival of first Blacks (in English America) at Jamestown, Va., in August 1619 to the March on Washington and the political triumphs of today, African-Americans have been major factors in the American drama.

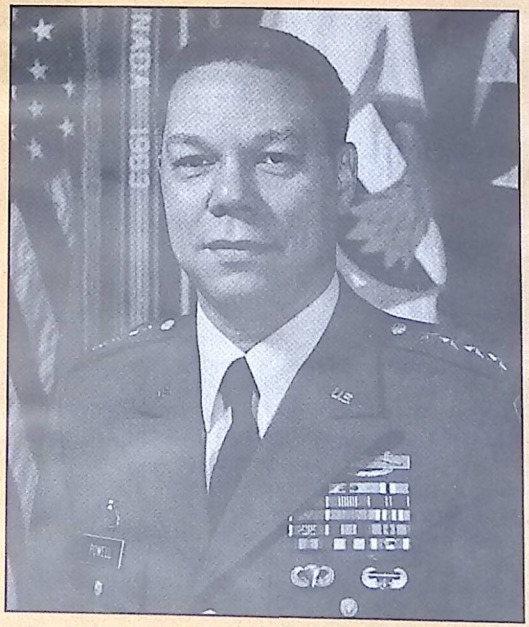
Continued on Page 46



First Black cabinet member was Robert Weaver, who was named secretary of housing and urban development. Patricia R. Harris was the first Black woman cabinet member, and Gen. Colin L. Powell is the first Black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



We are climbin' Jacob's ladder...
Every roun' goes higher, higher.
—Spiritual



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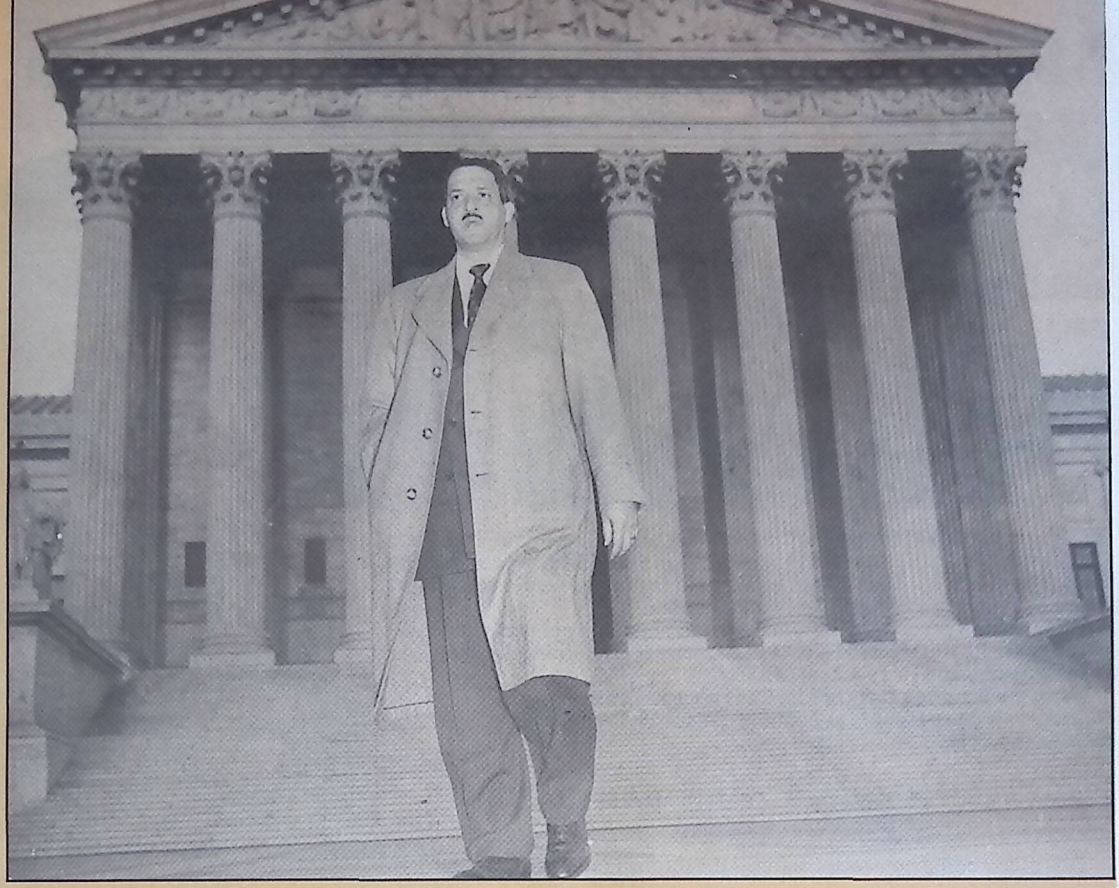
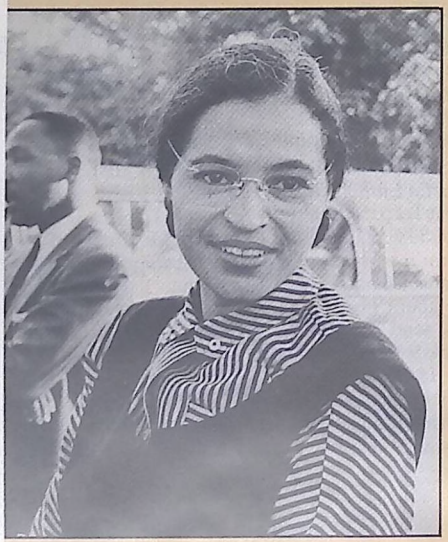
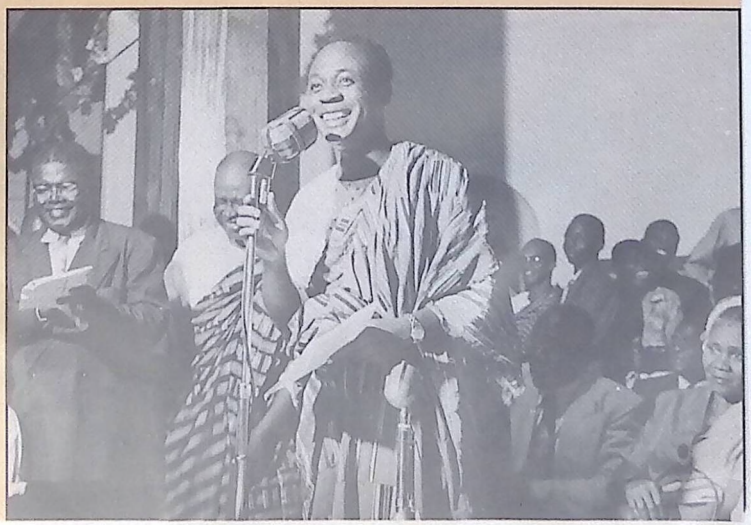


