86 years.... the best is yet to come

Ida Peters

Once a year we take a minute to reflect on John H. Murphy Sr., (1840-1922), founder of this chain of newspapers, 86 years ago.

It's hard to believe that all of my youth and adult life have been at the AFRO. On September 20, 1978, I will have logged 40 years.

Saundra E. Banks of WEEA Radio Station came in this week to do a salute to the AFRO on Sunday, August 13, and asked me to relate some of the exciting things that have happened through the years.

I took her on a tour of our Public Relations - Entertainment - Clean Block Mrs. Santa office.

Every five years we mount an exhibit at various schools and colleges to show black students the "roots" of the largest black - owned business in Baltimore . . . owned solely by the Murphy family.

On the walls are autographed pictures of the many stars who have visited including Sidney-Poitier, Bill Cosby, Teddy Pendergrass, The Supremes, First Class, Billy Dee Williams, Softones, Tavares, Raymond St. Jacques, Jayne Kennedy, Bobbi Humphrey to name a few.

On another wall is an oil painting by Elton Fax of Dr. Carl Murphy, my father, who was publisher from 1922-1967. Also, is Harvard diploma, Carl being the first of his generation to graduate from college. Then thre are framed invitations to the White House from Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy.

In another corner are the Civil War swords used by Grandfather John H. Murphy Sr. when he served with the Union forces with the U.S. Colored Troops, Company G, 30th Regiment, Infantry.

Then there are pictures showing Dr. Carl getting the Spingarn Medal in Atlantic City sitting with Chief Justice Thurgood Marshall. Also rare photos showing AFRO Boards in 1922, 1935, and 1945.

In another panel is the hood John H. Murphy Sr. wore when he was Past Exaulted Grand Ruler of the Independent, Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks of the World.

As you can see, we're the keeper of the archives and in the years to come we hope these valuable artifacts will find a permanent home in a museum.

When I first came to the AFRO in 1940, the brothers Carl, John and Arnett were preparing to buy a new press to celebrate the 50th anniversary in 1942.

Preparation had started three years ahead with the new Goss 4-color press being ordered and built at the factory with the Rev. N. B. Carrington and Lewis Cox going to the factory for training.

The advertising team was headed by D. Arnett Murphy with Jack Fortune as manager (Cab Calloway's father), Glenna Bannister, William Grayson of California who later became Vice President, Advertising with Ebony, William Worthington, Elson Higginbotham and Dot Jackson and Mae Dyson.

I remember that all of us doubled in writing stories for that edition that turned out to be the largest paper ever printed at the AFRO.

I remember interviewing the late Harry O. Wilson who owned half of Wilson Park and was owner and founder of the Mutual Benefit Society. Also, Dr. Williard W. Allen, Grand Master of Masons for 25 years and Father George F. Bragg, former AFRO editor.

I remember Grayson sold a page ad to Northwestern Loan on Thursday night just as the press started to roll with the first of five 24 page sections. I remember that edition had 120 pages of congratulatory ads with letters from everybody including the President of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt.

In those days, the AFRO didn't stand on ceremony. If somebody sold an ad, they stopped the presses and put it in.

The ad staff not only sold the copy but stayed until 10 p.m. and helped stuff the sections. Remember that Mr. Arnett took the tired crew to Club 1017, now torn down and owned by Charlie Burns of Super Pride Jame. That crew ran up such a bill . . . the boss was mad with everybody the next week.

I also remember the day that President John Kennedy died. All the major daily papers had finished their press runs for the day.

In those days before TV news as it is today, newspapers put out extras for breaking news events.

The AFRO has just started their weekly Friday press run. The press was stopped and as the news came over the wire services, the Kennedy Extra was printed and on the street in an hour. A copy of that paper is in the Kennedy museum.

Other famous extras were the Joe Louis fight extras of the 1930's. The headlines in 80 point type read "Joe Louis Wins."

For more AFRO Memories see Tuedday's AFRO.

Bill Lane in Hollywood

FROM the gorgeous Phyllis George to the beautiful and winsome Jayne Kennedy. That's the direction taken by CBS in selecting actress - sports enthusiast Kennedy to replace Phyllis George on "The NFL Today," the popular CBS-TV sports feature.

Jayne is now busily preparing for her network TV appearances and a job that will have her skipping all across the country each week from a New York base. She is 26, and was formerly Miss Ohio, has been on numerous top TV features and in major motion pictures. She now makes her home in Pasadena. Not long ago she headed up a television program called "Yours In Sports." One of her chief supporters has been Champ Muhammadi Ali.

Praises should be tossed to Jim Cato and Lin Hilburn of the Labor and Industry Committee of the Hollywood NAACP who, while all the squabbling was going on nationally about the Image Wards, were busy rapping with the FCC and with CBS about getting Jayne Kennedy, and others, into network television as hosts of special features. They were particularly strong on getting Jayne Kennedy on "The NFL Today."

