Maryland's 100-year-old black National Guard regiment

AFRO Photo file December 1941

Maryland State Guard Officers — (L - R): Capt. Nelson Williams, Capt. William "Bill" Brady, Maj. H. Maceo Williams, Capt. Louis Johnson and Capt. E. Walter Shervington.

Black men in America have a long history of defending these United States — all the way back to the American Revolution.

Locally, there is a regiment of black fighting men with a tradition of more than 100 years! Company C, the 58th Support Battalion and the 243rd Engineers of the 58th Infantry Brigade of the Maryland Army National Guard, as it is known today, started out in Feb. 1879, as the Monumental City Guard of Baltimore.

On Feb. 20, 1882, the Monumental City guard became the First Separate Company of the Maryland National Guard.

The history of this regiment of "Baltimore's Best" is a glorious one. After only 31-days training, the First Separate Company entered the Spanish-American War.

At the outbreak of the first World War, the company was mobilized and mustered into active federal service in July 1917. They were sent to Camp McClellan, AL, for two months basic training and waited for their orders in Newport News, VA until March 30, 1918 when they went to France.

Once in France, the regiment was known as Company One, 372nd Infantry Regiment, where they fought in Alsace-Lorraine and the Argonne Forest.

One of the highest individual awards in the unit, the French Croix de Guerre, went to Sgt. William Creigler, for leading the company to battle when the Company Commander became seriously wounded.

The 372nd Infantry Regiment was awarded the Croix de Guerre for the heroic way they accomplished their mission on the battlefield. The French later erected a monument for gallantry in their honor.

The unit returned to the United States and was demobilized at Camp Sheridan, on in March 1919.

In 1921 the unit was reorganized and designated Company "A", 140 Auxiliary Branch Engineers, and again designated Service Company 372nd Infantry Regiment in August 1940.

In March 1941 the regiment was again called into active federal duty and stationed at Fort Dix, NJ for basic training. This time they remained stateside and performed guard duty at strategic points along the Eastern Seaboard next to New Jersey and New York.

As the second world war raged in early 1944, the company moved to Camp Breckenridge, KY. and later Fort Huachucha, AZ. where it served as part of the training and replacement center. But on May 3, 1945, the company again prepared for overseas duty and shipped out to Hawaii, where they remained until the unit was demobilized just eight months later.

On April 25, 1947, the unit was stationed in Maryland. In April 1950 the Battalion was reorganized as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 231st Transportation Truck Battalion. This change added personnel to Headq quarters Company and increased their duties in order to relieve the companies of administrative details.

In January 1951 the unit again went overseas — to the Korean war. Throughout the war the unit hauled supplies and troops within range of small arms fire to help deter the advance of the North Koreans.

In May 1951, during the United Nations summer offensive the battalion worked on a round - the - clock operation, hauling supplies from Suwon to Wonju in Korea.

The unit was deactivated in February, 1955 in Korea and reactivated that same month as Maryland Headquarters and Headquarters Company 231st Transporation Battalion (Truck) Company.

They were the only unit from the Maryland National Guard activated for that war and went home with numerous Battle Streamers and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation.

The regiment was reorganized again in 1959, and then in 1963 when it became the 229th Supply and Transporation Battalion.

It was not until 1960, however, that the "First Separate Company" finally had a home. In May 1960, Governor J. Millard Tawes dedicated a $750,000 armory to the unit. The new armory at 2620 Winchester Street came 80 years after Baltimore's "Monumental City Guard" was organized.

Just three years ago, the company took stock of its valiant history and celebrated its 100th anniversary with a Ball in their home, the Melvin N. Cade Armory, named in honor of one of its brave officers.

AFRO FILE PHOTO April, 1942

MEMBERS OF MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD march proudly along the Baltimore City street during World War II.

AFRO File November 1940

Maryland National Guard — Armistice Parade.

AFRO Photo file June 1960

MAKING SURE — These members of the 229th Truck Transportation Battalion of the Maryland National Guard check their map before leaving for Ft. Bragg, NC, for two weeks of training. Left to right: Capt. William "Bert" Harris, Lt. Clifton Johnson, Capt. Thomas H. Briscoe, Capt. John Leath, Capt. Lorenzo Felder and Col. Melvin Cade.