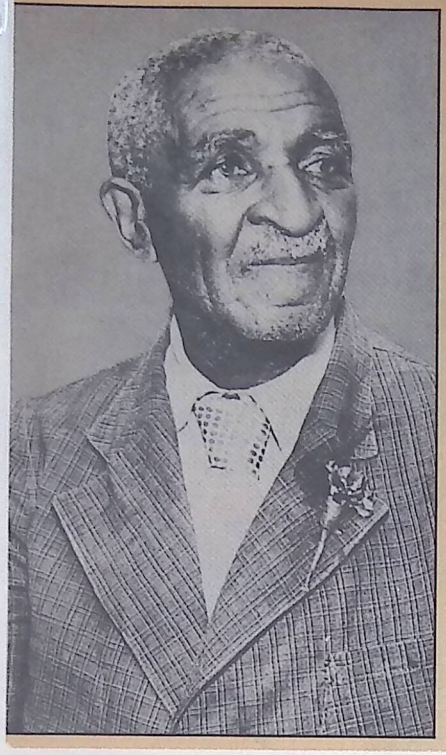


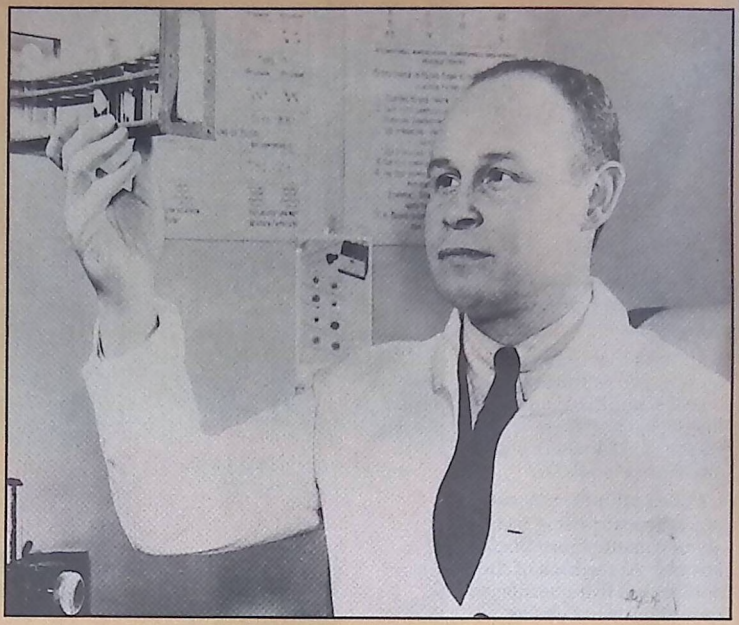
Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP played leading role in the Supreme Court desegregation decision. Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. helped organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott which was followed, in 1957, by the rise to power of Kwame Nkrumah and Ghana.

Joshua fit the battle of Jerico, Jerico, Jerico,
Joshua fit the battle of Jerico,
And the walls come tumblin' down.

