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PORTLAND OBSERVER

USPS 959 680 8556
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Volume XVIII, Number 4

"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"

December 9, 1987

Statue Planned on U of P Campus

In April 1806, three men associated with the Lewis and Clark expedition stood at a point in North Portland near the site of the University of Portland, and viewed the Willamette River and adjoining mountains. It is thought that this was their furthest penetration up the river. On the site 181 years later, a bronze statue is planned on the university campus to commemorate these explorers, who, historians suggest, had a unique ethnic combination. William Clark, the leader of the expedition, was white; his companion, York, was Black and they were accompanied by an American Indian.

This commissioned statue, "The Naming of Mount Jefferson," will be erected on campus at the point where these men are believed to have stood when they surveyed the Willamette River and saw the mountain which Clark named after then-president, Thomas Jefferson.

Created by Michael Florin Dente, adjunct instructor of performing and



fine arts at the university, the statue will be cast in bronze, with larger-than-life figures on a four-foot pedestal and will be historically accurate, with authentic costumes and accessories.

According to James T. Covert, Ph.D., project director and professor of history at the university, Portland has no statue of either Meriwether Lewis or William Clark, and no statue has ever been erected of Clark's Black companion, York.

Dente used a combination of methods to create his images. For Clark, he drew from a portrait by Charles Wilson Peale, painted when Clark was governor of the territory. "Clark had a penchant for rounded sideburns and groomed hairs," said Dente. "And in the statue, I made him lean and gaunt, to show the struggle of the two-year quest to reach his destination. York, Clark's companion, was a big man; journals estimate he stood over 6'. I imagine that York would

have had strong African features with a high-domed forehead.

"I used Chief Casino of the Multnomahs as the model for the Willamette Valley Indian who accompanied the party. It was a sign of eliteness and beauty for upper-echelon native Americans to press their babies' heads with boards to develop flat foreheads, and I show this in the statue; the Indian has a sloping, wide forehead."

In addition to their physical features, Dente has carefully researched, with Covert, the historical background of the party's arrival on Waud's Bluff.

"The Lewis and Clark party had just finished wintering at Fort Clatsop, and they were miserable. They were so flea-ridden that, despite the freezing weather, they occasionally submerged themselves into the icy river to get rid of all the pests they had picked up. York, Clark and a few others in their party left the Sandy River, learning of Indians who pointed out the Willamette River, previously hidden from view. Clark hired one of these Indians, using a looking glass as an item of trade, to show them how to reach the Willamette," explains Dente. His statue illustrates the culmination of that journey.

Symbolic details are important to Dente. The Indian in the statue holds a wapato plant (a potato-like tuber root with heart-shaped leaves) which was the staple of diets and the main trade-item from this region. The friendship Clark shared with York is demonstrated by the fact that they have their hands together on Clark's journal while Clark gestures toward Mount Jefferson, "almost," says Dente, "caressing the mountainside."

The statue's composition exhibits a spirit of cooperation, says Dente. The excitement, the joy of discovery, and cooperation is clear, and according to Dente, this is the first time all three races were coope-

rating in discovery.

"This piece is unusual as well because one of my special skills is portraiture, and I can give the faces of the three men expression of the type that is rarely seen in statuary," he says. "So the statue is not only a historical monument but also a fine art piece showcasing culture, ethnic diversity, friendship and history."

According to Covert, funds for the \$45,000 statue are still being sought.

"We have reached 66 percent of our goal, but we are hoping that groups and individuals will donate to this important project — statue that commemorates the first interracial community in the Pacific Northwest."

Individuals and groups who donate \$1,000 will have their names engraved on a bronze plaque on the statue's base and all benefactor's names will be printed in a brochure to be distributed to tourists and visitors to the statue. Casting is scheduled for late winter, and plans are being made for an August 1988 dedication.

"I look forward to finishing the statue," adds Dente. "I want it to be vital and full of life, and I think it will be. It's an emotional piece, and I've loved working on it. No matter how the viewer looks at this statue, no matter from where they view it or from which angle they see it, they will feel the camaraderie, the strength of these three explorers."

Bi-Centennial of Arrival of Blacks in Oregon to be Celebrated

Two traveling exhibitions from the Smithsonian Institution will open at the Oregon Historical Center in December to begin a year-long series of exhibitions celebrating the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the history of a black presence in the Oregon Country, Thomas Vaughan, executive director of the Oregon Historical Society, has announced.

Opening at 10 a.m. Wednesday, December 9, is "Contemporary Print Images: Works by Afro-American Artists from the Brandywine Workshop." The Brandywine Workshop, established in Philadelphia in 1972, presents 30 silkscreen and offset prints from its collections for this exhibition. Emerging and established Afro-American artists (including Benny Andrews, Selma Burke, John Dowell, and James L. Wells) are featured. These exciting works reveal insights into the complexity of printmaking as well as presenting a survey of contemporary Afro-American art.

Blacks in Congress

On Monday, December 28, an exhibition entitled, "The Long Road Up the Hill: Blacks in the United States Congress, 1870-1983" will open in the first floor gallery. This collection of photographs documents the struggles and accomplishments of blacks in the national legislature.

Not until 1870, 81 years after the first Congress convened, was an American of African descent elected to that body. Many black were elected by southern states immediately following emancipation, but by the end of the 19th century, discriminatory laws and local customs discouraged blacks from voting, resulting in no black congressmen from 1901 to 1929. Since then, the number and influence of black legislators has grown, and by 1984 a total of 59 blacks from 22 states had served in Congress.

Three additional exhibitions relating to black history will open in



1988. "Black Stereotypes in America: Some Perceptions of Character and Culture, 1850-1987" will feature a special collection arranged by Dr. Darrell Millner, head of the Black Studies Department at Portland State University. Items from his personal collections as well as some from OHS collections will be included. Racial stereotypes in general will be discussed. The opening date will be announced in January.

Future Exhibitions

An exhibition that documents the transatlantic slave trade, the struggles of New World slaves, and the colonization efforts of free blacks in West Africa will run from March

26 through June 11. This exhibition, "Out of Africa," also is a Smithsonian traveling exhibit.

The "Oregon Black Bicentennial" exhibition opening in the spring (date to be announced) will focus on the history of blacks in Oregon, beginning with a mid-adventure, the death of Markus Lopeus, a member of Capt. Robert Gray's crew, at the hands of Indians on August 16, 1788. This exhibition will be produced by the OHS exhibits staff, using artifacts, artwork, and photographs to chronicle this rich heritage highlighting both struggles and achievements, according to Garry Breckon, OHS exhibits coordinator.

Irving Appointed to Bureau of Environmental Services



Wanda Irving

Commissioner Bob Koch is pleased to announce the appointment of Wanda Irving as Communications Services Director for the city's Bureau of Environmental Services.

Ms. Irving is assuming one of two positions in this classification within the entire city of Portland. As Communications Services Director, Ms. Irving is responsible for planning and implementing publicity and community relations programs, in addition to developing Bureau-wide information policies and procedures.

Irving, who in 1975 was among the first class of women graduating from Dartmouth College, is a former radio news reporter. She has also worked as an advocacy specialist for Multnomah County, a program coordinator for Willamette University, Rogers Cable and Oregon Public Broadcasting and handled public relations for one of the Los Angeles Lakers basketball players. She has been nominated twice to the Marquis' Edition of Who's Who of American Women and is quite active on several community boards.

In addition, Irving became the newest commissioner for the Cable Regulatory Commission in early November.

Watch for Martin Luther King, Jr. Special in January!