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Where History Happened

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

was affectionately known by his readers as “The Professor.”

Black folks from every walk of life were interviewed by the Cornerstones team: Barbers, nurses, Pullman porters, doctors, football heroes, electricians, teachers, spiritual leaders, and early members of civil rights organizations. Cultural celebrities provided stories behind the local landmarks. The late Clara Peoples, the mother of Portland’s Juneteenth Celebration and who also helped establish Meals on Wheels in Oregon is thanked for her contribution to the project.

When Galbraith and her fellow researchers began the process they expected to find close to 150 buildings with historical roots to the black community, and to their great surprise 1,284

The entries in the index are brief, but telling: 6 N. Tillamook St. was home to the African American YWCA and the NAACP, and is now the Billy Webb Elks Lodge, named after an important Jazz musician of his day. Some stories are endearing: the black Tigner family was blessed with the unusual gift of quadruplets and local Alpenrose Dairy gifted them a home in the 1950’s after the births. Mrs. M Russell is described as “a splendid cateress and elocutionist” of the 1930’s who works at Mammy Shack. Other stories are honest and heartbreaking, such as Clara Edler who cooked for the same family for 74 years, she was a slave to Colonel James Crawford and then worked for his daughter.

After the latest project to document buildings important to Portland’s African American history was green lit, 1,000 letters were sent out to

“I think of all the buildings that were on Martin Luther King in 1998, there was something like 11 or 12 that were in the index, now we’re down to five.

A couple were burned in fires, but everything else has been demolished and redeveloped.

--Cathy Galbraith, executive director of the Architectural Heritage Center

were still standing. But Burt warned Galbraith shortly before his death that this work would be akin to “documenting destruction,” she explained.

“I think of all the buildings that were on Martin Luther King in 1998, there was something like 11 or 12 that were in the index, now we’re down to five. A couple were burned in fires, but everything else has been demolished and redeveloped,” Galbraith said.

The 225 pages of Cornerstones is a touching time capsule of the men, women and children who migrated to Portland and established the roots of the African American community. It begins with a history of African Americans in Oregon and ends with an index of historic places.

area home and building owners with the potential to be put on the National Register. Meeting the criteria to go on the registry can be a vital piece to any effort to preserve historic memories and landmarks in the face of gentrification for years to come.

With a grant from the Oregon state Historic Preservation Office, this continuation of Cornerstones will look at the themes, trends and patterns of history related to the African American experience in Portland.

The Architectural Heritage Center welcomes submission of photos, stories or other documentation that may aid in the preservation of Portland’s African American history. To share, contact Stephanie

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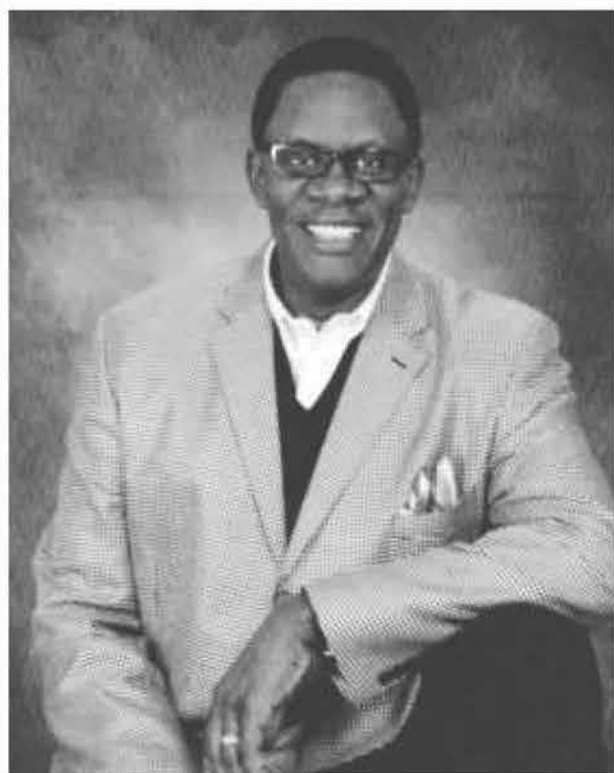
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treated can cause ill-health in other areas of the body as well. Our specialty is finding the cause of your problem and taking care of it, painlessly, without drugs...Just as nature intended. If you suffer from pain, stop pulling the alarm wires from the walls. Together, we can put the fire out...for good!

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