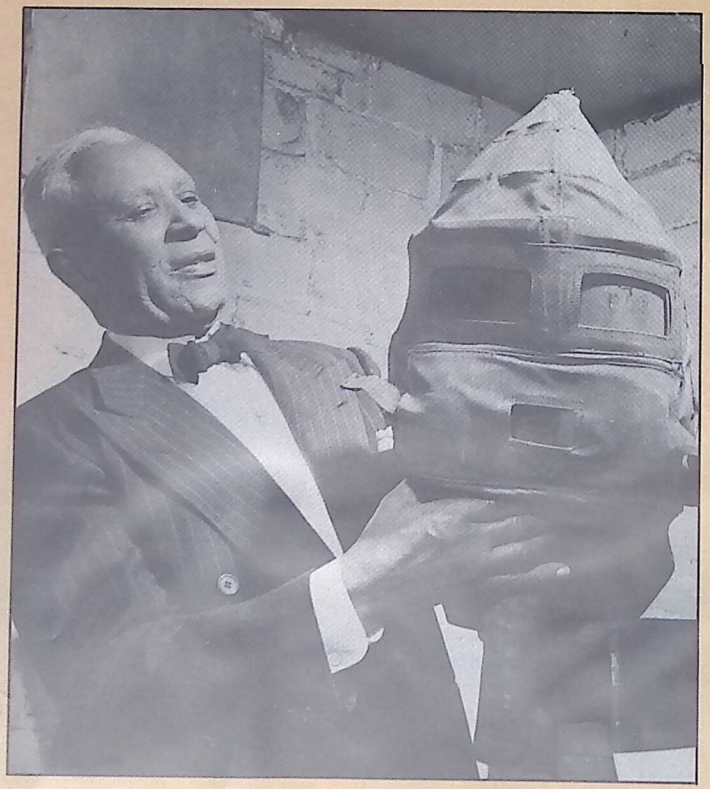
—Spiritual

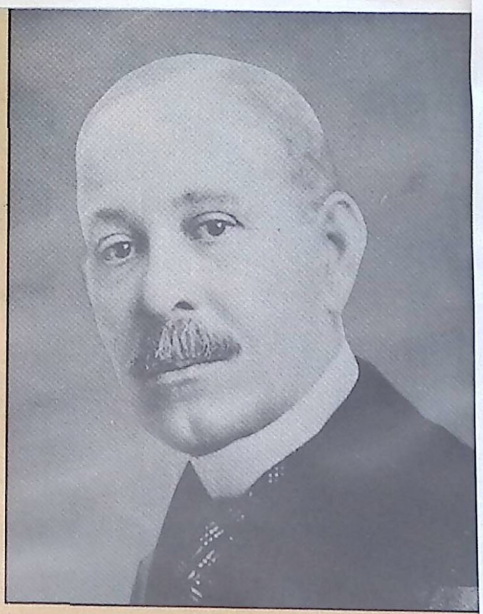






Black genius found expression in achievements of George Washington Carver (left), who revolutionized Southern agriculture; Dr. Charles R. Drew (above), a pioneer in the development of the blood bank; Garrett A. Morgan (opposite page, left), who invented the three-way automatic stop sign, and Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, the first person to successfully operate on the human heart.

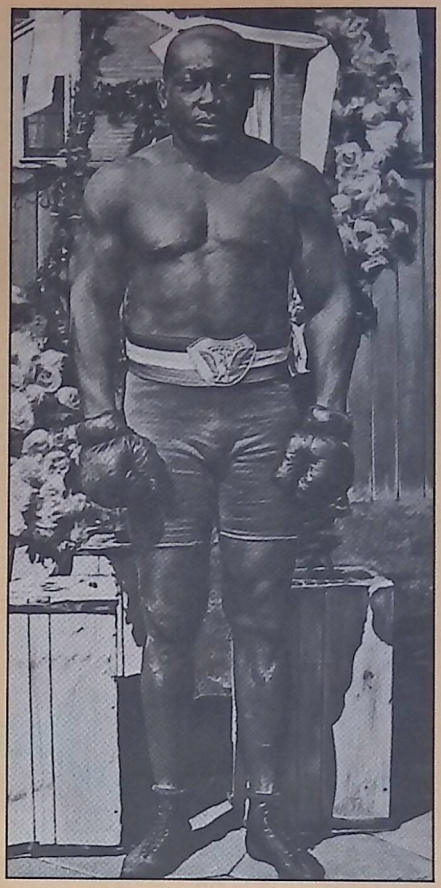




I say to you today that I still have a dream.

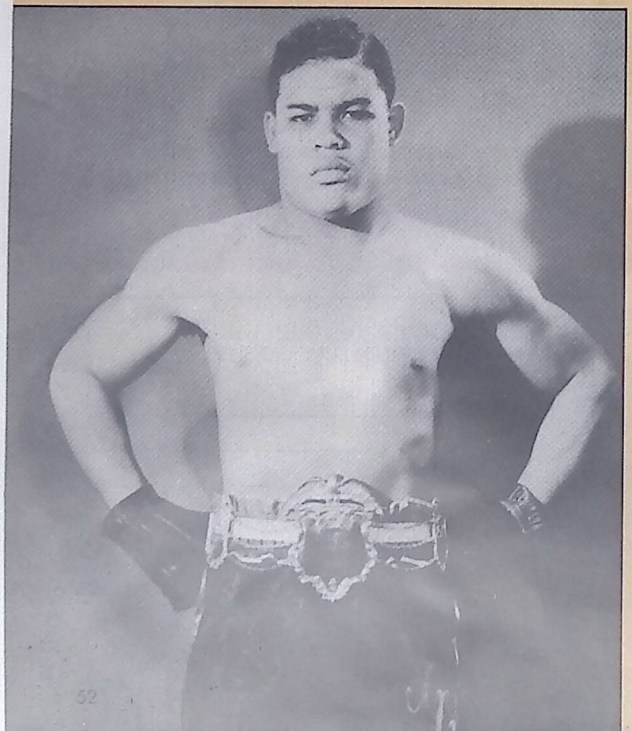
—Martin Luther King Jr.



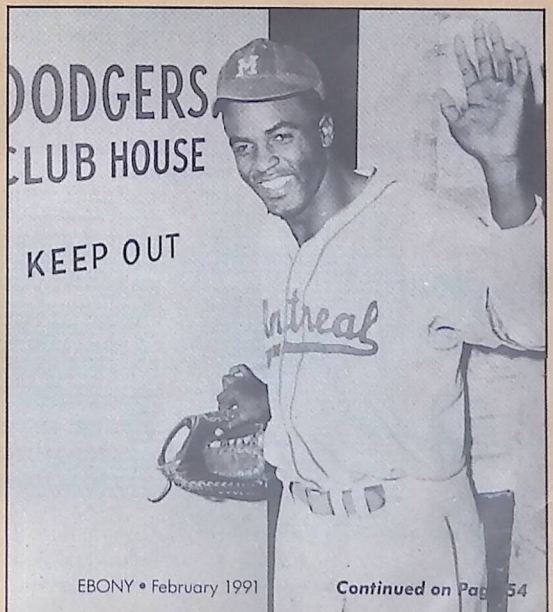


BLACK HISTORY *Continued*

He can run, but he can't hide.
—Joe Louis



Revolution in sports immortalized Jesse Owens, star of the 1936 Olympics; Jack Johnson, the first Black heavyweight champion; Joe Louis, who held the heavyweight championship for 12 years, and Jackie Robinson, the first Black in organized baseball in modern times.