Black History Month Events

February 1-22: "A Life in Art," offered by the Musuem of American Art, 8th and G Streets N.W., Washington, a show including 47 paintings, sculptures and works on paper, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily.

February 1-28: Works of Violet Hill Whyte, shown at Lillie Carroll Jackson Museum, 1320 Eutaw place Monday through Friday, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Special tours for large groups by calling 523-1208.

February 1-28: Black history as seen through the history of the postage stamp, items from the collection of Milton E. Stanley, retired school principal. Shown in the second floor gallery of the Enoch Pratt Free Library daily during regular library hours.

February 1-28: "Afro-American Art," works by Gordon Parks, William H. Johnson, Paul Collins and others exhibited at Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles Street. Reception at 3 p.m. February 7 with exhibit continuing through February 26.

February 12

February 12: "Cartoons That Swing" featuring: Ella Fitzgerald, Oscar Brown Jr., Ravi Shankar, Louis Armstrong, Don Redman, Oscar Peterson, Albert Ammons, Dizzy Gillespie, Roberta Flack and others at Gallery 409.

February 14

February 14 - Exhibit. "Building A New World: Black Labor Photographs." Images trace the history of Black Labor from reconstruction to the present. Participating photographers include Roland Freeman, Lewis Hine, Doris Ulmann, and Gordon Parks. UMBC University Library Gallery. Opening reception, Sunday, Feb. 14, 2 p.m. Free. Exhibit continues through March 30. Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Satuday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, 1 to 9 p.m. Call 455-2232 for more information or special holiday hours.

February 14: "Building a New World: Black Labor Photographs," Images of black labor history from Reconstruction days to the present. Opening days to the present. Opening reception at 2 p.m. in the library of the University of Maryland Baltimore County. (Exhibit continues through March 30).

February 14: "An Overview of Black American Music," members of the Urban Philharmonic of Washington performing music for jazz trio, string quartet and gospel quartet with commentary by Darrold Hunt. Beginning at 5 p.m. in Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles Street.

February 14: The Infinity Repertory of The Arts to perform "The Me Nobody Knows" at 2 p.m. at the Cloisters.

February 15

February 15 - Film. "Are You Listening-Household Technicians." life and views of maids and cleaning women organizing a union. UMBC. Fine Arts Room 306. Noon. Also will be shown at 7:30 p.m. at Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles St. Panel discussion follows.

February 15: "Are You Listening — Household Technicians," life and views of maids and cleaning women organizing a union. Noon in the Fine Arts room 306, University of Maryland Baltimore County. To be repeated at 7:30 p.m. in Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles Street.

February 17

February 17 - Film. "Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter," women employed in 2nd World War industry. UMBC Fine Arts Room 306. noon. Also will be shown at 7:30 p.m. at Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles St. Panel discussion follows.

February 17: "I Shall Moulder Before I Am Taken, a film based on the book "I Sought My Brother" by Counter and Evans and a lecture and demonstration of congo drums, staged at 6 p.m. in the Edmondson Avenue branch of the Pratt Library, 4330 Edmondson Avenue.

February 17: "Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter," women employed in World War II industry. Beginning at noon in the fine arts room 306 of the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

February 19

February 19: "Finally Got the News," a documentary of black auto workers contesting the leadership of the UAW. Noon in the Fine Arts Room 306, University of Maryland Baltimore County. Repeated at 7:30 p.m. in Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles Street.

February 20

February 20: Paul Robeson - The Tallest Tree in the Forest". This excellent documentary directed by Gil Noble was begun shortly before Robeson's death in 1976, and features film sequences from: "Saunders of the River" and "The Emperor Jones" at Gallery 409.

February 21

February 21 Hampton Institute Alumni Association presents the Hampton Institute Concert Choir in recital Sunday, Feb. 21 at 5 p.m. at Poly-Western Auditorium, Cold Spring Lane and Falls Road. Chairman, Atheda Lusk; Eleanor Tildon.

February 21: The New Baltimore Minstrels will perform "Black Reflections: Poetic Readings from the Past" at 1:30 p.m. Dance Menagerie will perform at 3 p.m. Both programs are at the Cloisters.

