Columbia Capers

By Pinnie L. Ross

A telephone call came to me over a month ago, and the soft voice on the other end was Mrs. Hattie Kidwell, wife of Earl Kidwell, Sr., longtime residents of Catonsville, inviting me and my husband Bill to share with her and her family in a celebration of the Cousins Reunion.

"Let's stay together" was the theme of the reunion. It was held at the downtown Hilton Hotel last Friday night through Sunday.

As we entered the hotel, there was a line of people as far as the eye could see in the back of the hotel. I paused in fear that I had the wrong place then I stepped closer to the line and began to read the badges pinned on each person — it was the right place and the right group. The badge read "Family Let's Stay Together."

It was truly a family reunion, but in the form of a convention. There were six hundred cousins, and relatives from as far as California attending this reunion.

As cousins and guests reached the door there was a white program book given to them with a black tree in the center of the cover with the generations of cousins, the Barnes, Buffard, McGriff, Bevard, Coulber, Truesdale and Vaughn.

The program opened with Mrs. Tessi Epps presiding Rev J. C. Peag gave the invocation, after which the audience stood and sang the Negro National Anthem. At the piano was Elvira Gosnell. Mary Truesdale, coordinator of the hosting chapter gave the welcome, Mrs. Brenda Calloway from the mayor's office presented a proclamation to the group.

Guest speakers for the special occasion were three of Baltimore's top political figures and community workers Attorney H. Dwight Pettit, president of the Monumental Bar Association: "As slaves took a process across the country, we were spread out and we lost our foundations. It is a fascinating thing to see organizations and groups of families getting together. This is an example of strong people and this is an example of what makes people able to stand and be together as we have been over the past 400 years. It is an honor to welcome you to baltimore."

Senator Verda Welcome, "I was told that half of a person's genes are given to him by his immediate parents, and the other half is fragmented for a hundred years down the line.

She congratulated the person who originated and planned the reunion and welcomed them. The lady senator mentioned the rebuilding program that Baltimore is caught up in, the subway construction . . . offered an apology for the inconvenience Baltimore may have caused them. She mentioned what Baltimore had to offer to its residents in the State of Maryland.

Senator Clarence Mitchell: "I am from a family that believes in families. . . "The Mitchell Family." I am always anxious to participate in any affair that is geared to the family. There are those of us like Senator Welcome who are working every day to make Baltimore an even better place. We are happy that you've chosen Baltimore for your site. " The young senator continued, "I travel all over the country making speeches and I'll look forward to seeing some of the cousins when I go to various towns, and if you are a cousin and I am in your town, come up to me and say "Hello, I am a cousin."

The international group did not forget to remember their deceased ones. It was a pause for a memorial service. Mrs. Ruby Steckell read a poem that gave the names of the cousins deceased. The most unique part of the service was the lighting of the candles by the little cousins.

Father Henry Hughes gave the benediction. A delicious dinner was served, followed by a disco until 2 p.m.

According to Mrs. Hattie Kidwell the first reunion was held in Washington, D.C. eight years ago. It came about after the funeral of Willie Vaughn's brother who died in Pittsburgh. They felt that it was a sad way for families to get together under those circumstances.

Another spokesman was Mrs. Truesdale whom I was never able to reach, but was told to contact another reporter, Willie Vaughn, a son of the first member of the family of the United States decided to chart the family lines.

The family roots were traced from Scipid. Vaughn came to this country from Nigeria back in the 1800's and was a slave in Lancaster, South Carolina to doctors, lawyers and teachers in sixteen states which included California and many other states. The search continues with the latest find in Kentucky. Said Mrs. Truesdale, "We were ahead of Roots."

In the very near future, said Mrs. Kidwell, the oldest member, 96 year old Andrew Peag of Lancaster, S.C. will be visited and interviewed on tape by some of the cousins. "We want his voice just as it is, broken language . . ."

Another year the reunion will be in Detroit. Why is it going to be held there? Because each year the group takes a vote and the state receiving the most applause will be the host state.

Another good feature of the reunion is that each has fund raisers preparing themselves for their turn. The dinner was complimentary from the Baltimore group.

The cousins kept themselves busy while they were in the All - American city.