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forced to rely on the words of others who chose, for some reason, to speak of her in vague and muted language. We know from these words and from other sources that she, like the other Mrs. Washingtons, was light-skinned, a "mulatto," according to cold and not always reliable census reports. She was, like the other Mrs. Washingtons, an educated woman, a product of Hampton Institute, which she attended with Washington's help. But she, unlike the other Mrs. Washingtons, was a retiring homebody who seemed to prefer the sidelines and the shadows. This does not mean, by any means, that she was a peripheral phenomenon in Washington's life. On the contrary, Fanny Smith and the women who succeeded her provided crucial elements that Washington needed at critical moments in his life.

The skeletal facts of Fanny Smith's life are quickly stated. She was born in 1858 in Malden, W. Va., and she was a childhood sweetheart of Washington, who also grew up in Malden. She graduated from Hampton in June, 1882, and married Washington on August 2, 1882, in the Zion Baptist Church in the Tinkersville section of Malden. Washington, it should be noted, was not a particularly promising catch. He was, at the time, principal of a new Alabama normal school which was on the verge of bankruptcy. The bride was 24 and the groom was 26.

The young couple packed their bags and moved immediately to Tuskegee, where they rented a big house and invited Tuskegee's four teachers to move in with them. This was not, all things considered, the best way to start a marriage, but it was a boon to *Principal* Washington, who acquired in one fell swoop a bride, a faculty dormitory and a faculty housekeeper. By 1883, the number of teachers boarding with the Washingtons had increased to eight.

Despite this unromantic setting, the marriage survived. On June 6, 1883, Mrs. Washington gave birth to Portia Marshall Washington, the first child born on the Tuskegee campus. Completely devoted to Washington and to Tuskegee, the young mother also found time to organize one of the first home economics classes for women. Although she was never a major personality on campus, she was, Washington said, "gentle and kind in disposition, and . . . quite a favorite with her people."

Throughout this period and later, even after her death, Fanny Washington was overshadowed by the rising star of Olivia A. Davidson, who *was* the major female personality on the campus and who was, in the view of Washington and modern scholars, the co-founder of Tuskegee Institute. Frail, beautiful, so light-skinned she could pass for White, Miss Davidson or "Miss D," as her friends called her, was assistant principal—the only person to hold that title in Washington's lifetime—and she was, on any fair reading of the record, one of the most remarkable personalities, male or female, Black or White, of the 19th century. A woman in the first Tuskegee class said she was "one of the noblest women who ever lived." A White woman called her "Sweet Saint Olivia."

Although Olivia Davidson suffered from a mysterious ailment that led to frequent illnesses, she was, according to some scholars, Washington's equal as a fund raiser and his superior as a teacher and educational theorist. Washington, to his credit, always conceded that she played a major role in founding Tuskegee, saying on more than one occasion that "she had more to do with the founding of this institution than anyone else."

Olivia Davidson was 27 years old, two years older than Washington, when she began her career at Tuskegee. Born in Virginia and raised in Ohio, she taught for several years in Mississippi and Tennessee before going on to Hampton and Framingham Normal School in Massachusetts, where she graduated with honors in 1881. She collapsed immediately after the graduation but recovered sufficiently to join Washington at Tuskegee six weeks after the school opened. Tireless, unrelenting, straining every nerve, marshaling matchless powers of analysis and persuasion, she organized the fairs and fund-raising expeditions that enabled the school to survive. Washington said later:

"The success of the school, especially during the first half dozen years of its existence, was due more to Miss Davidson than anyone else. During the organization of the school and in all matters of discipline she was the one to bring order out of every difficulty. When the last effort had apparently been exhausted and it seemed that things must stop, she was the one to find a way out . . . when a campaign for money had ended unsuccessfully, she would hie away North and money was sure to be found."

This was the woman—brilliant, determined, endlessly inventive—who stood in the center of the landscape during the crucial formative years of Tuskegee and Booker T. Washington and Fanny Washington. There is not the slightest hint, in the record or elsewhere, that the highly moralistic Olivia Davidson disturbed the marital harmony of the Washingtons. But Fanny Washington would have had to be superhuman not to feel a draft in the shade of Olivia Davidson's sun. That sun shone so bright that at least one modern scholar, Dr. Ann Garrett Robinson, hazarded the guess—which she labeled "pure speculation"—that "perhaps Fannie wondered whether she was as worthy a wife as she might have been." There is no record of Mrs. Washington's private thoughts or of the domestic arrangements of the Washington household, and there is no alternative to accepting the conclusion of modern scholarship that the marriage was reasonably happy. There are, after all, different fires for different seasons, and there is no way for history to tell what kind of warmth a hero needed and what kind of warmth he found.

Whatever the level of the flame, Fanny Washington relieved her husband of domestic burdens and provided an orderly home life to counter the disorder of his increasingly frustrating struggle to find money to keep Tuskegee afloat. On May 4, 1884, after only 21 months of marriage, she died suddenly at the age of 26. She died, as Louis R. Harlan observes in his excellent study, *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader,* as unobtrusively as she lived, and there is still some doubt about the cause of her death. One report said she died of injuries sustained in a fall from a farm wagon. Another report said she died of "consumption" of the digestive tract.

WASHINGTON, then not quite 28, found himself adrift with an 11-month-old daughter. The Tuskegee family, as one would expect, closed ranks behind him, and the daughter was cared for by a succession of nurses and surrogate mothers while he and Olivia Davidson continued their quest for the wherewithal to insure the future of Tuskegee. We don't know, we will never know, when the inevitable happened. But at some point in the years after Fanny Washington's death, the professional relationship between Booker T. Washington and Olivia A. Davidson became a

THE 3 WIVES OF BOOKER T. WASHINGTON



First wife, Fanny Norton Smith, was a native of Virginia, a graduate of Hampton Institute, and "a childhood sweetheart" of the famous leader.



Second wife, Olivia A. Davidson, was, according to Washington and modern scholars, a cofounder of Tuskegee Institute.

