Highlights

Top row: (L. to R.) —Heartbreak strikes the Haley family when Alex's mother (Irene Cara, left) and her mother (Beah Richards) learn that the young woman is dying.
—(below) Robert Culp (L.) takes young Alex (C.) and his father (Dorain Harewood) to a sharecropper's farm during the Depression.
—Diahann Carroll is Alex Haley's stepmother, comforting the boy's father (Dorain Harewood) when Alex drops out of school and joins the Coast Guard.
—Alex Haley (now played by Damon Evans) takes a wife (played by Debbie Allen) as WW II begins.

Bottom row: (L. to R.) —After retiring from the Coast Guard, Haley (now played by James Earl Jones) becomes a journalist whose interview subjects include American Nazi leader George Lincoln Rockwell (played by Marlon Brando) and (next photo) black leader Malcom X (played by Al Freeman Jr.).
—Haley's relentless search for his roots — for the truth of his ancestors — finally leads to the triumphantn discovery of Juffure, the Gambia, West Africa.

Who's who

George Stanford Brown (Tom Harvey) wears the hair for his role in "Roots: The Next Generation." Both stars fly in the first few hours as family patriarch Tom Harvey and later returned to direct the fifth two-hour episode. Brown was born in Havana, Cuba, and spent his childhood in Mexico, Canada, Europe and Puerto Rico. He played on a soccer team in New York and Los Angeles before gaining national attention in Oliver Perry Wilkins in "The Guardian" opposite Lee Majors. Brown's other credits include "Sally," with Joyce DeWitt and Vic Morrow, "The Comedians" with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. As a director, he has worked on episodes of "The Waltons," "Lou Grant," "Barnaby Jones" and "The Family." Brown, his wife and their two children live in Beverly Hills, Calif.

FAY HAUSER (Carrie Harden) portrays the schoolteacher who marries Tom and is the lady in flowerful fashion in Roots: The Next Generation. Born in Durham, North Carolina, she is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In addition to her role, she is also a successful songwriter and singer and has played several of her songs in her stage appearances in several off-Broadway shows and was a member of the touring company of "Porgy." Her other movie credits are "Cooley High," "The Long Night," "Nothing Happening!!," "Good Times" and a pilot film, "Brothers & Sisters."

AVON LONG (Chicken George) brings more than 50 years as an entertainer to the role of Kunta Kinte's rambling, chicken-thieving grandson. A star on the musical stage in Harlem, Long made his debut recently in Broadway, picking up a little laughter for his trouble in the hit musical "Bubbling Brown Sugar." His stage triumphs include his unforgettable portrayal of Sportin' Life in "Porgy and Bess," movies include "Harry and Tonto," "Lady Sings the Blues," "Cotton Comes to Harlem" and "Cornbread, Earl and Me."

LYNNE MOODY (Irene Harvey) recently delighted audiences in the original "Roots" as the wife of Tom Harvey, Irene's father. Her first movie role was as an American audience in "Tony, Is He Alive?" Other movies include "That's My Mama," "Bonnie and Clyde," "Dirty Harry" and many hit shows including "All In the Family," "The FBI," "Toma" and the television film, "Nightmare in Badman County." She studied acting at the University of Washington, the Goodman Theatre in Chicago and the Pasadena Playhouse. She also has been a successful model.

DEBBI MORGAN (Elizabeth Harvey) plays probably the most demanding role in "Roots: The Next Generations," aging from 18 to 93 during the course of the program's 14 hours. Born in Duna, N.C., she began acting in high school after her family had moved to New York. Her first major roles were with the Negro Ensemble Company and the New Federal Theatre Workshop. Later, she won the starring role in the national touring company of Joseph Papp's "What the Wine-Sellers Buy." Moving to California, she appeared in "Good Times" and "What's Happening!!"

'Roots 2' top ratings

Maybe the big story of 1979 had something to do with it, but "Roots 2," while leading all competition with "Gone With The Wind" and "CooCoo's Nest," The Nielsen overnights for Episode Three indicates the audience are building. Tuesday night "Roots 2" got a 51 share of the audience in New York and a 53 in Los Angeles. Sunday and Monday night, "Roots 2" pulled a 41 share nationally, beating its competition.

Weekend TV Watching

By Vanessa Johnson

Friday

Everyday: Attorney F. Lee Bailey with students his book "Secrets" and Bertie Higgins give quick tips, with others. 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

Mike Douglas: From Las Vegas co - host Joe Raven is joined by Dorothy Stratten, Jim Hudson, Jackie and others. 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

Different Strokes: Open hostilities flare between the brothers when Willis demands total privacy to work on a class project. 5:00 - 5:30 p.m. - Channel 13.

What's Happening!!: Shirley gets worried when she can't get along with Raquel, Dwayne and Rerun. 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

Roots: The Next Generation, Part 5. World War II finds Tom Harvey's great-grandson, Chicken George, enlisted in the Coast Guard, where he discovers a talent as a writer, developing love stories for his shipmates, sweethearts, his family. Julius Harvey attempts to make writing a publishing reality and a person dies. Part 5 - 7:00 - 11:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

The Sixth Month: Using computer technology, "The Sixth Month" shows how Neptune was discovered. As for the mythical 61 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 11 - 12 - 13 - 14 - 15 - 16 - 17 - 18 - 19 - 20 - 21 -