THE entire box office take of over a million dollars garnered by Mick Jagger and The Rolling Stones, at a one - day concert here was attached and held for court ajudication while a judicial look was taken into the paternity affairs involving Jagger, who is a white Englishman, and Marsha Hunt, who is a black American. Miss Hunt is also, according to her court testimony, mother of daughter, Karis, eight years old. And she contends that Jagger is the knowledgeable father of Karis; that Jagger had in times past contributed to the support of Karis, but that now some $230 per month was needed for her proper support. Miss Hunt, formerly a chorine in "Hair," said she had gone to court some five years ago to make her initial claim, and that at the time Jagger came through, midly. This time she wants him to come through strongly, and permanently.

SWITCH is the name of the group of handosome young fellows who comprise the new vocal - music Motown aggregation that's hammering with their new album at the very top of the music harts. The youngsters are being acclaimed with verve, vigor and vivacity by young ladies everywhere. Not since the advent of the Jackson Five and Motown seen one of its music units so powerfully received by the public. And the unusual feature of it all is that Switch was discovered and brought to the Motown label by Jermaine Jackson, an original member of the 3-5 and who is now a son - in - law of Motown pilot Berry Gordy.

THE MONTEREY Jazz Festival, opening Sept. 15 near Carmel, California, wants it known that the tickets to the affair are available up and down the West Coast that ducats may be obtained via mail: P. O. Box JAZZ, Monterey, Ca. 93940.

ATTY. Carl E. Jones, the sure - shot legal eagle of the Hollywood scene, who advertises his fees for representation, also sports on his business cards that all one has to do to reach him is dial 29-JONES.

Jesse Walker's N·Y· ... and now a word

NEW YORK: The New Cotton Club was jammed and jumping last week at a reception for Civil Court Judge candidate Henry R. Williams when pianist Dorothy Dandridge and violinist Richard Otto put on an impromptu show. Emcee Honi Coles, better known as a premiere tap dancer also surprised by singing a number in Williams' honor and singer Carol Cass, a looker and also an impressionist on the Cotton Club's regular show made the crowd happy. Popular Harlem dentist, Dr. "Rumps" Jones is campaign treasurer for Williams, and latter once a laywer for the late Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

Reception launching the First Harlem Jazz Festival was held on Wednesday, August 9 at the New Small's Paradise, which is, coincidently, the birthday of the Festibal's Official Spokesman, author James Baldwin. Frank Weston is producer of the Festival with L. Bruce Hopewell, musical coordinator. All show tickets are $12.50. Dates are Aug. 17-31. For further info. call (212) 686-9096 or 787-2609.

The Federal Communication Commission has refused to renew the license of a black - owned radio station, KOAD, of Lemoore, Calif., saying its owners Mr. and Mrs. Clark E. Parker, gave the FCC a "totally misleading" picture of the station's programming. Since KOAD is only one of the 57 black - owned radio stations in the United States out of 7,573 commercial stations, the FCC, in its public notice inviting applications for either an interim or a full - time license operator of the station, particularly encourated minorities to apply.

A memorial service for actor James Wigfall, the former Cowardly Lion in the stage show "The Wiz," was held Monday at the La Mama Annex on East 4th Street. Wigfall died in Bellevue Hospital from massive head injuries suffered when the bicycle he was riding was hit by a truck on July 24. A native of Jersey City, New Jersey, he worked with the Negro Ensemble Co., the Cafe La Mama, and the Afro - American Total Theatre.

Oscar Brown, Jr. is now presenting his musical revue, "Faces of Brown," five times a week at the Last Hurrah, a disco in Philadelphia.

Top Jazz Albums

1. Sounds . . . and Stuff Like That Quincy Jones
2. Feels So Good Chuck Mangione
3. Images Crusaders
4. Sunlight Herbie Hancock
5. Weekend In L.A. George Benson
6. Don't Let Go George Duke
7. Freestyle Bobbi Humphrey
8. This Is Your Life Norman Connors
9. Arabesque John Klemmer
10. Super Blue Freddie Hubbard

Top R & B Albums

1. Natural High The Commodores
2. Life Is A Song Worth Singing Teddy Pendergrass
3. A Taste Of Honey
3. A TasteOf Honey
4. Togetherness L.T.D.
5. Come Get It Rick James
6. Sounds . . . And Stuff Like That Quincy Jones
7. Loveshine Con Funk Shun
8. Natalie . . . Live Natalie Cole
9. So Full of Love The O'Jays
10. In The Night Time Michael Henderson

Top R & B Singles

1. Boggie Oogie Oogie A Taste of Honey
2. You and I Rick James
3. Three Times A Lady The Commdores
4. Get Off Foxy
5. Close The Door Teddy Pendergrass
6. Last Dance Donna Summer
7. Shake and Dance With Me Con Funk Shun
8. I Like Girls Fatback Band
9. Stuff Like That Quincy Jones
10. Shame Evelyn Champagne King

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Fay Carmichael's Trombones

A group of free lance musicians from the Baltimore area, former soloists with the Hank Levy's Towson Jazz Ensemble and the Peabody Jazz Ensemble, will be giving free concerts this month in the Inner Harbor and War Memorial Plaza under the direction of Fay Carmichael.

A graduate of Western Maryland College with graduate work at Towson State Catholic U and Peabody, she is a former teacher of instrumental music in the Baltimore Public Schools.