February 21: "The Negro Spiritual; its origin and significance" a program sponsored by the Bamaker Douglass Musuem Foundation, to be held from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Asbury United Methodist Church, 67 West Street, Annapolis.

February 21: "Baltimore, the Nineteenth Century Black Capital" a lecture by Leroy Graham, former Fulbright scholar and master's graduate of Morgan State University, speaking at 3 p.m., Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles Street, Baltimore.

February 24

February 24: "A Song for You," a concert at 6 p.m. by the Imani Messengers of Bethel A.M.E. Church, St. Bernadine's Catholic Choir, the Youth and Sanctuary Choir of Wilson Park C. C. Church, John Anderson, Kenyatta Howard and Hannah Ajenifuja. Staged in the Edmondson Avenue Branch of the Pratt Library, 4330 Edmondson Avenue.

Continued on page 31

A salute to Black History Month

and the distinguished men and women who've made that history through the years.

In 1846, a brilliant young Black engineer from New Orleans named Norbert Rillieux patented and put into operation a process for steam-refining sugar that ultimately revolutionized the industry in terms of quality, volume, and economy of production.

The principle conceived by the inventor, and the essential process, are in use today, and Rillieux is perhaps even more famous in our business now than he was in his lifetime. Contributions like Rillieux's, important but not always celebrated, have come from countless gifted, dedicated Blacks down through history. . . in all times, in all countries, in all areas of man's endeavour.

In the arts, the sciences, industry, government and the professions, these men and women have put their minds and hands to work with courage, imagination, and unflagging devotion toward the enrichment of the lives of all men. We salute them and their proud work!

Domino Sugar
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If you ask me

By Bettye Moss

Hats off!

Our salute this week goes posthumously to 14-year-old Katrina Little, of Groveland Ave.

She was the Harlem Park Junior High School student who was crushed by a bus while en route to school early Friday morning. (Feb. 6).

We feel she typifies many of our youngsters who are about the business of getting an education and participating in school activities in a meaningful way.

At the time of the tragic accident, she was trying to catch a 7:16 a.m. bus on Groveland, near Belvedere, so she could participate in school band rehearsal.

Honor student

An honor student, young Miss Little was active in Sunday School and was an usher at St. James United Methodist Church, where funeral services were held Tuesday morning.

Hats off to the late Katrina Little for being an outstanding teenager, and for inspiring others to achieve. This, of course, is small comfort to her parents, since she was an only child.

So, special hats off to her parents, Aretha and Gene Little and grandparents, Mary W. Mason, and Mr. and Mrs. John Taylor, for rearing such a delightful teenager. May she rest in peace.

Continue your nominations to this column's Hats Off Section. Help us single out young people who do well.

You see, too many adults take notice of young people only when they do wrong.

About people

Continue cheer to Baxter Seay, the longtime Evans Chapel Rd. resident. He's doing remarkably well at Union Memorial where he had his leg amputated. And, continue cheering his wife, Mildred, who has been a real helpmate.

Dr. Simon Carter, the physician, is doing well at Provident Hospital, where he had surgery on Tuesday.

Also on the mend, and doing well, Mrs. Essie Sutton, the good neighbor and dressmaker, who had foot surgery. She's recuperating at home.

Mrs. Ernestine F. Jones, the Department of Social Service exec, will be honored at a reception at the Belvedere on Thursday, February 18, 5:30 to 7:30.

Reservations at $17.50 per person, are being accepted by Mrs. Anita Marshall at DSS, 1510 Guilford Ave.

Rev. Cornish

Morgan Christian Center marks its 40th anniversary on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 6 p.m., at Fontaine Bleu.

During the dinner, there will be special tributes to longtime director, the late Rev. Howard L. Cornish, who headed the center for 32 years, until his death in Nov. 1978. For reservations, 920 per, call 254-7161.

Cuff note: the late Rev. Cornish was an inspiration and counselor to many a Morgan student. Those who benefitted from his help should turn out in large numbers. Student tickets are $15 per.

Douglas Memorial Community Church marks its 57th anniversary on Sunday.