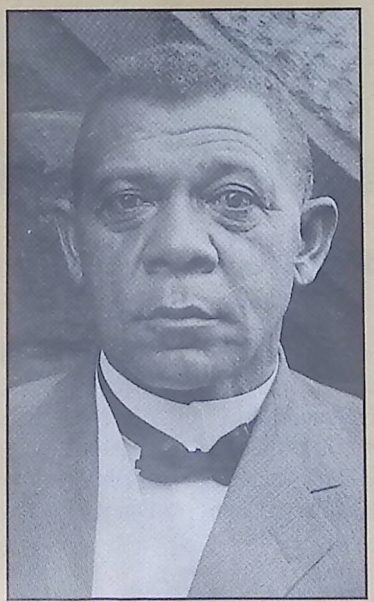


Third wife, Margaret James Murray, expressed reservations about marrying a man with three small children.

THREE of the most fascinating romances of our experience occurred in the vortex of a personal and social struggle that probably changed the course of Black history.

The central figure in these romances was Booker Taliaferro Washington, who created a new style of Black leadership and rose to levels of fame attained by only one other Black leader —Martin Luther King Jr. During the course of his meteoric rise to power and fame, Washington wooed and married three women. The story of his personal life and his relationship with the three Mrs. Washingtons is an intriguing and instructive story that raises anew the old question of the connection between power, love and sexual roles.

According to psychologist Ann E. Garrett Robinson, who played a major role in focusing public attention on the forgotten wives of Washington, the story also reveals the central (and largely unreported) role Black women played in founding and shaping Black institutions.



Booker T. Washington founded Tuskegee Institute and created a new and controversial style of Black leadership in the 1890s. The educator married for the first time at the age of 26.

The story begins where all good love stories begin—with a mystery woman or, to be more precise, an obscure woman who disappears from the record almost as suddenly as she enters it. Her name was Fanny Norton Smith, and she was the first Mrs. Washington. The problem, from the standpoint of historiography, is that we know very little about her life, either before or after her marriage to the founder of Tuskegee Institute. "Whatever his reason," author Samuel R. Spencer Jr. wrote in *Booker T. Washington and The Negro's Place in American Life*, "Washington in his autobiographical writings of later years said little of his first wife."

Who was the first Mrs. Washington and why has history pushed her to the sideline?

The answers to these questions are to be found, in part, in the accidents of a cruel fate and the mysteries of a retiring personality. The woman left no words to tell us what she thought of the role history assigned her, and we are

made of all this. He apparently believed—and the internal evidence of the letters supports this view—that his fiancée was going through a bad case of nerves and that her objections were neither deep nor well-founded. Subsequent events tended to bear him out, for after the wedding—he was 36 and she was 31—on October 12, 1892, Margaret James Murray Washington settled down without too much strain into the five roles (wife, surrogate mother, administrator, teacher, women's spokesperson) that Olivia had established. She was reconciled with Portia who at first "violently" opposed the match but was soon calling her stepmother "mamma."

Certain scholars have said that this marriage was a marriage of convenience that the middle-aged widower deliberately contracted in order to regularize his family life. There is perhaps some truth in this, but it is not the whole truth. In the first place, a *prudent* widower seeking a safe and conventional wife to care for his children would not choose a sharp-tongued and volatile woman who picks fights with his brother and expresses negative feelings about his daughter. There are, secondly, hints in the record that Washington found the blunt and occasionally light-hearted and frivolous approach of his fiancée—an approach markedly different from the saintly perfection of Olivia—refreshing. At any rate, this decidedly unpoetic man came in these years as close as his nature would permit to writing a love poem. The "poem," hastily scribbled in his notebook, read:

Maggie

1. Poem
2. Last Summer
3. Tell real feelings to Boys
4. What an institution I could make with her help

Let me keep loving.

The poetry—if we can call it that—stopped after the marriage, partly, one suspects, because of the increasing demands on the time of a man who was rapidly becoming a national leader. In the months and years that followed, and especially after the "Atlanta Compromise Address" of 1895 catapulted him to national and international fame, Washington adopted a business-like approach to his marriage.

It was Washington's custom in these years to send peremptory notes to subordinates demanding immediate rectification of real or imagined errors. Mrs. Washington, the director of women's industries, received the same formal and sharp letters, addressed impersonally to "Mrs. Washington," as other department heads and teachers—and she usually answered in kind. This was one exchange:

> Mrs. Washington: I am convinced that we are not justified in using that large room called the "Child Nurture Room" for such a purpose. The room should either be divided or the partitions rearranged so that we will not have such a large room standing idle the greater part of the time. . . .

Mrs. Washington replied:

> Mr. Washington: The Child Nurture Room is in constant use. I should be very sorry to have it divided. . . . You happened to visit the room when it was not in use. That is not often the case. I will consider it a very great favor if you leave the room as it is. Very truly yours.
>
> Mrs. Washington

On another occasion, she answered a scolding Washington letter with three graphic words:

Umph! Umph! Umph!!!

Despite the stresses and the ups and downs of a long relationship, the marriage lasted for 23 years. During this period, the third—and last—Mrs. Washington acted as surrogate mother for the Washington children and hostess for a stream of famous visitors. She also headed a principal department of the college, advised Washington on his speeches, and traveled around the country, with and without her husband, making speeches. The couple, in fact, had a set routine which called for Washington to address the ministers, teachers and professionals in the morning, and for Mrs. Washington to speak to the women in the afternoon. Local papers sometimes devoted more space to Mrs. Washington's observations than to Mr. Washington's speech.

The last chapter of this story was written not by Washington, who died in 1915, but by Margaret James Murray Washington, who survived him by 10 years. When she died in 1925, Tuskegee and the Washington image were permanent fixtures in Black and White America. But few realized, then or now, how much the institution and the man owed to three Black women who came up from slavery with him in unique and still instructive marriages of vocations and visions.

Need to list achievements along this side.

professional-personal relationship. They were married on Wednesday afternoon, August 11, 1886, at the home of her sister in Athens, Ohio. She was 32 and he was 30.

