

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Trail Blazers Honor Local Leaders

Trail Blazer Coach Nate McMillan (right) pays tribute to Pastor Fred Woods (from left), Daphne Bussey and Avel Gordly during a post-game Black History Month celebration Sunday in the Rose Quarter commons. The extraordinary contributions of five local African-American citizens were recognized by the Portland Trail Blazers during halftime at games during February. Honorees not pictured are Tina Myers and Howard White.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Neighborhood Reincarnation

continued from A5

will be anything like the Dude Ranch. It was like (New York's) Cotton Club, the Apollo Theater, Las Vegas and the Wild West rolled into one...It was the hottest Black and Tan club west of Chicago." Managed by Pat Patterson and Sherman "Cowboy" Pickett, it had a Wild West motif, with walls adorned with pictures of black cowboys and waitresses in pseudo-cowgirl attire complete with holsters carrying cardboard pistols.

Its wooden floor was so polished it reflected what was above it. The house band was led by Banjaski Adams, but it attracted not only the cream of Portland's musical talent but also luminaries such as Louis Armstrong, Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins and Thelonious Monk.

The nightclub also attracted people from all races and all parts of the social spectrum. To quote Dietsche, they included "Zoot-suited hipsters and sidemen from Jantzen Beach looking to get the taste of Guy Lombardo out of their mouths. Racially mixed party people

who couldn't care less that what they were doing was on the cutting edge of integration in the city that had been called the most segregated north of the Mason-Dixon line." Public segregation was the law in Portland until 1953.

This last, many suspect, led to the club's closure.

It is all gone now, bulldozed away like some kind of jazz Pompei.

—Robert Dietsche

"The papers said it was (because of) all the big-time gambling and accidental shootings," Dietsche wrote. "Most people think it was the mixed couples, the flirting, those racy dances, those happy bottoms 'shaking the African.'"

Eventually not just the jazz scene, but an entire community of more than 400 homes would be leveled to make way for the Rose Quarter. Other projects,

such as the I-5 Freeway and the abortive effort to expand Emanuel Hospital, would create similar havoc. As Dietsche notes, "It is all gone now, bulldozed away like some kind of jazz Pompei."

This is the Dude Ranch's second claim to fame; unlike so many of the area's former jazz clubs, the building it was housed in still stands.

A few years ago, a group of young entrepreneurs wanted to restore the old club space and use it as a jazz club much like the Dude Ranch. They were unable to make the project work, but the building and two adjacent buildings were then purchase by a second group of investors.

They have renovated the structures and are in the process of leasing them for commercial space.

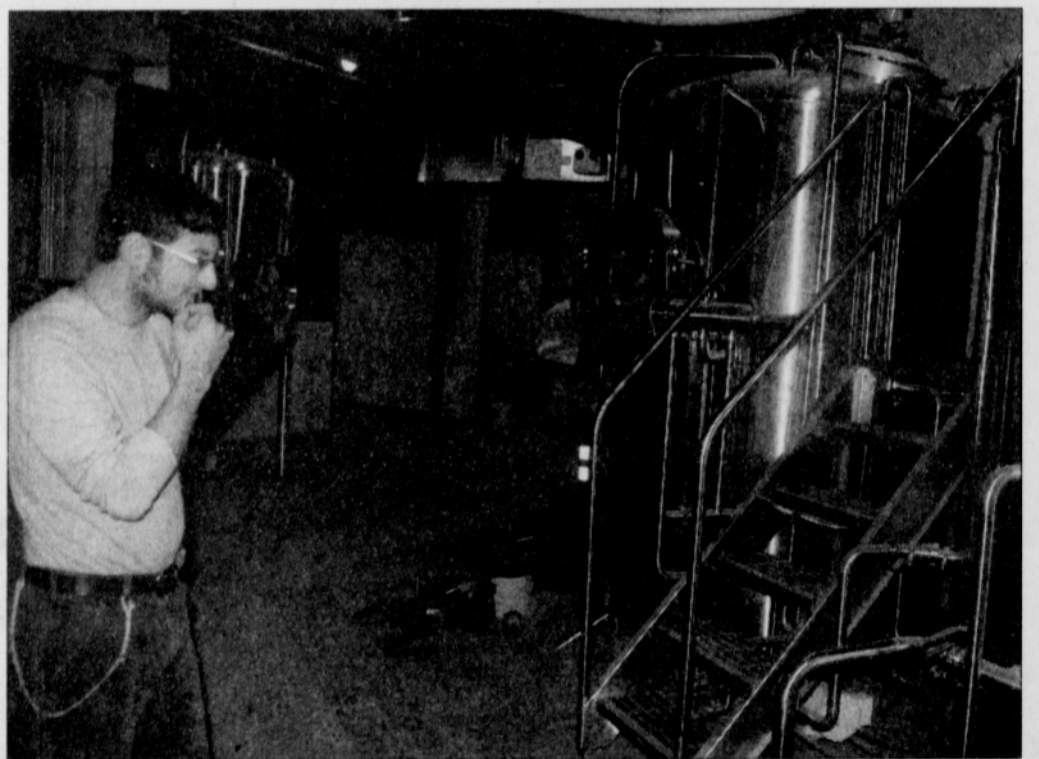
The Left Bank backers also hope to have a restaurant or night club. While it won't be a replica of the Dude Ranch, they have adorned some of the space with photos and memorabilia from the club.

