



George Fletcher competing at a Pendleton Round-Up in the early 1900s. Both Fletcher and Sundown, a Native American competitor, were both considered by their peers to be the best rodeo cowboys of their time. They endured racial discrimination by not being allowed to win a championship, except one time only for Sundown. Sundown was later given recognition for his talents in the Rodeo Hall of Fame.



Bill Pickett, a famous cowboy. The word cowboy was a put-down title for blacks, called by whites to belittle them on the ranch. Over time the word's meaning and usage has changed, referring to a mounted ranch hand who tends cattle or horses.

Saluting Portland's First's for Black History



Mel Renfro had his beginnings playing football at Jefferson High School and the University of Oregon. He later went on to become a six-time All-Pro player with 10 years as a professional player for the Dallas Cowboys.



Dr. Norval Unthank was one of Portland's first black physician and surgeon. He was born in 1899 in Allentown, PA. and died in Portland in 1977. Dr. Unthank was honored as Doctor of the Year in 1958. The Unthank Plaza and Unthank Park in Northeast Portland are named after him.



The Golden West Hotel, located at NW Broadway and Everett was built in 1900 in the French Renaissance style. William D. Allen opened it as the first African American-owned hotel in 1906. It served as a center for the African American community until 1930.

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Black Rodeo Cowboys

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