Bettye Moss

IF YOU ASK ME

Smile orchids

Smile orchids to **Miss Gail Stanfield.** Hers is the melodious voice you hear when you call the office of Coppin State College president, **Dr. Calvin Burnett.** You'll like the way she says, "please hold on."

A 13-year employee at the college, Miss Stanfield belongs to St. Peter Claver Catholic Church, lends her voice to the choir at St. James Episcopal Church.

Plenty of sunshine in the voice of **Mrs. Deborah Brunson,** secretary in the Coppin language and literature department. Hold "hold on, please," and "thank you for holding" are delightful, too.

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Smile orchids to these good neighbors we spied at the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity's Mardi Gras scholarship ball on Saturday : — **Mrs. Odessa D. Durkins,** president of the Urban League Guild; **Mrs. Yvonne Archer,** the School 64 teacher and **Mrs. Shirley Robinson,** the retired city teacher now on Community College of Baltimore faculty.

(See more about the Omegas' fundraiser below).

Always plenty of sunshine in the voice of **Mrs. Priscilla Lansey,** Friends will attest she inspires them with her hearty laugh.

Smile orchids to her especially this week. Her hubby, **Gaines Lansey,** president of Ideal Federal Savings Bank, was back in the hospital (Liberty Medical), on Tuesday.

Mailbag

Mailbag: — **Mrs. Margaret Boone,** nursing assistant at the Wesley Methodist Retirement Home on Rogers Ave., writes this smile salute:—

"Congratulations to **Ms. Frances Watkins,** of the Wesley Methodist Retirement Home. She handles the calls for the director, **Ms. Wendy Warner,** Ms. Watkins deserves your smile orchids because she is very pleasant and soothing in her response to everyone. . .".

* * *

Editor's note: Please share with this column names of people who you meet who have sunshine in their voices. Help us prove people will take time to praise others who smile.

Please write, Smiles, If You Ask Me, Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN, P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore Md., 21203; and smile, please.

About People

Congrats to staff and help at the Palladium. They did a terrific job on Saturday evening when the Liberty Heights Ave. hall hosted the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity's annual Mardi Gras benefit for scholarships.

It made you proud to see the well-groomed young waiters and waitresses serve the buffet and attend the tables with grace and ease. And the place was packed with an estimated 1500 persons.

Highlight of the evening, the costume competition with cash prizes for best individuals, couples and groups. See news release for winners.

Among happy participants, and winner of second prize for couples, **Dr. Wilson Dickerson,** the dentist, dressed as Andy with **Agnes Edwards,** as Raggedy Ann. Cute!

Dr. Benjamin Whitten and Walter E. Riddick co-chaired the fundraiser. **Arthur W. Lambert** is chapter president. (basileus).

* * *

Big bash in D.C. on Friday evening was the 49th anniversary Valentine dinner dance hosted by the famed Hellians Club. Event was in the Marriott Grand Ballroom.

Among guests — D.C. Mayor Marion Barry and wife, **Effie.** Baltimoreans there, **Bea and David Wright, Kay and Simon Carter, Sam and Barbara Owings, Phyllis and Mike Moore.**

Other Marylanders spied in the crowd: **Larry and Althea Moore,** (she chairs the Md. Lottery Commission; and **Marie and Charles Hicks.**

Also a real bash was the Saturday evening Valentine party **Judge and Mrs. William Thompson (Audrey** called a Family Court. It was also in the Marriott's main ballroom, featured buffet and plenty of good entertainment.

More people

Valentine party here in Baltimore on Sunday was hosted by our town's We Wives Club, headed by **Ivy Grinage. Margery Prout and Jo Brown** chaired the event held at the Regency Terrace.

Other club members: **Iona Collins, Mae Dyson, Adele Foreman, Priscilla Lansey, Ieis Lloyd, Gwen Tarter, Ida Peters, Ada Weaver, Agnes Reaves, Roberta Keets and Margaret Hythe.**

Among guests: **Mary and Aaron Ellis,** who were observing their 40th wedding anniversary.

Also spied in the crowd the **Alfred McEwens** (Delores) of Crownsville. He's the retired Air Force Lt. Col., now in government post. Many know their son, **Mark McEwen,** the CBS Morning News weatherman and commentator.

Another son, **Christopher (Kirk) McEwen** is the disc jockey on 98 Rock.

* * *

Big event in Atlanta this Saturday (Feb. 20) installation ceremony for **Dr. Leroy Keith,** as eighth president of Morehouse College. He was assistant to president of U of Md. before his appointment to the Georgia school.

