

Flora Parrish celebrates 86th birthday

By Kathryn H. Bogie

Friends and neighbors, old and young, thronged to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson C. Walker recently to wish a "Happy Birthday" to Flora Dawson Parrish, mother of Mrs. Walker.

Laughter rang out often as Mrs. Parrish traded happy quips as she moved among the many guests who had come to greet her. Later, she cut for each guest a piece of the huge decorated birthday cake with a big "86" ablaze with candles in the cake's center.

Mother of two, grandmother of six, and great-grandmother of five, Mrs. Parrish is proud of her family. She points out that both of her children, Lehman, her son and her daughter, Carmen, are college graduates. Lehman Parrish is a real estate and insurance broker and operates his own Chicago-based company. "The grandchildren, all six of them, are also all college graduates," this stately lady lets you know.

Mrs. Parrish sets the pace for achievement for her family by her own example.

Born in Camden, Mississippi in 1894, Flora Dawson lived on the prosperous, well managed farm owned by her parents. Her own mother was a teacher and inspired this daughter to learn. "I also learned," says Mrs. Parrish with a twinkle, "that if I studied and read a lot, I could escape farm work! and you can believe, that by age nine, I was chosen by my father to keep his 'books,' all his farm records!"

Schooling was actually in nearby Campton, a country seat, affording Black children an education through the eleventh grade. Flora spent the school periods with her grandmother, a Campton citizen, and spent holidays with her farm family. As she grew, a spirit of independence, ambition, and strength of character grew with her.

"I wanted to go to college. I wanted to teach," Flora remembers. "So, the summer I was 15 years old, I taught summer school in a one-room school over in Arkansas. Most of the pupils were older than I, but because they wanted to learn, and their parents wanted them to learn, I had no discipline problems."

"I entered Mississippi Industrial College in 1912, and was graduated in Home Economics in 1916."

"My first teaching job, after graduation, combined teaching and being principal. A staff of three, and I, operated an elementary school with an enrollment of 100 pupils," related Mrs. Parrish.

Marriage to John Parrish did not halt her career, nor did mothering their two children stop Flora Parrish. These events seemed only to open new horizons for her.

"I was considered 'outspoken' in those days," the veteran fighter for equal rights laughs, then recalls: "I was always vocal where my rights, especially in employment and wages, were concerned. They called me 'that daughter of Bill Dawson's!' but I had their respect."

"I could drive a car, drive a truck, and could run a tractor long before most men approved these activities for women. Taught myself!"

"The position I held longest was a County Home Demonstration Agent for Madison County. The job became available through the federal government. I and my small staff had, at one time, a register of 1,503 girls and 862 women, in various communities of our county, wanting to learn how to be a better home makers. But, before I started on this job, I had to demand my rightful salary from the local administrators who wanted to pay me nothing at all!"

"No salary, no work, I said to them. And I meant it! I stuck to my word. 'They' held their meetings to discuss the situation and me. Someone told them my parent's name. Quickly they called me in and said, 'why didn't you say you were Bill Dawson's daughter?'"

"They hired me at my price. And I went to work. Stayed 30 years, and over, before I retired - The first time, that is."

The Parrishes took a break during WW II and came to Portland. They liked Oregon and made some arrangements to maintain their Mississippi holdings while residing in Portland after the war was over.

With Portland's new head start program blooming on the scene, Flora Parrish saw that many mothers of these children needed guidance on how to plan nutritious meals for their families. She credits Martha Jordan for recognizing the value of the skills she had to offer and soon Flora Parrish was "off and running" with a new career:



Mrs. Flora Parrish is honored on her 86th birthday by her daughter, Mrs. Carmen Walker.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

helping people to gain better control of their daily living.

The year of 1912 held change for this family for in that year, John Parrish died. The widow needed time for herself and once again she retired from steady employment.