Members of the group play in the house orchestras at the Painter's Mill Music Fair, the Mechanic and the Lyric.

Soloist with the group, Nataska, is a Morgan grad and has sung with the Lionel Hampton Orchestra and on the road with Sammy Davis Jr.

Members of the band are from Morgan University, Towson State and Peabody.

Their repertoire consists of big band jazz, rock and standards like "Stardust," "Mr. Bojangles" and "This Masquerade."

Saturday Aug. 12, Fay Carmichael's Trombones will give a free concert 6-7:30 p.m. at Buckman's Field, Marville and Key Avenues near Cross Country Blvd.

Tuesday, Aug. 29 — War Memorial Plaza, 12 Noon. Wednesday, Aug. 30 — Inner Harbor Stage, 8 p.m.

Fay Carmichael Trombones include Nataska Hasan Yousef, vocalist; Leroy Hawthorne, piano; Charles Funn, valve trombone all from Morgan State. Wayne Wells, trombone; Eric Landers, bass trombone, from Peabody. John Getz, lead trombone; Steve Groot, bass; Church Karner, drums, from Towson State.

The McKenzie report

By Vashti McKenzie

If you ever want to know which weekend in August is going to rain, to save your inner - city survival garden from shivering in the 90 degree heat, just note when the AFRAM Festival is going to be held.

Every year it either manages to rain on the AFRAM Festival or the AFRAM Festival manages to be held on rainy weekends.

The sun shook free of dark clouds a little last Saturday and a lot last Sunday afternoon in the Inner Harbor.

Th damage was already done, however, Friday night. Torrential rains turned Rash Field, site of the AFRAM Festival, into a quagmire, fit only for mushrooms and worms.

Crowds poured into the Harbor area, happy that it wasn't raining and unhappy about the humidity. Families oced with the heat and sunshine wearing boxer shorts, T-shirts, halters and hardly anything at all.

Lemonade, chicken and rice and the smell of McCormick's pepper flowed freely over the festivities.

There seemed to be something for everyone. There were children's shows, modern dancers, singing groups, and bands.

The play area was full of mud and parents trying to hold on to toddlers and toddlers trying to hol on to brightly colored balloons.

The walks lining the downtown Marina were filled with displays of art representative of our Afro American culture and heritage.

The airways contained the sounds of local radio stations broadcasting live.

Practically every ethnic group in the city has had an opportunity to relish their heritage and unity. Last Sunday was our opportunity and as the Rev. John Bryant, pastor of Bethel AME Church commented "we're only group to have church."

Rev. Bryant spoke to the assembled crowd about moving mountains . . . mountains of hatred, alcoholism, drugs and fear. He spoke about unity and establishing a purpose and a plan; possible through a mustard seed of faith. It's a belief that the mountains can be moved by plugging into a spiritual force.

Rev. Bryant also spoke to the need for black people to love blac people. The Imani Messengers of Bethel AME Church dressed in colorful African print robes and headdresses, sang under the direction of Harrison Scott.

Pauline Wells Lewis and Mary Clayburn did a masterful job as mistresses of ceremonies.

Bits and Pieces — Lawrence Parker's preview of his "Anniversary Show of Stars" benefit for the Negro College Fund will be held Aug. 18 at the Pavilion in the Inner Harbor. The models got rained out last Friday.

Kene Holiday, of TV's Carter County and his wife Janifer are all smiles upon the arrival of their new son, Darian Kenneth recently in Los Angeles.

Sammy Davis Jr. who opened on Broadway in "Stp The World I Want To Get Off" paid a surprise visit to Eartha Kitt on the stage of the Mark Hellinger Theatre where she's starring in "Timbuktu."

Davis attempted to pick up M's Kitt, lost his balance and went tumbling to the stage. The audience drew its collective breath as Davis limped off the stage appearing to be seriously hurt. After to limping to the manager's office, Davis appeared again l s old vibrant self.

$80,000 ROLLS — Michael Jackson is reported by New York columnist as having blown $80,000 of his 'Wiz' salary on a new Rolls — a gift to himself. He supposed to be learning to drive so he can take Janelle Commissing, a former Miss Universe to the movie's premiere Oct. 24.

TV Watching

By Vanessa Johnson

Friday

Dinah: A tribute to Welcome Back, Kotter with Garbiel Kaplan, John Travolta, Lawrence Hilton Jacobs, John Sylvester White. 4:00-5:30 p.m. - Channel 9.

Mike Douglas: Carol Channing, David Groh and Linda Hopkins koin co - host Ben Vereen. 4:30-6:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

Evening Magazine: A profile of Kevin Clash, 1 17 year old who designs, constructs and pervroms with puppets. 7:30-8:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

Soundstage: An electric blend of music from David Amram and friends, including Dizzy Gillespie, Steve Goodman and members of the Chicago Symphony. 9:00-10:00 p.m. - Channels 22 and 67.

CBS Pilot: "Sparrow," a young New Orleans private eye (Randy Herman) who uncovers a link between a dowager's stolen bird and an unsolved jewelry theft. Starring Jonelle Allen. 10:00-11:00 p.m. - Channel 2.

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