The new Mrs. Washington continued to work in the field of fund raising and on the campus. A friend of the Washingtons and of Tuskegee said later that "rarely has it been the lot of two individuals to be so thoroughly united in their life work." Washington said:

"For some time before our marriage, and also after it, Miss Davidson kept up the work of securing money in the North and in the South by interesting people by personal visits and through correspondence. At the same time she kept in close touch with the work of Tuskegee, as lady principal and classroom teacher. In addition to this, she worked among the older people in and near Tuskegee, and taught a Sunday School class in the town. She was never very strong, but never seemed happy unless she was giving all her strength to the cause which she loved. Often, at night, after spending the day in going from door to door trying to interest persons in the work of Tuskegee, she would be so exhausted that she could not undress herself."

Two boys were born to the Washingtons, who were apparently devoted to each other. The tone of their relationship can be gauged from two letters of Olivia Davidson Washington. The first, dated March 26, 1888, began, "All goes well today darling," and ended:

> Take care of yourself. *Keep your feet dry.* Kisses & love from the children & your loving
>
> Olivia

The second letter began, "My dear Husband, It is two days since I wrote you," and ended:

> Watermelons are plentiful and Portia is happy. Goodbye dearest,
>
> Olivia

Less than a year after the posting of this letter, a fire broke out in the Washington home at four in the morning. Washington was in the North raising funds, and friends rescued the children and Olivia, who was recuperating from the difficult birth of her second son. The shock and exposure upset the delicate balance of her constitution and Washington carried her to Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital. For more than a month, he maintained a lonely vigil at her bedside. She died on May 9, 1889, at the age of 34 after two years and eight months of marriage. "Few will ever know," Washington wrote a friend, "just what she has done for Tuskegee and for me."

It has been argued with great authority that her death marked a fundamental turning point in the life of the rising young leader. Soon afterwards he shaved off his dooping mustache and presented to the world the brooding, clean-shaven image of the Booker T. Washington posters.

SHORTLY after the death of Olivia, Washington traveled to Nashville for the Fisk commencement. One night during the commencement activities he was seated at dinner across the table from a beautiful and forward young senior who told him that she had applied for a position at Tuskegee and that he had not answered her letter. The student—her name was Margaret James Murray—went on to say that she had been offered a position at Prairie View State College but that she preferred to work at Tuskegee, even for less money. This bold—and ingenious—approach startled Washington, who discovered that the young woman—she said she was born in 1865 but census data indicate that she was born in 1861—was a native of Mississippi and that she had spent eight years working her way through Fisk as a "half-rater," a student who worked half-time and studied half-time. The record says that Washington was amazed that a college senior could be so mature. The record does not say, but it is a fair inference that he also noticed that the buxom and bold lady was uncommonly attractive.

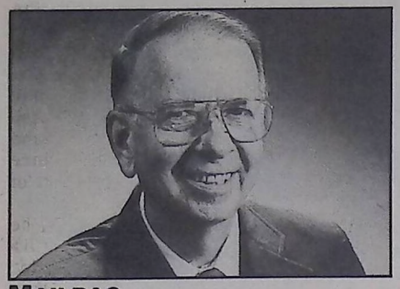
To make a long story short, Margaret James Murray did not go to Prairie View. Washington hired her to teach English and then advanced her to Olivia's old position of Lady Principal. He apparently tried to maintain the same formal relationship with Miss Murray that he maintained with other faculty members—but it didn't work. The new administrator was efficient, attractive, and impossible to ignore. She started writing long letters to Washington—letters which became progressively more informal and personal and which provided detailed reports on the goings-on at the Institute. Sharp-tongued and sharp-eyed, she told him that he should speak to "the gentlemen teachers," and said that "almost all or at least too many of them stand in the halls [or] on the porch and spend their time talking to the girls." On another occasion she reported that a woman teacher entertained a male student, "at least sixteen," in her room.

For a number of reasons, some of them emotional and practical, some of them institutional, some of them obscure, Washington found himself drawn to the company of the Lady Principal, who was, one can imagine, a refreshing change from the yes-people he surrounded himself with. Washington apparently proposed sometime in the fall of 1891, but Miss Murray, who seems to have been going through an acute psychological crisis, put him off, and in a revealing series of letters bared her soul. She admitted frankly that she didn't like Washington's brother and that she was jealous of the female advisors and friends in the Washington inner circle. In one letter she expressed particular concern about one of Olivia's old friends, a White woman who was doing volunteer work at Tuskegee. "Has she written you any more love letters?" she asked. "Her letters are more like love letters than are mine? You would laugh if I were to tell you that I am jealous of her." She returned to this theme and this woman in later letters ("They tease me a great deal about her but I have no fear. Need I have any?") but was finally convinced that her fears were groundless.

But there were other—and deeper—problems. One of them was that Margaret James Murray didn't like "little folks"—children. She wrote in one letter, "Mr. Washington [she used the formal "Mr." when she was in a petulant or flirtatious mood] "you do not have much sympathy with me because I feel as I do in regard to little folks—I get annoyed at myself but the feeling is here just the same."

A second and more serious problem was that she did not—for reasons that she could not fathom—care for Portia, Washington's beloved daughter, who was then eight. "Mr. Washington," she wrote, in an extraordinary letter of November 1, 1891, "you have no idea how I feel because I can not feel toward Portia as I should. And I somehow dread being thrown with her for a lifetime. I sometimes make up my mind that I will not let any talk to me of the child and then I forget. She kind of understands it too and I hate it. I wonder Mr. Washington if it is a wise and Christian thing for me to love you feeling as I do? Still I shall be absolutely honest with you and if you feel that you prefer giving me up I should find no fault with you."

It is hard to know what Washington



MAILBAG
Leland Hawes

Hospital wing renamed to honor nurse Clara Frye

The self-sacrificing woman who gave her all to provide health care for Tampa's black residents in the early years of this century will be honored at Tampa General Hospital this afternoon.