Since then, Mrs. Parrish and Mrs. Walker have toured together. They have visited two European countries and have enjoyed the pleasure of their mother-daughter relationship. Mrs. Parrish also visited the Holy Land with a church tour-group. Trips to Hawaii are now fairly frequent, for both of them enjoy the Walker's second home in Oahu.

In Portland, Flora Parrish is keeping, untarnished, her record of 61 years of teaching Sunday School. She has taught Sunday School wherever she has lived, be it in Mississippi, in Arkansas, or in West Virginia. She joined the local Allen Temple, C.M.E. Church in 1961 and teaches a Women's Sunday School class there at the present. Another church home she claims is Mt. Sinai Baptist Church. She feels

a warm welcome at Mt. Sinai whether she is there as a special speaker, or as a friendly neighborhood visitor.

This indefatigable lady also conducts a Bible class each Tuesday noon to which anyone is welcomed. "I have read the Bible from cover to cover three times," she says. "I feel I belong to God's Church-no matter where I go."

Time has been kind to "Mother Parrish." She may not cook as often as she once did, but she still can produce the delectable sweet potato pies, the light rolls, the tender poundcake and the spicy gumbo her family enjoys. She uses lots of fish in her week's menus and fishing friends replenish her well-stocked freezer.

A pair of glasses and a tiny hearing aid help this dour "86-year-young" lady keep her driving skills honed up to her own strict standards. Not one ticket for driving infractions mars the Flora Parrish perfect driving record.

Black educator addresses desegregation forum

Dr. Wm. A. DuPree, Area Director of Secondary Schools in Cincinnati, Ohio, will keynote a one day seminar on the "Elements of Desegregation." The Urban League of Portland and the Community Relations Division of the Department of Justice are cosponsoring the seminar Friday, February 29, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the Matt Dishman Community Center.

A forum of Portland community members will initiate the day. Sessions with Portland Public

School officials and School Board members will follow.

Dr. DuPree has extensive experience as an educator with a specific focus on desegregation issues. He has served as a consultant with federal agencies since 1968 including the Departments of Education and Justice. Dr. DuPree was a Fulbright Fellow to the University of Ghana. He has instructed in Black History at the Universities of Xavier, Miami and Cincinnati.



Models for Allen Temple fashion show are Delia Broadous (seated), Pamela Reynolds, Pamela Martin, Regina Green and Glenda Parks.

Youth sponsor fashion show

"Reflections: The 70s in Review" is the theme chosen by the young adults of Allen Temple C.M.E. Church for their Ninth Annual Luncheon Fashion Show to be held March 8, 1980 at the Sheraton, Lloyd Center at 12:00 noon.

The annual event is a fund raising activity sponsored by the Young Adult Team for the church's yearly Mammoth Tea. Their sponsor is Mrs. Sarah Strayhand.

The fashion extravaganza is divided into two parts for a total review of the 70s. Part I, coordinated

by Regina Green and Delia Broadous, reflects the fashions of kiddies and teens. Commentators for this part are Debra Strayhand and Louise Norris. Part II, coordinated by Kathy Kendrix and Jo Ann Johnson, reflects adult fashions (male and female) for all occasions. Commentators for part II are Celeste Paul and Rose Martin.

For further information or tickets you may contact Allen Temple, Sat. from 8 A.M. until 2 P.M. or call 248-9393.

Pacific Power Citizen of the Week



LINDA ANDREWS

An eighth grader at Boise Elementary School, Linda Andrews was the first student to make the Honor Roll after the standard was raised to 3.5 (B+)

Linda is a veteran reporter on the "Boise Speaks" newspaper staff, currently writing an entertainment column as well as feature stories. She follows four siblings, all of whom were members of the newspaper staff.

A singer, Linda was chosen to sing the theme song for Boise's 50th Anniversary. She sings in the Church of the God's Choir and the "Gospelites."

Linda loves to read, especially about science. Her principal and teachers call her an exemplary student.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Andrews.

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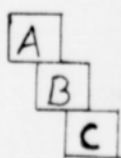
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