

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY

By Gwen Walker

Follow the example of two African-American women pioneers of California.

Mary Ellen (Mammy) Pleasant was born a slave in Georgia where she was a domestic and cotton picker on a plantation. A wealthy planter purchased her from her master after noticing

how intelligent she was. He then sent her to a family in Boston to be educated. The Boston family failed to observe the agreement by forcing her to work long hours; thereby setting her free. After receiving her freedom, she married a wealthy black man named Alexander Smith. Smith's residence was the

meeting place for abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips. Upon Smith's death, Mammy inherited more than \$50,000.

In 1849 she migrated to San Francisco where her opened a boarding house and began to issue loans at high interest rates and speculate in Real Estate property. She, along with Biddy Mason, owned a lot of property in California.

Biddy Mason, a Real Estate investor and philanthropist was a Georgia born slave who had moved to California with her three slave children and her master, Robert Smith to settle in San Bernardino in 1851.

The Smith family, Biddy and her children stayed in San Bernardino for three years. The Smith's then decided to move to Texas. On the way out of the state the sheriff of Los Angeles stopped the Smiths and served him with a writ which prevented him from taking the slaves out of the state. Smith filed a petition to the L.A. County Court to re-secure his "property rights," but the judge ordered Biddy and her children freed.

A short time later Biddy moved her family to Los Ange-



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les and secured a job as a practical nurse. With her savings she purchased several parcels of property in L.A. and saw their value increase several hundred times. She became very wealthy and began to help others less fortunate.

These two women are examples of how important investing in and believing in our community is. There is a program at First Western Bank called the Nucleus Plaza Program to assist us in purchasing homes in our community in the 89106 and 89030 areas. See Loan Officer Carmen Rodriguez or Bank Manager Nafeesa Spencer for more details. First Western Bank also believes in the value of our community and property. They were the first and the only bank that has given funds to the building fund for the upcoming Walker African-American Museum. Also, as a recent homeowner through this Nucleus Plaza Program, the staff is courteous, efficient and fast in processing your home purchases.

5TH ANNUAL LAW LIBRARY BANQUET TO BE HELD JUNE 10

On Friday, June 10, 1994, the Friends of the Clark County Law Library and the Clark County Bar Association will be convening the 5th Annual Law Library Banquet. This year's banquet will take place at the Palace Station in Las Vegas and will feature a debate of the candidates for District Attorney of Clark County and exhibits of law books and computers. The debate among Stewart Bell, Carolyn Ellsworth, and Brad Jerbic is expected to be stimulating and exciting.

During the no-host cocktail hour and dinner, the audience will be entertained by the Emie George Trio, who will provide a diet of jazz. The trio performs 4 nights weekly at the Hollywood Cafe at the Debbie Reynolds Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

The event will be begin at 5 p.m., with dinner at 7 p.m., followed by the debate starting at 8 p.m. A donation of \$75.00 per person is requested. Tables of 10 for \$750 will be available. Direct all inquires to Frank Herch, Director of the Clark County Law Library, at 455-4696.

POET'S CORNER

"I Remember Now"

By W.C. Jones

Of all the things that I've "Forgotten"
That I remember most of all
Are some "Dreams" I used to dream about
Then waken to recall...

Some days and nights and mornings bright-
All afternoons till dawn;
"Rhythmic Dances" in spentful trances
As graceful as the swan

"The Same" were we all, as I recall
(A faded memory)...
Like Blackened Skies with "Twinkling Eyes"
A "Common Legacy"

As bush and plain in pouring rain
Amid a drenching feast,
Flourished like "A Garden";
Home of Man and Beast

Tho lingering moments invade may mind
With thoughts of "Far Away,"
Ever near, they "Reappear"
But Never seem to stay

Now distant horizons rise upon a distant shore
Where awaits tomorrow's sorrow
Of four hundred years -
And more...

A life of death - "Here & After"
Evermore begin...
Passing through - already gone -
Returning once again...

But, still I sense those gentle breezes
Of so many "Long Agoes"
While I shiver in the coldness
Of The Northern Wind that blows...

Seldom were tears that were quickly wiped
away
Abundant were the years
Of joyful yesterdays...

Now as white sails descend beneath some sunset
Beyond an endless sea,
Gone are my brothers and my sisters;
All our family;

It seems the things that I remember -
I forget again, somehow...
Tho forgotten as is "Tomorrow" -
I REMEMBER NOW...

The Afrikan Pledge

Author Unknown

We will remember the humanity, glory and suffering of our ancestors and honor the struggle of our elders.
We will strive to bring new values to our people.
We will be loving, sharing and creative.
We will work, study, and listen; so we may learn, so we may teach.
We will cultivate self reliance.
We will struggle to resurrect and unify our home land.
We will raise many children for our nation.
We will have discipline, patience, devotion and courage.
We will live as models to provide new direction for our people.
We will be free and self-determining.
We are Afrikan people, we will win.

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