And more

Thinking-of-you cards, please, to **Mrs. William Parrott Sr. (Mae).** She and her husband had been married 60 years when he died last week.

Many know Bill Parrott because he was for 43 years a teacher and administrator in the city schools. Many others knew him as a dedicated organist and choir director for over 38 years at St. James Episcopal Church.

It was there on Monday morning that funeral services were held. And it was there that one of the original songs he composed was sung beautifully by soloist Rosalyn Wood.

It was entitled "The Angel's Song." Words were composed by late AFRO publisher Carl Murphy, who was a great admirer of Mr. Parrott. A spiritual the two wrote and composed is "Lord, Come, I Need Help." Mr. Parrott, who was 82, is survived by son, William Jr., a sister, Mrs. **Rufus Hackett (Charlotte),** of Durham, N.C., was ill and unable to attend. Two grandchildren, **Wayne Parrott and Angela Thomas** also survive.

Nice gesture: A large contingent of Mrs. Parrott's family — the Cochrans, Jordans and Pittmans came from D.C. to join the Parrott family at rites.

Arena mourns

The recent mystery slaying of 22-year-old Dana Keith orange has left members of the Arena Playhouse family in a state of shock. **Mrs. Camilla Sherrard** the retired manager-director, termed the Feb. 1 killing unbelievable, of Dana, she said, "he was a very kind person. He was the house manager and technician. Everyone loved him."

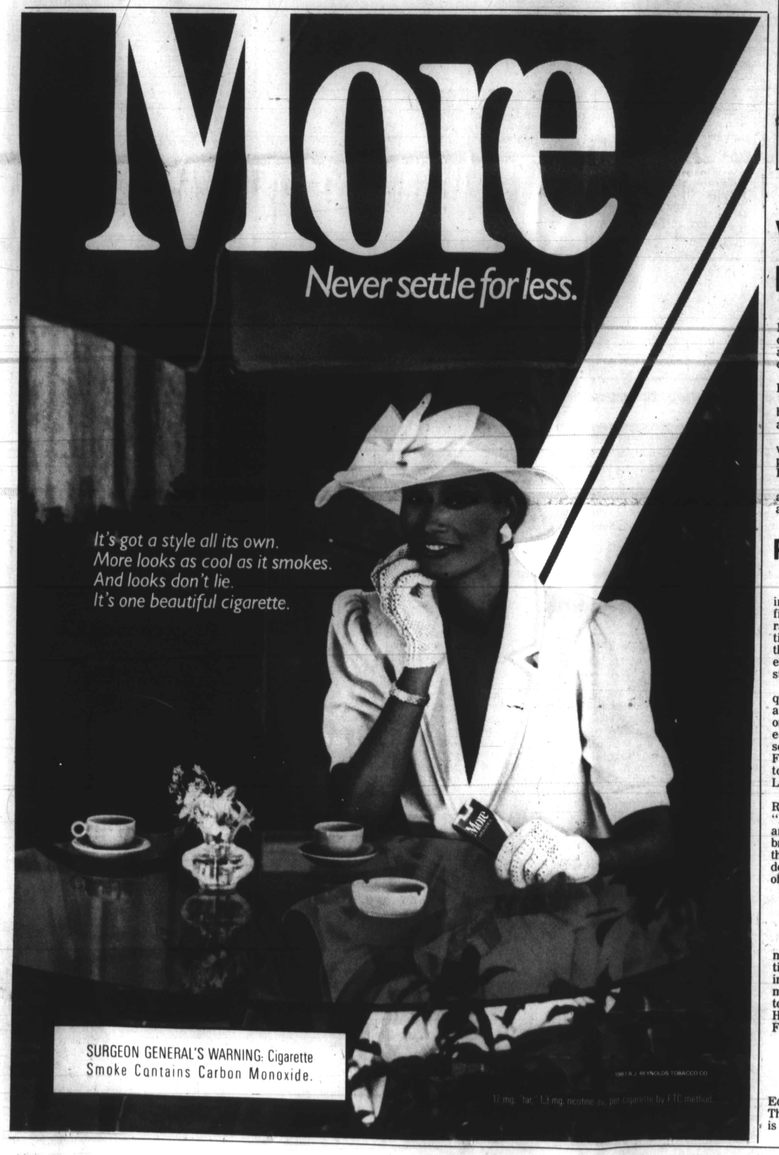
Samuel H. Wilson, the Coppin prof. who is a founder and artistic director at Arena, remembered Dana as "a productive young man who was always very helpful."

