

Entertainment

BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

CHICAGO, Ill. — Too many times our group has been denied inclusive positions in American history. Therefore it was with pride and passion that this scribe eyed the windy city's Historical Society's permanent American Exhibition. "A Diverse America" is the lead theme of the undertaking to introduce the contributions of a mix of the 2.5 million Americans who populated this nation in 1765. In the words of co-curators Alfred Young and Terry Fife, "the exhibition is dedicated to realism, not romance, and to rescuing from inattention the people who played a part in creating our nation." It tells the story of the founding of the Republic, emphasizing the participation of both ordinary and extraordinary people and the roles they played. With that in mind introduced were merchants, native Americans, artisans, the "unfree," African Americans, women and children, most under sixteen years of age, who made up over half of the population of that time. The exhibition charts the growth of this diverse population through 1820 when it had jumped to 10,000,000. Captain Paul Cuffe, a free African and Phillis Wheatley were singled out to highlight the African contribution to the rise of America. Enslaved in Africa as a child, Ms. Wheatley became a house servant to Thomas Wheatley,

She was educated by this religious Boston tailor. She was freed in 1774 in the



Mr. & Mrs. Jim Cuffe

wake of her fame having traveled to England where thirty-nine of her verses were printed. In later years her book of poems was often used by anti-slavery activists as visible proof of the abilities of African Americans. In 1780 at just 21-yrs old Paul Cuffe persuaded a number of other free African Americans to join him on a petition to be exempt from paying taxes. As poor and despised Blacks they were

not allowed to vote, but required to pay taxes. His question: "Didn't the principle of the revolution, 'Taxation without representation' apply to him, a seaman who had been a prisoner of war?" Thirty years later, Captain

the Cuffe clan. Leading the pack was Jim Cuffe, one of the nation's top entrepreneurs, with holdings worth millions in B'klyn, N.Y., Atlantic City, N.J., Sierra Leone and Liberia. He was accompanied by his spouse

Cuffe was perhaps the richest African American in the country. His flagship, the Traveler was one of several he owned, together with property worth in excess of \$20,000. He was the son of an Indian mother and an African-born father. In his teens he mastered the skills of seamanship and whaling. Step by step he also built his own fleet. However his unfathomable success and fortune did not blind him to the despair of his roots or race. A devout Quaker, he believed that emigration to Africa was the solution. In 1815 he commanded "The Traveler," on which the first thirty-eight emigrants sailed to Sierra Leone. "There," he believed, "free Blacks might Raise to be a People." Lamont Thomas, in his biography of Paul Cuffe (1759-1817) quotes historian Letitia W. Brown's reference to Captain Cuffe as "A one-man civil rights movement."

The Chicago event was the magnet which attracted a number of descendants of

Rayna and daughter Janine. Others on the scene were Carl Cruz, Millicent Reynolds, Randall Pollard, Marianna and Wendell North and Lorraine Kazan, all of New Bedford, Mass. From N'— Jersey came Natalie Warner DeBann, Sharon Gaines and Conrad West. Virginia was represented by Janet West, Lillian F. Cuffe, Myrtle Washington, Willie L. Dozier Jr. and his mother Sallie A. Dozier. The total group, the largest contingent of invited descendants, are members of the seventh and eighth generations of the Cuffe family line. It was a proud moment in each of their lives and a golden plus in the crown of the Chicago Historical Society.

WRITE NEWSY:—Motown has divorced itself from a \$5,000,000 antitrust legal action indie promoter Joe Isgro lodged against several wax works back in May '86. The suit is based on charges that a collection of wax works conspired to kill off indie promoters' \$60-\$80,000

1987 CEBA Awards Given

New York, October 15, 1987 — It boasted all of the drama, energy and excitement of a lustrous New York opening. Limousines, glamour, lights and cameras were among the props at the 1987 Communications Excellence to Black Audiences (CEBA) Awards evening.

Upwards of 1,500 corporate titans, media executives and creative people in the communications industry were in attendance at the Grand Ballroom of The New York Hilton as the World Institute of Black Communications presented its tenth annual awards presentation ceremony. The awards are given in recognition of those corporations, advertising agencies

annual biz. talk is that Motown gave up 100G's to be erased from the suit. It allegedly cost Capitol Records 300Gs to become an earlier dropout. The settlement bug is said to have also nipped Dick Griffey who will take that route out of his Solar Records breach-of-contract/discrimination action against Warner Communications. The heart of the action is that allegedly after lending Griffey \$41 million to build a 6-story Solar Tower in H'wood WCI played financial tricks with that firm's due funds preventing it from meeting mortgage obligations . . . Any University of College interested in recruiting 18-yr old, 6/10 super basketball star Jarrod Mustaf to traverse their polished boards will have to come by poppa. The man, who in his own words is "buying the pork chops and rice," wants to know:

"The status of minority representation on the institute's faculty; Tenure of minority professors; the graduation rates of Black students in general and Black basketball players in particular; also minority representation on the athletic staff." GOOD FOR YOU MR. MUSTAF . . . Critics have laid a write hand full of adjectives on the talents of young and lovely Victoria Platt. The recurring guest of the Cosby Show has the lead role in the AMAS Rep. Theatre's musical version of "Conrack." The report from Cedars-Sinai Hosp. is that Ella Fitzgerald is fighting off the complications of diabetes . . . STAY LOOSE: BILLY ROWE IS A SYNDICATED COLUMNIST.

and individuals who have made a conscious effort to reach and acknowledge the valuable Black consumer market — a market whose 1987 income will total \$203 billion.

Prominent media personalities hosting the occasion were Ed Bradley, Emmy award-winning CBS news correspondent for "60 Minutes"; Phil Donahue, television host of the syndicated "Phil Donahue Show"; Ruby Dee, poet, producer and actress; Jayne Kennedy-Overton, recently selected as the most admired Black American woman; former NBA great Bob Lanier; NBC's commentator for "NFL Live", Ahmad Rashad and Susan Taylor, editor-in-chief of Essence magazine, host and executive producer of "Essence" — the television program.

A special award was presented to Robert I. Johnson, president and founder of Black Entertainment Television for his pioneering contributions to the cable television industry.

The 1987 CEBA Awards celebrated "A Decade of Excellence." The theme embraced America's heightened consciousness of Black consumers and the awareness of that group's formidable spending power. To that end, 90 CEBA statuettes in 42 categories were presented for the best African-American oriented advertising campaigns and media programs.

A multi-media module entitled "Inspiration for Excellence," co-sponsored by Coca-Cola USA and the Miller Brewing Company which documented the evolution of advertising to Black audiences was one of the evening's highlights. In addition, some of the print entries were on display.

According to the World Institute of Black Communications co-directors, Joan Logue-Kinger and Adriane t. Gaines, the Institute was founded in 1978 by the National Black Network for the purpose of increasing the awareness of the communications industry to Black Americans.

Vincent T. Cullers, president and CEO of Vince

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Milton "Soul Joe" Miller
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