A nine-story patient-care wing will be renamed the Clara C. Frye Pavilion in memory of the nurse who gave assistance in her home first, and then in a rudimentary hospital.

Pharmacist John Scrivens, who has led the effort to memorialize Mrs. Frye, will be master of ceremonies at the 2 p.m. event in the patient tower cafeteria.

Speakers will include former County Commissioner Rubin Padgett, state Reps. Jim Hargrett and Jim Davis, City Councilman Perry Harvey and County Commissioner Sylvia Kimbell.

Hospital president Newell France will unveil a special Clara Frye plaque near the main entrance of the hospital. Among the guests will be Mary T. Cash, a nurse who knew and worked with Mrs. Frye, and Martha Garnett of Monterey, Calif., a granddaughter of Mrs. Frye.

■ ■ ■

And speaking of efforts to gain long overdue recognition ...

Clinton L. Black is a premedical student at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee who is waging a crusade to erect a statue in his hometown, Marianna.

Black fervently believes that honor should be conferred upon T. Thomas Fortune, a one-time slave who became nationally recognized as an author, a newspaperman and a civil rights leader.

Calling him "an unsung hero," Black has mounted a $40,000 fund drive to memorialize Fortune, also a native of Marianna. He said his efforts thus far have met with some encouragement as well as some oppo-



Grouped around Harlem Academy principal Christina Meacham, front row center, in the 1920s were teachers, front row from left, Iola Brumick, Sarah A. Ferrell, Mamie Brumick and Emma Bryant. Among those standing were Amelia Sallye, Charlotte Bryant, Lilla Walker and Serena Peck.

Photograph provided by Rowena F. Brady

Treasures tell community's story

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Staff Writer

A rainy-day pastime in her childhood has turned into a "retirement" project for Rowena Brady.

"On rainy days, we would pull out old pictures, and my mother would explain them," she said.

That fascination from her youth has become a mission, now that she's supposedly at the age when she should have leisure time.

Rowena Brady's mission is year-round, not just a pertinent subject for Black History Month.

She is zealously assembling photographs of Tampa's black community, with the goal of publishing a book.

Officially retired as a public school teacher, she still volunteers her time at St. Peter Claver parochial school in the inner city. Her church and organization



"My proposals have been repeatedly dismissed on grounds of a lack of interest in Fortune and insufficient funds in governmental budgets," Black said. He is eager to overcome that lack of interest.

Thomas Fortune's father, Emanuel, was a Republican legislative leader during the Reconstruction period in Florida following the Civil War. Emanuel Fortune was counted among the "moderates" at the state constitutional convention in 1868.

Florida historian Jerrell Shofner, in his book "Nor Is It Over Yet," wrote: "A speaker of considerable ability, Fortune was from Jackson County but had to leave his home during the racial violence there in 1869."

Shofner continues: "His son was T. Thomas Fortune, who as an expatriate Floridian in New York in later years became an accomplished newspaper editor, literary figure and member of the Afro-American League."

FAMU student Black fills in further details. He writes that following the war, Thomas Fortune started out as a printer's devil (helper) at the Marianna Courier. But death threats forced him and other members of his family to leave Marianna.

The young black man moved to Tallahassee, then to Jacksonville, working on the Jacksonville Daily Union and attending the Freedman's Stanton Institute. In 1876 he went to Washington, D.C., to study law at Howard University.

Fortune had to drop out of school, though, when the bank that held his funds collapsed. He kept up his writing as a columnist for a publication called People's Advocate.

Married by then to Carrie C. Smiley, Fortune and his wife returned to Jacksonville so she could give birth to their first child. He worked as a teacher there but "was soon forced to resign because of his radical and futuristic ideology," Black relates.

After coming down with malaria, Fortune moved north again in 1879, to New York City. There, he became owner of a newspaper that underwent several name changes.

"As editor of the Freeman, Fortune was considered not only the leading Negro journalist, but one of the most promising leaders of his race," Emma Lou Thornbrough wrote in a biography of Fortune.

Fortune "was a relentless, agitating political maverick," Black writes. He says Fortune uncompromisingly demanded equality for black Americans.

The former Florida slave was a founder in 1890 of the National Afro-American League, one of the first civil rights organizations. He wrote three books propounding his "highly controversial" views.

Fortune "dedicated his entire life to improving the living, working and educational conditions of every African American," Black concludes.

Born in 1856 in Marianna, Fortune died in June 1928 in Philadelphia.

Black has established a trust fund for construction of a statue of Fortune at the SouthTrust Bank of Northwest Florida, 1314 Rockwell St., Marianna, Fla. 32446.

activities keep her on the go.

Mrs. Brady displayed these photographs to illustrate that significant images do exist in old trunks and attic hideaways.

The schoolteachers assembled around the indomitable principal, Christina Meacham, helped shape the lives of hundreds of pupils at Harlem Academy in the early 1920s.

I've written previously of Mrs. Meacham, the first black woman principal in Tampa, and her memorable influence on several generations of leaders of the black community.

The teachers at the school were of great importance, too. Mrs. Brady's mother, Sarah A. Ferrell, is among those shown.

The other photograph, lent to her by Luther Alexander, depicts an Emancipation Day celebration in Tampa around 1920.

The 12 dapper young men proudly displaying the American flag probably assembled on New Year's Day, as has been



Photograph provided by Luther Alexander

Young men celebrated Emancipation Day in Tampa around 1920. Identities were not available.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

the custom in Tampa since the Civil War. It marks that momentous day when Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863.

This celebration of freedom continues to the present, under the sponsorship of the Baptist Ministers Conference of Greater Tampa and Vicinity.

The Rev. A. Leon Lowry, pastor of the Beulah Baptist Institutional Church, which was founded in 1865, said the observance varies in location from year to year but is always well attended.

Usually a young person repeats the words of the proclamation, and a minister delivers a sermon. Lowry said he correlates emancipation with the Biblical story of deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt and the long return to freedom.