He added, "I regarded him as a son. I taught his mother **(Catherine)** now a City College teacher, at Coppin and I work with her in the Youth Theatre at Arena. His father, **(Rodney)** and I are in the Frontiers Club together.

"It is really like I have lost a member of my own family. I have no idea who would want to kill him. He didn't have an enemy in the world."

Police are at a loss too. At this writing no arrests have been made. Young Orange was found dead in the hallway of his Fairfax Rd. apartment which had been ransacked.

A week before his death, he had received notice he had been accepted as a trainee in the Baltimore Police Department training class.



Djimo Kouyate

Walters celebrates Black History Month

Djimo Kouyate, the founder and director of the Washington-based Memory of African Culture, will perform an authentic African concert at The Walters Art Gallery on Sunday, Feb. 28 from 2-3 p.m., as part of "Afro-American Culture: A Living Art," the museum's celebration of Black History Month.

Mr. Kouyate, born in Dianna, Senegal, is descended from the Kouyate family of **griots,** oral historians.

His concert at The Walters will feature the **kora,** a 21-stringed bridged harp (shown here); the **balafon** (similar to an xylophone); and the **seourba** drums.

The concert will be followed by "A Dialogue With Sojourner Truth," with Baltimore actresses Alice McGill and Marilyn Cameron (3-3:30 p.m.); and a jazz-dance performance and demonstration by Baltimore Dance Exchange (3-4:30 p.m.).

Admission to "Afro-American Culture: A Living Art" is free with admission to the museum. For more information call The Walters at 547-9000 x236/237.

Pratt sets events schedule

How does a Black child react to institutional racism? Do our finest private schools condone racism? Has "affirmative action" created more problems than it has solved? Why is Black enrollment dwindling in our institutions of higher learning?

These are only a few of the questions that will be addressed at a Black History Month forum on the impact of a private school education on Black youth scheduled at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 28, in the Wheeler Auditorium of the Pratt Central Library, 400 Cathedral Street.

The keynote speaker will be Robert Sam Anson, author of "Best Intentions: The Education and Killing of Edmund Perry", a brilliant, investigative analysis of the events which led to the violent death of a young Black graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy.

Anson's talk will precede a panel discussion led by Beverly Burke of WMAR-TV, Channel 2 in Baltimore.

Panel members will include Paul Ruffins, editor of **Point of View,** magazine of the Black Congressional Caucus; Roslyn Wynn, Baltimore mother of sons who are attending Phillips Andover Academy, and William Green, Director of the Upward Bound program.

The discussion will be followed by questions and comments from the audience, which is expected to include a broad cross-section of the Baltimore community.

Admission to the forum is free, with seating available on a first-come basis. Further details are available from the Pratt Library's Public Relations Office, 396-5494.

Historian Banks to speak

Baltimore City Health Department will host "The Constitutional Status of Afro-Americans into the 21st Century: An Assessment," the final of four seminars to be held in honor of Black History Month, on Wednesday, Feb. 24 from 11 a.m. to 12 noon at 303 E. Fayette Street, 3rd floor conference room.

Guest speaker for the seminar will be Dr. Samuel Banks, Baltimore City Public Schools. The seminar is free and open to the public. Call 396-1443 (TDD #396-1846).

Anger to be probed

Inner Turmoil: Anger is the subject of a seminar offered by the Education Center of Sheppard Pratt on Monday, Feb. 22 from 7-9 p.m. The seminar will examine several ways of managing anger. The fee is $16.00. Call 339-4094.

BLACK HISTORY FEATURE

From Africa to the Americas

A family's saga spans time and space

By Kimberly Macklin
Special to the AFRO

Marion Parker Nelson has a family history that spans the globe and is more than 150 years old.

She is the owner of International Fashions Treasures at 322 West Baltimore Street, is in the retail business of African, American arts and crafts. Her shop contains items that are hand made, and embroidered. Items range from dashikis to beaded jewelry.

Nelson, a native of Monrovia Liberia, stems from a large family of 11.

Her family emigrated to Liberia during the 19th century.

Liberia was first settled by black Americans in 1822, under the auspices of the American Colonization Society. In 1847, the colony was granted independence as a republic.

Life was hard for the former slaves and black freedmen sent to Liberia. Many of them, unused to the African climate, died shortly after reaching Liberia, but a sturdy group of settlers grew and prospered.

