

OBSERVATIONS

FROM THE SIDELINES
BY Kathryn Hall Bogle



At the poetry reading at Gingerbread Bookhouse were (l-r) Beth P. Wilson, author and guest of honor; Lois Marie Lewis, poet; Nathaniel Scott, poet; Pamela Glaster, co-owner of the Gingerbread Bookhouse and Mary Kurney, Applegate School librarian. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

BETH P. WILSON, honored California educational consultant, poet, and author of five books for children, recently slipped into Portland for a quiet visit with an old friend. However, word of her presence spread and soon she was deluged with requests for advice and consultation time regarding some part of her professional experience.

A native of Tacoma, Washington, Wilson is a graduate of College of Puget Sound. Her advanced work, done at University of California at Los Angeles, was followed by 20 years of teaching in the elementary schools of Oakland. Wilson was the second of Oakland's Black teachers in the public schools system.

From her teaching career she retired to write books for children. Wilson retains a life membership in PTA, she maintains an active participation with civic and professional groups involved with parents, she is listed in Who's Who of American Women and the World's Who's Who of Women. She is a member and former board member of the California Writers' Club and of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. Awards have been bestowed on Wilson by the California Association of Teachers of English, the National Council of Negro Women, Today's Women, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta and The Links, Inc.

In Portland, Wilson's only public appearance, an evening of poetry, was arranged quickly by Poet Nathaniel Scott of Portland State University and by Pamela Russ Glaster, poet, school teacher and co-owner of Gingerbread Bookhouse on N.E. Union Avenue.

A mixed audience of children, parents, authors and other interested readers of prose and poetry filled the browsing rooms of Gingerbread Bookhouse on Saturday evening. Wilson read highlights from her five books, all available in local school libraries. Titles are Martin Luther King, Jr., Muhammad Ali, The

Great Minu, Stevie Wonder and Giants for Justice.

Lois Lewis, KBOO's current office accountant, well known as an author of workshops and as a consultant on personal discovery of self and direction for personal growth, appeared on the evening's program as a poet reading and reciting some of her own published poetry.

Scott, also a published poet and newswriter, read some of his latest poetry dedicated to the internationally noted artist, Jacob Lawrence. Scott also read an amusing but thoughtful composition concerning sex and the science of test-tube births.

For the delight of children, Mary Kurney, a librarian at Applegate School, read and told stories specifically for the youngsters in the audience. Miming and mugging her way through the stories and using several voices depicting the characters Kurney brought to life the personalities found in "Black Folk Tales," an account of "How the Snake Got His Rattles."

Pamela Glaster, poet, read several of her own compositions of varying mode. She included protest such as "Free at Last—Yes—But

Not Equal"; love and heart throbs such as "I Gave You Me," and "Memories to Be Remembered"; a teenager's plaint, "Why Can't I Write?" and about rivers, the Nile and the Niger.

Leon Glaster acted as master of ceremonies for the occasion. He also made announcement that Pamela, his wife, has plans to make poetry readings a monthly event at Gingerbread Bookhouse.

THE NATIONAL THEATRE of the Deaf presented a sensational evening of theatre in its Pulitzer Prize-winning play, "All The Way Home," seen and heard by a near capacity audience at the Jefferson High School Performing Arts Center last Monday. The traveling troupe blended the sign language of the deaf with the spoken word to give an integrated audience of deaf and hearing people a smooth performance for each. So carefully had the actors rehearsed that it became easy for the hearing portion of the audience to feel that the signed language employed simultaneously by the actors was being understood through interpretation rather than through audio

delivery.

Intermission time was a revelation of the same sort. An audible hum came through from the foyer of hearing persons discussing the play, while inside the auditorium groups of people silently talked it all over in beautiful ballets of hands and fingers. The story of family love points to the universality of the human experience, and Jefferson's Performing Arts Center presented the art of another minority segment of the population.

THE AFRO-AMERICAN Heritage Bicentennial Quilt made in Oregon in 1976 is on the move again, according to Dale Archibald, chief curator of the Oregon Historical Society. Archibald said that OHS had granted the request to show the quilt at the "Political and Campaign Quilt Show" of the Kentucky Heritage Quilt Society conducted by the Kentucky History Museum at the St. Clair Mall in Frankfort. "Students," Archibald said, "of American politics and quilt fanciers are interested in seeing work reflecting political concerns in numbers of ways. Women have expressed their political views on secession and other ideas through handwork." Archibald added that the Kentucky Museum had fulfilled regulatory attention to requirements laid down by OHS, including controlled environment for the quilt (temperature, humidity, light, window placement and photography) as well as shipping arrangements, insurances, and fees. The Kentucky exhibit opened on October 1 and will run through November 10, he said.

Convenor for the group of Oregon women who contributed on the handmade heritage quilt was J. M. Gates.

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