

# Civil Rights Era Photos Discovered

Newspaper had kept scenes from public view

(AP) — Dozens of never before released photos from Birmingham, Ala. during the Civil Rights era came to light this weekend after an intern discovered them buried in an equipment closet at the Birmingham News.

The photos had been in a box marked: "Keep. Do Not Sell." But at the time they were taken, the newspaper didn't want to draw attention to the racial discord of the 1950s and 1960s, news photographers from the period said.

"The editors thought if you didn't publish it, much of this would go away," said Ed Jones, 81, a photographer at The News from 1942 to 1987. "Associated Press kept on wanting pictures, and The News would be slow on letting them have them, so they flooded the town with photographers."

On Sunday, the photos finally went to print in a special eight-page section called "Unseen. Unforgotten." Others are on the newspaper's Web site at <http://www.al.com/unseen>.

Several photos vividly show the segregation in the South at the time, including the disparity among school buildings and the different lines for blacks and

whites, even at the jail as the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth posts bail after an arrest.

Others show confrontations: a police officer shoving a demonstrator, black children hit with the spray of a firehose, crowds heckling demonstrators on their knees, Freedom Riders being arrested, and whites throwing bricks at cars and blocking blacks from entering "whites-only" areas.

*"I was very, very thrilled to see that we do have them. I knew the pictures had to exist, but they were being kept somewhere."*

— Katherine Burks Brooks, former Freedom Rider

One photo shows a Ku Klux Klan rally with men wearing hoods but their faces uncovered. Others show National Guardsmen with their guns drawn, protecting a bus in one and rounding up rioters protesting a black student's enrollment at the University of Mississippi.

Catherine Burks Brooks, 66, a Birmingham teacher who was part of a group of Freedom Riders while a student at Tennessee

State University, was among those photographed.

"I was very, very thrilled to see that we do have them," she said after learning about the newly found photos. "I knew the pictures had to exist, but they were being kept somewhere."

Robert Adams, 84, a photographer who joined the newspaper in 1940 and retired in 1985, said The News didn't want to inflame the situation.

In the News' centennial edition in 1988, the newspaper said a New York Times story in 1960 forced the paper and the city's white community to confront the racial conflict: "The story of The Birmingham News' coverage of race relations in the 1960s is one marked at times by mistakes and embarrassment but, in its larger outlines, by growing sensitivity and acceptance of change."



The Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth (center) and Freedom Riders discuss what to do next after bus drivers at a Greyhound Terminal in Birmingham, Ala., refused to carry them any farther. The May 15, 1961 photo was one of many Civil Rights era photos never released to the public and discovered in a closet at the Birmingham News.

## Gordly Hosts Town Hall

State lawmakers representing northeast and southeast Portland will host a Town Hall meeting Saturday, March 4 from 10 a.m. until noon at the Hollywood Senior Center, 1820 N.E.

40th Ave. Sen. Avel Gordly, Rep. Steve March and Rep. Jackie Dingfelder will attend the public session. The focus is healthcare issues and other constituent concerns.

## Brilliant Master of Sci-Fi Dies

Writer explored race, politics

(AP)—Octavia E. Butler, considered the first black woman to gain national prominence as a

science fiction writer, has died, a close friend said Sunday. She was 58.



Octavia Butler

Butler fell and struck her head on the cobble walkway outside her home near Seattle, said Leslie Howle, a longtime friend and employee at the Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame in Seattle.

The writer, who suffered from high blood pressure and heart trouble and could only take a few steps without stopping for breath, was found outside her home in the north Seattle suburb of Lake Forest Park and died Friday, Howle said.

Butler's work wasn't preoccupied with robots and ray guns, Howle said, but used the genre's artistic freedom to explore race, poverty, politics, religion and human nature.

"She stands alone for what she did," Howle said. "She was such a beacon and a light in that way."

Jane Jewell, executive director of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, said Butler was one of the first black women to explore the genre and the most prominent. But Butler would have been a major writer

of science fiction regardless of race or gender, she said.

"She is a world-class science fiction writer in her own right," Jewell said. "She was one of the first and one of the best to discuss gender and race in science fiction."

Butler began writing at age 10, and told Howle she embraced science fiction after seeing a schlocky B-movie called "Devil Girl from Mars" and thought, "I can write a better story than that." In 1970, she took a bus from her hometown of Pasadena, Calif., to attend a fantasy writers workshop in East Lansing, Mich.

Her first novel, "Kindred," in 1979, featured a black woman who travels back in time to the South to save a white man. She went on to write about a dozen books, plus numerous essays and short stories. Her most recent work, "Fledgling," an examination of the "Dracula" legend, was published last fall.

She received many awards, and in 1995 Butler was the first science fiction writer granted a "genius" award from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, which paid \$295,000 over five years.

Butler described herself as a happy hermit, and never married.

"Mostly she just loved sitting down and writing," Seattle-based science fiction writer Greg Bear said. "For being a black female growing up in Los Angeles in the '60s, she was attracted to science fiction for the same reasons I was: It liberated her. She had a far-ranging imagination, and she was a treasure in our community."

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## Awards Honor City Cyclists

Portland bike fans will honor their own at the Alice B. Toeclops Awards and Auction on Saturday, March 4, at the Oregon Convention Center. The 11th annual event recognizes individuals and community groups that encourage and improve local transportation conditions for cyclists.

TriMet's Caleb Winter, City Commissioner Sam Adams and State Sen. Ginny Burdick are a few of the nominees this year.

Doors open at 5 p.m. for complimentary wine, hors-d'oeuvres and silent auction, followed by

dinner, a live auction and the awards presentation. The event is a fundraiser to support the advocacy and education work of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance.

The event's namesake is taken from Alice Babette Toklas, a companion of early 20th century writer Gertrude Stein, who found salvation on her bicycle.

Admission is \$65 for adults and \$25 for children under 12. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.bta4bikes.org/alice/tickets](http://www.bta4bikes.org/alice/tickets) or by calling 503-226-0676.