In 1859, Rev. David Y. Payne, his wife and children left Richmond, VA after slavery. Payne, born a slave, was the son of a white Virginia plantation owner. Payne decided to leave America shortly before the Civil War and start a new life in the new nation of Liberia.

Ironically, Nelson, who researched her family's history, discovered that the slave owner and his brother migrated from England during the 17th century and established a plantation on the James River.

His family was among the 67 colonists who embarked at Hampton Roads, VA for the motherland.

David Y. Payne was an Episcopal Methodist minister, Nelson said, and was one of two ministers who said a farewell prayer before the ship Harriet left Hampton Roads.

The family settled in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia.

Nelson spoke highly of her family member, James Spriggs Payne, who made great contributions to Liberia.

He migrated to Liberia in 1859 with parents, sisters, and brothers. He was an ex-slave who returned to his motherland to become the first Methodist pastor of Liberia and the 4th and 6th president of his nation.

James Spriggs Payne wrote a book on economics and was decorated by Queen Victoria for his service to his country.

In her Liberian family of many, there are great presidents, preachers, and educators. Nelson showed a reporter a photograph of Matilda Maude Payne Parker, who was an important educator of Liberia College.

Matilda Parker married Phillip Clarence Parker, who owned one of the two first retail stores in Monrovia, and was the Spanish Consul in Liberia.

Davis' shop does bring the continent closer to Baltimore. Brightly colored garb vies with African artifacts for attention. Both Nelson and shop employees are dressed in African clothing, and Nelson never hesitates to tell visitors the history behind each item in the store.

Although Liberia has been riven by rebellion in recent years, Nelson has fond memories of the land of her forefathers.

Nelson studied at Howard University and taught at the School of Medicine at Howard. Her post graduate studies were done at Catholic University. While at her dissertation stage she was exposed to a military coup d'etat which resulted in her failing to complete her dissertation.

Nelson said she loves her homeland, but plans to build a new life here in America.

"It crosses my mind to go home to live, but I feel I can contribute on both sides," she said.

Nelson's family continues to remain closely knit through frequent visiting.

Nelson feels her business is growing successfully and hopes to expand in the near future. She perceives her business as a way of sharing African culture with the sisters and brothers here in the states.

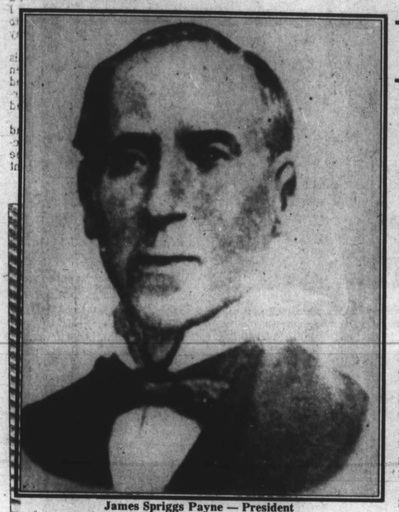
"We hope our being in Baltimore operating this little business will share and enlighten the minds and hearts of people here," she said.

Nelson has 7 children who remain part of the Parker legacy. She is grateful for her success as well as her families.

"I feel I have the best of both worlds," she said.

Nelson said she recalls now her grandmother would often write the family's American cousins, but the ties between the two branches of the family eventually were lost when her grandmother died.

She said she still searches for the American branch of the Paynes, and hopes one day to be reunited with the Paynes who stayed behind when her great-grandfather sailed for the shores of Africa.

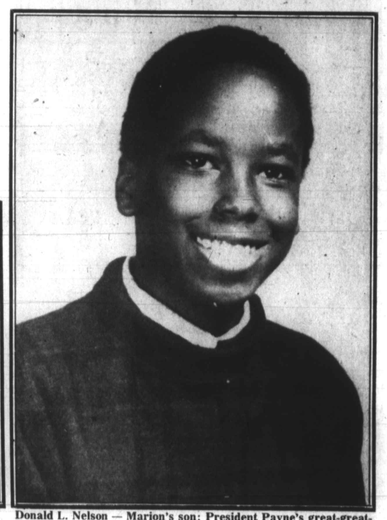


James Spriggs Payne — President

Phillip Clarence Parker, II — Matilda's son; President Payne's grandson

Matilda Maude Payne Parker — President Payne's daughter

Phillip Clarence Parker, Sr. — Matilda's husband



Donald L. Nelson — Marion's son; President Payne's great-great-grandchild.

FEB 1988