

Black History Has Buns Of Steel And Abs Of Iron

By Prof. McKinley Burt

While we regret that not all of the glorious contributions to world culture and technology was written in stone, enough has survived the rascality of frightened academicians and racists to chart the path to a true historical perspective of mankind's development.

A case in point is the account (revelations) I introduced last week; a description of a millennium-long involvement of the black races with the working of iron and steel. I suppose that as a teenager, working after school in foundries like the "St. Louis Car and Foundry Company," I thought the involvement of hundreds of thousands of skilled black workers in the iron and steel works of America

was either a matter of cultural preference -- or genetic (smiles).

By 1948, I had gained some degree of enlightenment, a time which found me working at "chipping out molds" at North Portland's "American Brakeshoe Foundry" while attending Northwestern Law School three nights a week. But I had not yet gained access to that level of documentation which, last week, permitted me to shock some readers by documenting that there were many "Iron plantations" as well as the 'cotton' fiefdoms of American Slavery.

And what a difference several decades have made. Now, we may see in both academic journals of science or archaeology--or in popular science magazines like "Scientific American"--photographs and illustrations of modern researchers in

Nigeria, sitting around replica of ancient forges they have excavated. In the fashion of the ancient African technicians who built them, we find scientists from Yale and other universities sitting around conical charcoal forges in circles of eight to twelve--pumping eight-foot-long bellows that raised forge temperatures high enough to work steel.

So it is no hashish dream that prompted European explorers as early as the 11th and 12th centuries to return from Africa with exciting stories and illustrations of black warriors in supple armor who rode fiery steeds who were similarly protected. Of course, when centuries later these dusk warriors (Shakespeare's Moors) invaded Europe, charged through Spain and were only stopped half-way through France, it became obvi-

ous even to a fool that these people were neither dumb nor inferior.

While European historians will mention that there were no "dark haired" peoples found in Europe prior to the invasions of the African Moors (Massey, Wells, et al), American historians have no desire to lose academic tenure or to fall out of good graces of major publishers. Those of us who are not restricted by the racist protocols of many schools and media are free to read and study the texts and photographs of such dedicated researchers as the renown J.A. Rogers; perhaps the greatest of early African American historians who traveled all the world to document black history (including the Vatican Library and major museums and libraries in Europe, Asia and Africa: See "Sex And Race, Vols I&II" &

"World's Great Men of Color, Vols I&II", and many others).

Here you will find photographs of the works of the world's most renowned European artists; true depictions of the real role of blacks in world history: Africans in all the family trees of the royal houses of Europe, jet black, woolly-headed St. Maurice, patron Saint of France (who turned back the African Moors before all of France became 'cullud folks'--or did they?). Many reproductions of the 'Coat of Arms' of today's prestigious families of England, Norway, Sweden, Germany or France, and take a good look at early, untouched portraits of Beethoven and of Audubon who was born in Santo Domingo (The "Dominican Republic" where all those great black baseball players come

from). Audubon is the spitting image of David Justice of the Atlanta Braves--or is it the other way around?

Speaking of "Iron and Steel" be sure to get a copy of this month's "Natural History Magazine", Feb. 1996, Vol. 105, no 2. Although the article I want you to read is titled "Kingdom of Gold" and centers upon much of the cultural history of Ghana, Africa (early slavery and the 'Golden Stool') there is a simply fabulous account of African technical ability in working with machinery. Abandoned autos, trucks, farm equipment, etc. is recycled into many sophisticated "new" vehicles, industrial machinery, farm equipment, food processors and the like. No engineers or European Supervisors--are they trying to tell us something? My "Black Inventors" showed same ability.

Vancouver Eyes Traffic Troubles

The Lincoln Neighborhood Association is working with Vancouver's Transportation Division to develop a traffic plan which addresses pedestrian and traffic safety, speeding and cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets.

The neighborhood association will circulate a petition to verify that a majority of the residents are familiar with the plan. People who

sign the petition will get a postcard to send comments on the plan to the transportation division.

After residents have signed the petition, a meeting will be set to discuss the comments and refine the plan. City staff will meet with residents to select a preferred alternative. After choosing an alternative, the plan goes to city council for approval.

Interested residents can reach the Lincoln Neighborhood's contact person co-chair Patty Messenger at 695-3157, or city traffic engineer John Manix at 696-8290.

Vessels, Steens Host Cookbook Writers

Local cookbook authors are featured at events jointly sponsored by Vessels and Steens Coffee House during Black History Month.

Saturday, Maxine Jackson Blacknall, author of "The Heart & Soul of Maxine's Cuisine," will be on hand for a book signing, as well as have samples of her

recipes to taste.

A first-time author, Blacknall published her cookbook last summer as a result of a cooking class and contest. She entered the contest after participating in a special class offered by the American Cancer Society and the National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer.