Baltimore Friday as soon as they arrived, it was registration and a visit in the city, then National Board meeting, then the banquet and memorial service and disco. Saturday, a business meeting after which they boarded the buses for a cruise on Port Welcome. For the little ones 6 - 12, Mrs. Shirley Jackson took them on an adult walking tour. Sunday morning a prayer breakfast, prayed by Rev. Petty, D. W. McKinney, Oscar Vaughn, National Chairman, and Wheeler Barnes.

The busy Mrs. Kidwell kept looking for her son, Dr. Earl D. Kidwell, a surgeon, to arrive from Florida. Dr. Kidwell will set up his practice in the Memorial Professional Center.

His cute wife, Marcellous, arrived before and was present with her sisters and mother, Mrs. Bennett. Another son was present, attorney Charles Kidwell. He is a D.C. attorney. Mrs. Tessi Ebb, the Kidwell's only daughter, is a city school teacher.

A special prayer for all of the cousins and other relatives as they journey back to their homes. God bless them for sticking together.

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Thanks to the Afro-American, Baptist Ministers Conference and the City of Baltimore for answered prayer.
On July 10, 1978, I am to appear in Circuit Court #2 to get a hearing so that I can return to my home at 3906 Chatham Rd. I have not lived there since August 20, 1976.

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—Oblate sisters

(Continued from Page 9)

A white collar tops a larger black one and the drapery of the habit falls to the floor in graceful folds. The pedestal for the statue is made from marble of the altar which was installed in the chapel in 1842. The altar used for over 125 years is the one at which James Cardinal Gibbons was ordained.

Participating in the Sunday mass were Sister Mary Benigna Holland, Sister Marie Infanta Gonzales, Brother Joseph C. Hager, Sister Mary Alice Chineworth, Mrs. Pauline Johnson Jones and Sister Mary Celestina Johnson.

Gift bearers were Theodore Wilson, Sister M. Cecelia Herbert, Sister Elizabeth Ann Reid, Sister Mary of Good Counsel Batiste, Mrs. Betty Wood, Sister M. Virginie Fish and Sister M. Alexis Fisher.

Principal concelebrants included Revs. Carl A. Fisher, director of ceremonies; Raymond Hesler, William J. Lee, William P. McKenna, Thomas P. O'Connell, James Ruthowski, John R. Sullivan, Charles H. Rowland and Joseph O'Meara.

Among others assisting were Fr. Maurice J. Blackwell, Fr. Carl Fisher, Fr. Steve Ageman, Msgr. Clare J. O. Dwyer, Fr. Jerry Hargrove, Washington; Fr. Jerome Moody, Stephen K. Brown, altar server, Washington and Fr. Joseph F. Curtis Jr., Washington.

The Ave Maria was by Sister M. Josella de los Rios, soloist and the processional, Jubilate Deo, by the Oblate Sisters Choir.

The chalice was the one belonging to another founder, Rev. Nicholas James Hector Joubert. S.S., ordained in Baltimore in 1810. The chalice created for the 150th anniversary celebration is by Sister M. Pierre Gardner, OSP, and has wine and water cruets to complete the set.

Special thanks went to Rev. John R. Sullivan for his interest and cooperation in the preparation for the celebration.

Remarks by the Oblate Sisters' superios general, Sister Marie Infanta Gonzales, noted that this service was the first public expression of gratitude to God for the "first miracle of human relationships which began July 2, 1829 and which will culminate in a giant step for Christianity on July 2, 1979 when the order will mark the 150th year of their foundation."

Referring to the theme, "We have come this far by faith," Sister Marie thanked the hundreds of persons in the audience, "the splendid demonstration of Christian Witness shown here by your presence today."

Gratitude was also given for success in crossing "deserts of hardship and trials, valleys of discouragement and frustration and up steep mountains of challenge and change."

The focal point of all their thanksgiving, she said, is the grace each Oblate Sister received to go forth and teach all nations.

Recalling the little school on George Street, in Baltimore in 1829 Sister Marie Infanta gave thanks for the unflagging spirit of James H. N. Joubert and the first four Oblates.

A portion of the Oblate Sisters' history reveals there was a flood of black refugees from Santo Domingo which poured into Baltimore in the early 1800s. Finding no schools for their children, they were forced to open those of their own. Elizabeth Lange opened one in her home and a fellow refuge, Fr. Joubert, inspired her and three others to found a teaching order.