"The other speakers vary in thrust," Lowry said. "Some deal with the challenges still remaining — where we were and where we are, and the fact that we're not totally free."

It's also a day for black motivation, with the emphasis on voting, the minister and long-time School Board member said.

The circa-1920 group shown in the photograph assembled on Scott Street, with signs visible on windows in the background for the Scott Street Meat Market and Union Mutual Insurance.

Mrs. Brady is hopeful that treasures such as these will be matched by hundreds more. If you have photographs that could be reprinted or copied in the book she plans, call her at (813) 877-6494.

Historian chronicles black Hillsborough family

By LELAND HAWES
Tribune Staff Writer

In a column last October, I wrote of Joseph Gillette Knapp, a retired judge from Wisconsin, who became a founder of the community of Limona east of Tampa in the 1870s.

Judge Knapp was a promoter, anxious to fill the countryside with new settlers who would till the soil and start new lives in the as-yet uncleared woods.

Knapp was a "constant correspondent" in an era when newspapers often used letters describing areas that would be of interest to their readers. Most of his epistles went to papers in Wisconsin.

But the weekly Sunland Tribune, published in Tampa, used a considerable amount of Knapp's material, also. There was an appeal in showing the home folks how this section of Florida was being promoted in the North.

Occasionally, Knapp would write of an experience or an observation. One front-page article of his is of particular interest. For he chronicled the success story of a black farmer who homesteaded in Hillsborough County after gaining freedom following the Civil War.

This is the account as it appeared in the Sunland Tribune of Aug. 17, 1878:

"Three days ago, with some friends, we mounted our lumber wagons for a trip to Lake Tonotasassee (sic) 10 miles north ... Knowing that some portion of the road was through the woods, and almost without a track, we undertook a new, and to us unknown, route.

"A meeting house, where the Methodist blacks worship and hold camp meetings, was found in the woods with no houses near ... A little further on, a Baptist Negro meeting house was found, also in the woods, and soon our road terminated at a gate.

> Knapp believed that if Royal Read — who had emerged from slavery and poverty — could make a success of a farm in interior Hillsborough County, so could others.

"Seeing a Negro boy of 13 summers plowing with a jackass among cow peas, we inquired the way, and we were told to enter the gate and go to the house."

Citizen Royal Read

"Thus we designate our hero of African descent, made a free voter by the Civil Rights Act.

"The house is 24 by 18 feet, composed of hewn logs, with a broad porch on either side. A good puncheon floor in house and porch kept them from the damp of the ground. Plenty of outhouses contained the corn — crib and storehouse, and the old house built four years ago formed the kitchen.

"A large double white althea, in full bloom, made an ornament in front of the house, and several ever-blooming roses grew scattered around the yard. Large yellow figs [were] just beginning to ripen, enough to make 100 pounds of dried figs to the tree each year.

"There were 20 acres of corn, which looked well for this remarkably wet season, half of which was planted as a subsidiary crop with the long-staple cotton, just coming into bloom.

"He also had five acres more, planted with potatoes and cow peas. All was under good fence and had been well-tended, the one ass doing all the plowing.

"He had planted out 400 oranges, some of which would produce fruit in two years more. Such was the place we found in the pine woods.

"In 1863 the owner of Read had taken him, with his fellow slaves, from Virginia between Petersburg and Lynchburg, and brought them to Polk [County], where they engaged in farming.

"But the end of the Great Rebellion freed Read and he married a native Floridian black and had five children by her, the oldest we had seen plowing.

"Four and one-half years ago, he entered on this place. He and his wife made a cover to sleep under, then cut the logs to construct the old house and built it.

"He had provisions for two months and $16 in cash. Half of that sum went to secure his homestead of 80 acres. The balance would go but a little way for bread to feed six human beings.

"Undaunted, he commenced to clear about his house, to build his fences, to plant a few orange trees and fig cuttings about his house.

"He worked for others, to buy his bread, and then he and his wife cleared the land, made the fences and plowed, planted corn and sweet potatoes. His fuel [wood] cost the labor of cutting. His clothing was cheap, and most of his family wore no shoes.

"He has now land enough cleared to grow his bread, and this year he will sell corn to the amount of $100, and he gets a cent a piece for the figs. He can keep his jackass and buy his horse this year.

"His children go three miles to school, and the two oldest read and write. He reads a little.

"When he shall secure his title to his homestead, in three years more, his 80 acres will be a competence for life. Should he desire to sell at that time, $30 an acre would be cheap ..."

Knapp went on to make his promotional pitch, saying that if Royal Read — who had emerged from slavery and poverty — could make a success of a farm in interior Hillsborough County, so could others.

University of Florida historian Canter Brown Jr. has pieced together further details about Royal Read. He found a marriage record showing Read married Harriet Varn on Dec. 28, 1865. She was a member of the Peace Creek Baptist Church.

Brown said Royal Read had come south to Bartow from Virginia in 1862 with owner William Joel Watkins, who later became a mayor of St. Augustine.

The 1880 census listed Read's first name as "Ryall" and his age as 45. Virginia was given as his home state, and his occupation as farmer.

Harriet Read's age was 40, and her occupation was put down by the census taker as "keeping house."

The children's names and ages: Henry, 18; Alice, 13; Ada, 9; Eddie, 6; Victoria, 4; and James, 2. An 1885 state census added the name of another child, Peel, then 1 year old.

Historian Brown, in his new book, "Florida's Peace River Frontier," writes that Read and his family were among a number of blacks who left Polk County and moved to Hillsborough at a time of "Regulator" or Klanlike activity in Polk.

Among others who came to the Thonotosassa-Seffner area then were Adam Holloman, Sampson Forrester, Stepney Dixon, the Stillings family, Simon Jackson and Solomon Carrington.

Descendants of these families still live in the area today. I'm hopeful that additional information can be developed on the Royal Read story in the months ahead.