

The Heritage of Cooking Series

# Pioneering Washington State

(Continued from page 7 col. 6)

fire, forcing many people to live under pitched tents. Men with building skills were needed and many black men helped recreate the city. But as attitudes changed, these same men found themselves juggling careers more often than not. While Mr. Harvey's business card still read CONTRACTOR, he operated a barbershop and shoe repair shop. A curtain divided the two work areas and with the change of an apron he could either give a shave or resole a shoe. "One had to work hard to maintain a family. There were no social services, only neighbor helping neighbor," said Ms. Taylor. Her mother and aunt worked as caterers, serving sqaub under glass to clients but the less exotic baked beans and brown bread at home.

Another family long in the forefront of community service are the Gaytons. Ms. Virginia Gayton, who can trace her roots back to Lewis George Clark, the abolitionist after whom George Harris in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is based, says quite simply of the times, "We had greater freedom here but fewer opportunities." Both of her parents, who were trained schoolteachers, settled in Spokane in 1901; but the first black schoolteacher was not hired until 1946, so her father spent his life working on the railroad. He thought he would try politics, but no black man was elected to the state legislature following William Owen Bush in 1889 until Charles M. Stokes, in 1950. How significant it is today that Ms. Gayton's eight children are active in education and political science.

Ms. Gayton studied at Howard University, but found that with all of her skills and training, most employment open to black women was in domestic service. That was in 1926. Today, Washington state has Peggy Maxie as its first black female representative. These and other changes would not have happened had it not been for the vigilant efforts and vision of the elders. This was true in Washington as well as Oregon, where the anti-Black resident law was repealed in 1924 and the first Black legislator was elected in 1970.

The second large recruitment of black workers from the South did not occur until the government made an effort to swell the ranks of civilian workers in its wartime plants during World War II. In Pasco, Washington, the population went from six Blacks in 1940 to 2,500 by 1948, and the parallel between the Roslyn settlers in 1880s and the Pasco pioneers of 1940s are amazing. At first there was the suspicion and lack of cooperation from the residents, then the formation of a strong community feeling.

The one thing that Pasco did not have going for it, however, was the awe inspiring beauty of the Roslyn mountains or the temperate Seattle weather. Ms. Katie Mooney recalled that she cried every day for a year when she looked out from her trailer camp onto the tumbleweeds, sagebrush and terrible dust storms of the Plains area. But within a short time residents were able to build their own homes and nestle in. Without much help from the city fathers, they were forced to lay their own pipes for water and sewage disposal. But they had come to stay. Ms. Mooney dried her eyes and started the St. James Methodist Church in her living room. Rev. and Ms. James Brown began the Morning Star Baptist Church. And together they made Pasco "home." They found that collards, mustard, poke salad and turnip greens would grow in Pasco and that the waters were filled with squaw fish, chiselmouth and catfish just right for frying. They built business establishments, like Ms. Mooney's own Apex Cafe where patrons enjoyed her famous apple pie with beer crust.

So what Pasco lacked in scenic splendor was more than compensated for by the expansiveness of the human spirit, and newcomers like Pat Alford who had never heard of Pasco until her husband's recent relocation there can say with pride, "I love it here. This is my home and I wouldn't want to live any other place."

No one, it seems, has more zeal for Northwest living and traditions than do the recent transplants. The land seems to grab them and, in the true northwestern black tradition, they



Ms. Ethel Craven reminisces the days when coal was king and hundreds of Blacks, her mother included, helped turn Roslyn, Washington, into a rip-roarin' 'gay '90s' town.

are welcomed by those who preceded them.

In Seattle, with an enthusiasm that is infectious, they extol the latest Puget Sound fish-and-chip places, the Space Needle, the monorail,

Pioneer Square, the large Chinatown, the grandeur of Mount Rainier and Snoqualmie Falls where breakfast is an all-day event--and all of it is something to write home about.

Next week: Recipes from historic Washington



Reverend James Brown, a 91 year old resident of Pasco points out his garden with wife, Lizzie.

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