Now known as Oblate Sisters of Providence, the order is embraces social service and nursing in schools in Maryland, the Carolinas, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.

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Catonsville Notes

By Liz Williams

All of the speakers, including her pastor, the Rev. Wendell Phillips, have known Harriet to be a woman of her own convictions. She has always been known to express her true feelings about vital matters and because of this, she won the respect of friends and co - workers.

Other retirees who were honored last week were: Clements Nixon, the Recreation and Parks (Balto. City) administrator and Wellington "Ducky" Ross, the Adult Education Specialist for the State of Maryland.

Congratulations to all other retirees. A special congratulations for Pauline Caulk Blackwell (Samuel) who has retired from the AFRO AMERICAN. She gave many dedicated years of service to the paper and I know that she will be missed by all.

Hopefully, by the time you read this column, Robert Rideout will be home after having undergone surgery at University Hospital. I talked to his faithful and devoted wife, Mildred during the week. Mil, as we fondly know her is the head nurse at the Chest Clinic on North Avenue. She has been with Baltimore City Health Department for 25 years, serving in many areas as a public health nurse.

Mil shared an experience that she and Rob had recently which I thought was so beautiful. She said, "Rob and I returned home to Grace AME Church on January 29 at the 11 a.m. service. The welcome that the congregation gave them was one of love and warmth. Rev. Boston told his flock that Mil and Rob had returned home to Grace. This close couple will never forget that memorable Sunday morning.

Prior to Rob's illness, the Rideouts traveled throughout the U.S., Mexico and Canada. They had planned to go on the recent cruise with the Phalanx Club of which Rob is a member, but his recent illness prevented them from going. Their son, Ronald, who lives in Baltimore is a Baltimore City policeman in the Central district. Their other son, grandchildren and great grandchildren, live in San Fernando, Calif.

Get Well cards to Marie Young who is now at home and also to George Hopewell (Naomi) who is now at home. Prayers for Lillian Whiting who is at Forest Haven. Continue to send cards to the known sick, aged and shut - ins.

Sympathy cards to the family of "Billie King" formerly of Catonsville, New York. She was the wife of Samuel "Honey" King, formerly of Catonsville. Cards also to the family of the late C. Quinn Jackson of Leslie Avenue. He was a big worker in the Elks - Crescent Lodge No. 355. Funeral services were held at St. Johns AME Church Interment was in Chicago, Ill.

Have a good week and continue to do a good deed every day. It is going to be a good deed, now that the weather is getting hotter, but try anyway.

P.S. Thinking of You cards to Yvette Murphy (James "Jim") whose mother Mrs. Rosetta Davidson was buried from St. James Episcopal Church during the week. Mrs. Davidson had been ill for some time.

Despite the heavy rains last Sunday, the Oblate Sisters of Providence were able to begin their Sesquicentennial year of celebration. The Liturgy of Thanksgiving was to be held at St. Mary's Park on Paca Street. Due to the weather conditions the Liturgy was held in the chapel of Mt. Providence on Gun Road. Along with a few others we overlooked the card which told us where to go in case of bad weather. We walked all over the St. Mary's ground in the rain, looking for some sign of life. After about 10 minutes or more we found someone who told us about the change. We finally walked back to our cars in the rain and drove back out to Catonsville.

The grounds were filled with buses and cars, most of which were from out - of - town. All of the nuns participated in the service in one way or another. Lawrence Cardinal Shehan, the former Archbishop of Baltimore was the celebrant, assisted by other priests. The Mass was followed by a delicious luncheon.

When I asked Sister Mary Alice Chineworth how could they feed all of the guests, she answered by saying "Providence always finds a way." Despite the bad weather, it was a beautiful day for the Oblates, especially the older nuns who could not have made it to St. Mary's Park. Congratulations to these women of prayer, strength, mission, vision and action. Sister Marie Infanta Gonzales is the Mother Superior.

The Jet Set Pleasure Club will take an eight day cruise aboard the Oceanic Ship covering the ports of Nassau and Bermuda, August 12 - 19. Maybe it is not too late to sign up. See or contact Mrs. Cassandra McDonald of Morning Star Baptist Church for further details. There might be some cancellations.

Do not forget the trip that the Willing Workers Club of Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church is sponsoring to Niagara Falls and Thousand Islands, August 11 - 14. Contact Grace Jackson or some other members in the group.

