

ED BROWN, PUBLISHER OF THE LAS VEGAS SENTINEL-VOICE, LAID TO REST AT AGE 71

Lt. Col. Edward Strawther, known professionally as Col. Ed Brown, died in Valley Hospital on July 23, 1988 following a long illness from cancer.

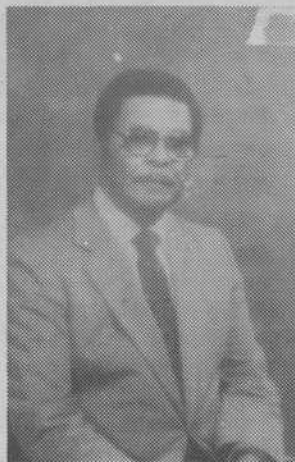
Born on April 10, 1917 in Philadelphia, Pa., to Margaret Hass and Edward T. Strawther, he spent his youth in that area, living in Pottstown and Mercersburg, Pa. and Hagerstown, Md. He attended high school in Mercersburg, excelling in sports and the arts, and at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania.

In 1942 he enlisted in the Army and served in the Pacific Combat arena in both World War II and the Korean Conflict, rising through the ranks from buck private to the rank of Lt. Colonel. He was the recipient of the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit for his service to his country. He was credited with having established the first R and R area in the Pacific War Zone for combat troops and the first radio station for American troops in that area. He remained in the Army Reserve until 1968.

Following his return from Korea in 1957, he was assigned to the Tuskegee Veterans Administration Hospital at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, where he served as Chief, Recreation, Chief, Special Services and Personnel Director. (At that time, Veterans Hospitals were segregated and the hospital at Tuskegee serviced all Black veterans from all over the United States. It predominately served psychiatric patients, but also had a small medical and surgical unit.) While at Tuskegee he also revived his interest in radio, which had started in 1940, when he had his first radio show (he was a sportscaster) on the local radio station in Mercersburg. In Tuskegee

he became a disc jockey on the otherwise all white radio station WTUS, hosting daily radio shows at 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. before and after his regular working hours at the hospital.

Always an innovator and



Col. Ed Brown

ways looking for a new challenge, he decided to leave government service in 1959, going to Washington, D.C., where he became a news announcer and religious disc jockey and later the station manager for Station WUST. It was at Station WUST that Edward Strawther, at the request of the General Manager of the station, took on the name of Col. Ed Brown, because it was easier than Strawther to pronounce and remember. The name stuck and he was thereafter known professionally as Col. Ed Brown. He legalized the name when he went to work at Station WNJR in Newark.

In 1968 he responded to an offer to become station manager for a large radio station in the greater New York area, station WNJR in Newark, New Jersey. It was during his first few months at this station that he conceived the idea to make Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s

birthday a national holiday, in order to try to quell the devastating Newark riots which ensued in the wake of Dr. King's assassination. The idea spread to Washington and gradually became a nationwide movement. While at WNJR he received over a million letters from all over the nation expressing support for the idea and he personally made several trips to Washington to deliver them to Senator Edward Brook of Massachusetts and Congressman John Conyers of Illinois, who first introduced the bill in Congress.

A new challenge again called in 1974, when he came to Las Vegas to become station manager at KVOV Radio. He remained at this station until 1980 (except for a period of about one year, during which time he was an account executive for KORK Radio), when he and his wife Betty established the Las Vegas Sentinel Newspaper.

During his 14 year residency in Las Vegas, Ed Brown was very active in community life. He was founder and past president of the Las Vegas United REACT Association; a member of Saints and Sinners; a member and past president of the Las Vegas Optimist Club and past regional director of Optimist Clubs International; a member and past president of the National Wild Horse Association; a member of the Wild Mustang Association; a member of the NAACP; a former board member of the Nevada Black Chamber of Commerce; a former board member of the Las Vegas Chapter of the American Red Cross and a member of the Order of Kentucky Colonels.

Always interested in athletics, Brown became a boxing judge and then was appointed to the Nevada State Athletic Commission by Gov. Robert List. He also served for 3 years as Vice President for North America of the WBA (World Boxing Association).

He was a board member of the West Coast Black Publishers Association and a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

He is survived by his wife Betty of Las Vegas; daughters Patricia Ann of Hagerstown, Md. and Comilla Ann of Washington, D.C.; sons Edward, Jr. of Gaithersburg, Md., Andrew Owen of St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, LeRoy Artis and Willis Ber-

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Professional Black Women's Alliance Honors Ruby Duncan and Maggie Pearson

Mrs. Ruby Duncan, Welfare Activist, received the prestigious "Community Service Award" on July 30 at 6pm at the Union Plaza Hotel & Casino, when the Professional Black Women's Alliance sponsored its second annual Rose Awards Ceremony.

This award was presented by First Lady Bonnie Bryan to Mrs. Duncan for her outstanding accomplishments in the face of adversity.

Ruby Duncan was born on a farm in the backwoods of Tallulah, Louisiana in 1932. Her parents were poor, black and earned their living by working in the cotton fields of the nearby Ivory Plantation. Although Ruby began her life in the midst of the great depression, it had little effect upon her life. In rural Louisiana, people were already poor — none had money at any time.

The rural Louisiana area where Ruby grew up was lush, flat farmland. On their small farms, each family had its own garden which supplemented its meager incomes from the cotton fields to provide their subsistence. Ruby had three brothers and

one sister, all except one dying in their youth from accidents or illness. Her parents were both dead before she was four years old.

Ruby spent her youth living with various relatives in

hour week. Meanwhile, one of her aunts had moved to Las Vegas, Nevada, and wrote Ruby about the high wages her aunt was working in a laundry making less than \$40 per week.



Ruby Duncan

and around Tallulah. She and other black children worked in the fields of the Ivory Plantation from May through October each year and attended school from November through April. She well remembers the dual school system in Louisiana with awe. Ruby dropped out of school after completing the 9th grade to work full time. For several years she worked as a waitress and barmaid, with her income finally reaching \$9.50 per week for an 80-

In 1953, Ruby decided she had had enough of low wages in Tallulah and moved to Las Vegas to live with her aunt. She found her aunt living in a cardboard shack in the desert, east of Las Vegas, sharing a community washhouse and outhouse with out poor Black people. Water had to be hauled from Henderson, a 10-mile distance. In 1953, Las Vegas was a segregated community by practice, if not by law.

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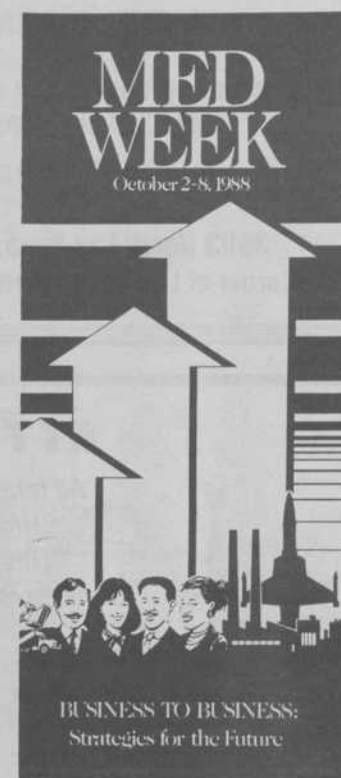
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