

# Portland's Evolving African American Community Continues

schools and numerous other businesses and services.

## The Church

The church had always played a dominant role in the African American society. Since the early days of slavery the pulpit had been the means to communicate the stron-

gest of messages to scores of black people throughout America. The church had always been the soul and heartbeat of the community and by the 1900's, this had not changed.

African Americans found ample employment both during and after the fair, increasing their chances of home ownership. However, many upscale neighbor-

Black

## History Month on OPB



### Goin' to Chicago

The story of how millions of African-Americans moved from the rural South to the cities of the North.

Thursday, February 8 at 10pm



### Bob Marley: Rebel Music

News and archival footage provide insights into the music, politics and spiritual inspiration of the reggae superstar.

Wednesday, February 14 at 9:30pm



### Marcus Garvey: Look for Me in the Whirlwind

The dramatic rise and fall of a leader who influenced politics and culture around the world.

Friday, February 16 at 9:30pm



An aerial view of the Albina District from North Vancouver Ave. to Russell St. (Courtesy of OHS)

At the turn of the century, the downtown Portland community consisted of several small churches. Three of them were the AME Zion Church (started as The People's Church in 1863), Bethel AME Church and Mt. Olivet Baptist Church. As African Americans began migrating to the east side of town, churches were started up in the Albina District.

hoods came with restrictions barring blacks from owning property in that area, forcing them to locate in the more modest areas.

### WWI and Economic Growth -The Emergence of the KKK

The war and its aftermath caused great economic and social changes. Fear and discomfort grew over threats of international Bolshevism because of the Russian Revolution.

### The Lewis and Clark Exposition and Oriental Fair of 1905

The fair was called the "most noteworthy enterprise of the early twentieth century." From June 1<sup>st</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup>, nearly 1.6 million people paid their way into the fair. The event brought in a half a million people from regions far beyond the Pacific Northwest and put Portland on the map.

Locally, the growth of large corporations, fast paced social changes, unemployment, and high prices, led Americans to feel they were losing control. The Ku Klux Klan emerged, promising to restore the "small town and local control". They claimed aliens or outsiders had to be eliminated. Jews, Blacks and Roman Catholic immigrants were said to be causing the imbalance and needed to be chased out of town. In 1922, Klan candidates won a few seats on the Multnomah County Commission and about a dozen seats in the state legislature. Fortunately they ran out of



The Shiloh Baptist Church in the Montavilla neighborhood in 1916. Church life played a dominant role in the African American society. (Courtesy of OHS)



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