As with much of that era, it is gone but not forgotten.



PHOTOS BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Joanna Agee does marketing for the Left Bank Project near the Rose Quarter. The neighborhood once was the major hub for Portland's African American population.



Alex Gany oversees the installation of equipment for Upright Brewing in the Left Bank Project on Northeast Broadway. The company will craft beer in the basement of the building, directly below the ballroom where jazz greats from the Dude Ranch once performed.

IT ALL STARTED ON THE BUS

A SALUTE TO ROSA PARKS (1913-2005)

On December 1, 1955 Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama after refusing to give up her seat to a white man while riding a segregated bus.

Rosa Parks' courageous act drew national attention to simple truths: A public transit system paid for by all must benefit all, and civil rights must be protected for all.

ROSA PARKS STATION

In honor of Ms. Parks' courage, TriMet is proud to announce the renaming of the Portland Blvd. Yellow Line MAX Station to the Rosa Parks Station.

TriMet is an EOE, committed to developing an organization that is reflective of and sensitive to the needs of the diverse community we serve, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.

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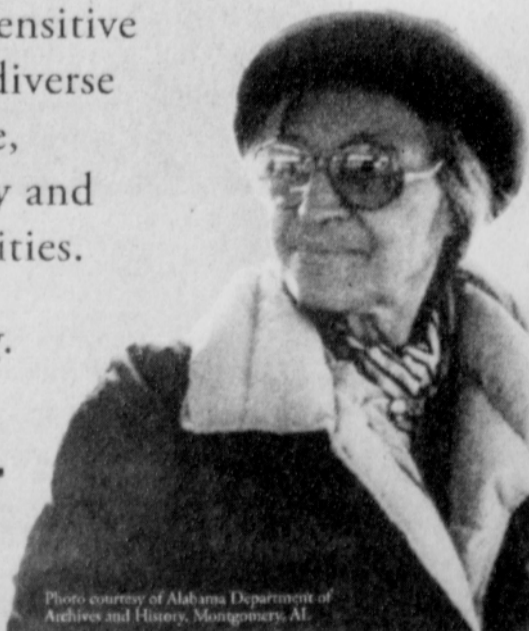


Photo courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL

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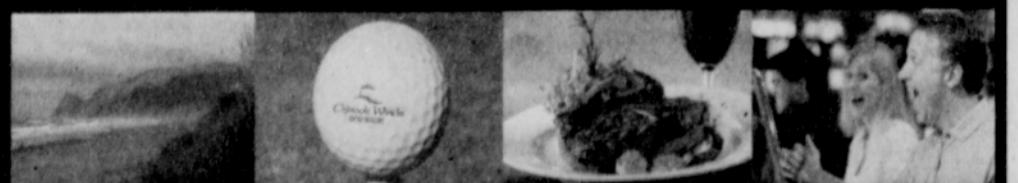
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