Former Baltimore minister, the Rev. Frank L. Williams, pastor of Ashbury Methodist Church in DC is the speaker. The Rev. Marion C. Bascom is pastor.

Earl Bundara

Some people are able to maintain a pleasant disposition, even when they suffer a long illness.

Such a person was Earl Lloyd Bundara, the retired Baltimore city mathematics teacher.

On February 7, he lost his battle with the respiratory ailment, which had kept him in and out of the hospital since 1974. He was 63.

He was eulogized on Thursday evening, (Feb. 11), at Grace United Presbyterian Church, where he was a trustee and longtime member.

Despite his illness, Earl Bundara enjoyed life daily. The picture in our mind is of him tinkering with his cabin cruiser at his summer home on the Magothy, where he enjoyed caring for his boat. He loved the water.

34 years

Just this past October, when he participated in the annual O-Nose Club's party, he was cheerful and concerned about his guests. He and his devoted wife Berine, were gracious hosts, insisting that guests have an enjoyable evening.

More important, he showed that same kind of concern about the young people he taught for 34 years - making math subjects interesting and relevant for them. (He knew the importance of academic excellence, being an honor student in high school and college).

And, this was so, too, when he coached and officiated at high school sports events, sharing the skills he had learned which won him recognition as an outstanding athlete, particularly in swimming and diving.

Silent warrior

In the handsome four-page funeral program, daughter, Tonya Bundara Steiner, used the words, "Silent Warrior," to describe her dad.

Her beautiful tribute included these words . . . "Being a man of quiet strength and determination, Earl seemed to excel at his every endeavor.

"He was a silent warrior, "playing" life almost as one plays chess or the ancient game of Go, strategizing, overcoming obstacles head - on, withdrawing temporarily for a better future victory, and sometimes surrendering, not through weakness, but through wisdom.

"Lauther, sorrow, smiles, tears, pain, pleasure, winning, losing, giving, learning, trying, living and yes, even dying — were and are a part of our physical time in this universe — were and are a part of Earl Bundara.

"He may be dead in a physical sense, but on Sunday evening, February 7, 1982 he was reborn into the spiritual and has transcended morial agonies. He is truly free . . ."

In addition to his wife, Berine, retired AFRO classified exec, Tonya, he is survived by a stepdaughter, Allenette Gail Valentine; and grandchildren, Piper Daniels, Kimberli and Nia Valentine;

Also, a brother, Wejay Bundara of San Antonio, TX, who was here for the rites with his wife, Mamie; a sister - in - law, Mrs. Annie Lee; and nephew, Wejay Bundara 3rd of Houston, TX.

Also here, Mrs. Bundara's cousins, Roderick and Frances Ragland of Philadelphia

Handsome

Cuff note: Both Bundaras - Earl and his surviving brothe, Wejay, were retired Army colonels.

They were handsome in uniform, and even handsomer in their high school days.

Many a Douglass High coed included them on her favorite list of popular guys.

They were as nice as they were good looking.

In death, Earl Bundara was as handsome as ever. Mortician was Herbert Nutter.

Honorary pallbearers were members of Grace trustee board, Baltimore Alumni, Kappa Alpha Psi Coast Guard Auxiliary, O'Nose Inc., Richard Fry and Franklin Owens.

Active pallbearers were: Malcolm Chamberlain, Clarence Dyson, William E. Griggs, Carl Jones, Warren D. Lee, Roderick Ragland, Ronald D. Scott and Harry Michael Valentine.

'Aunt Mary'

Mrs. Mary Jones Wood Williams died Tuesday at Dukeland Nursing Home. She was 94.

Longtime Falls Rd. residents will remember Mrs. Williams was fondly called "Aunt Mary" by many neighbors, and her husband was referred to as "Uncle Turk."

Funeral services are Monday at Immaculate Conception. Survivors include numerous nieces and nephews.

Exercise

Getting ready to start an exercise regime? A slow but steady pace is the best way to go if you've been inactive over the past months of winter.

Try walking 15 minutes more daily and work up to a 60 minute stride over the next months. Climbing stairs is a good way to shape up - one minute of stair climbing burns up 13 calories.

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during
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