Last week seemed to be a week of retirement dinners. We attended a dinner, honoring Harriet W. Jones (Wilbur) the longtime Baltimore County social worker. Harriet was in charge of the Homemakers Division, and it was she who nursed this program from its very beginning and it has become one of the most vital programs in the Department of Social Services, Baltimore County. Many of you remember Harriet as the Baltimore City school social worker. She was the social worker at the Bragg School, several years after it opened. Harriet is a leader at Heritage Church on Liberty Heights.

AUREVOIR — Pauline Blackwell, longtime circulation supervisor, bids a fond farewell to AFRO-AMERICAN fellow employes at a brief, informal retirement party. Mrs. Blackwell ended 42 years of service on June 30

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Woodlawn Highlights

By Marjorie Green

SSA welcome wishes are extended to the summer aides assigned to the various Woodlawn and downtown bureaus of operation. Gloria White, a Community College of Baltimore Secretarial Science major has been assigned to the Administrative Services section in the Dickinson building. She is a member of the Virginia Rayner Choir at Concord Baptist Church.

Anthony Garres, an English major has been assigned in the Operations building. Kevin Kellam, a former McDonough student who was awarded a full scholarship to DePauw University is working in the Mail Management section. Another scholarship recipient is Stanton Belle. He will enter Morgan State University with a four year scholarship in music.

Judith Moore, Pamela Wainwright and Evelyn Skipwith are also registered for fall classes at Morgan State University. Kim Kelly, Bureau of Disability clerk, wants to be an executive secretary. Rosary Wright assigned to the Medical staff is interested in Accounting and Business Administration. Both students will attend the Community College of Baltimore in the fall.

Several members of the SML Club have planned a vacation weekend at Host Farm in Pennsylvania. Gwendolyn Conaway, one of several persons retiring under the early out retirement plan next month, will accompany the group.

Other club members planning to make the trip are Bernice Dargan, Mildred Hodge, Esther Waters, Doris White, Thelma Leeds, Ann Wallace, Shirley Taylor, Elizabeth Umphrey, Agnes Willis and Mary Farley.

Send get well cards to Barbara Bentley at 3316 Barrington Rd., Baltimore, 21215. Barbara is home recuperating from recent surgery.

AFGE Union Local 1923 candidates are off and running. The election will take place on Wednesday, July 12, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and our very good friend of many many years, Helen G. Tucker called to say that SSA employees who want a first vice president with 13 years of Union experience and dedication, can make their vote count by pulling lever 1 - A to re - elect Helen for the office of first vice president and lever 20 - B to elect her as delegate for AFGE Local 1923. Helen has served three years as first vice president and nine years as recording secretary. She has recruited more new members than any other officer. All union members are invited to exercise their right to vote.

Eastward, through the sparkling Mediterranean Sea and past the sun - baked shores of Africa — past the fabled Greek Isles and the storied neighborly isles of Rhodes and Cyprus lies the sunny old - new land of Israel. The brochure goes on to describe the fascinating features of Jerusalem and the Bethlehem birthplace of Jesus.

The information comes from Union Baptist Turners Station Church. The Rev. William E. Johnson, pastor of the church will lead the Holy Land Pilgrimage, Nov. 6 through Nov. 15. Persons interested in the trip can receive additional information by calling Mrs. D. Johnson, 462 - 6182 or Mrs. L. Mitchell, 383 - 1275.

Send news items for this column c - o WOODLAWN HIGHLIGHTS, P. O. Box 705, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

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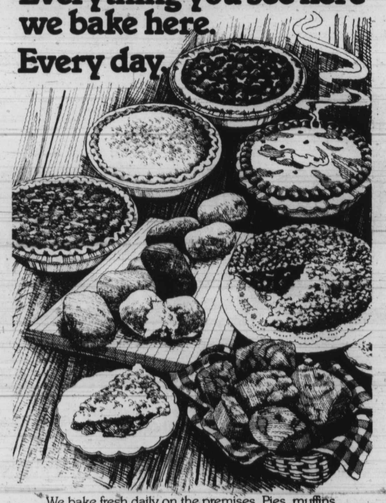

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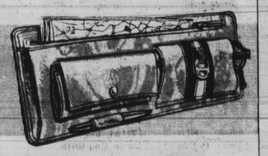

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