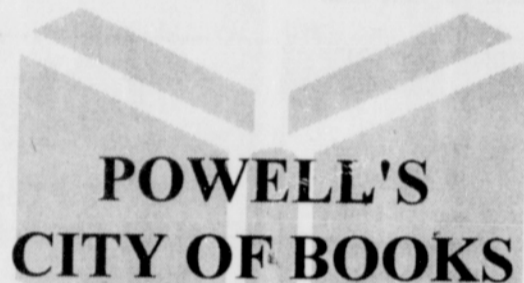
Blacknall has modified and created new soul food recipes low in fat and cholesterol. Blacknall is determined to help change the way we cook and eat for a healthier heart.

Blacknall will be available Saturday, from noon to 2 p.m. at Steen's, 2603 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Vessels,

Tableware With Meaning, 2605 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Feb. 24, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Grace Kuto will talk about her book, "Harambee! African Family Circle Cookbook." The Kenya native offers over 30 authentic recipes reflecting the cuisine of different ethnic groups in east Africa.

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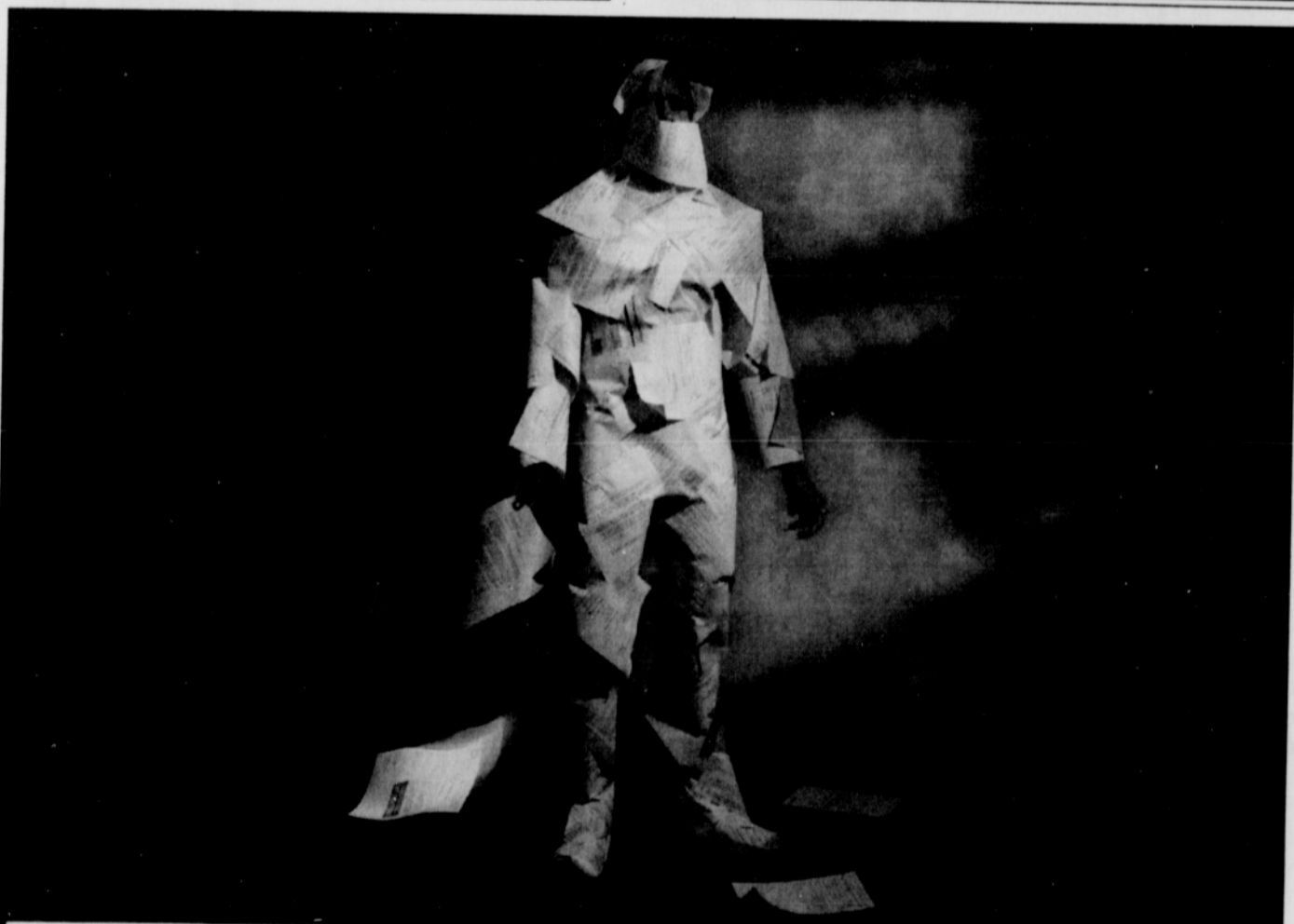
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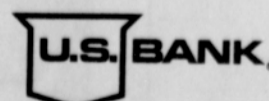
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