

Sweet Georgia Browns throws grand-opening bash

By Dianna Saffold
Sentinel-Voice

Anticipating the long-awaited debut, following a devastating fire, the historical restaurant known as H & H has reopened its doors anew as "Sweet Georgia Browns." Showing a hint of the new ambiance, the owners not only reopened the doors but also rolled out the red carpet.

As you enter Sweet Georgia Browns, you feel the elegance...baseboards, columns, arches and all that frames the reception area with beautifully carved wood. A classic Greek touch added to the skylight of stained glass foliage.

Owner Hank Black, wearing a tuxedo and his trademark baseball cap, spoke proudly of his new family venture.

"We seat 299 now, with three private rooms," he said. "Our meals are southern cuisine and there is nothing over \$30. In the near future, we will have a full bar."

Well-wishers flowed into the eating area from two sides; one flowed into a floor with booths and tables, as the other line flowed into side eating areas and private rooms. The new fat cats in town, CMX Sports & Entertainment, occupied one of those private rooms. Working the room as usual was CMX Community Affairs Executive Master/Ceremonies James C. Payton and his lovely wife Mable Buckner-Payton, studio CEO Eric Brown and Demetrius Brown of the CMX Exchange. CMX, a new group in town, came with a fresh new vision involving music and group productions for movies and sports.

The attendee list for the restaurant red carpet grand opening read like the Trumpet Award, including hard hitters from every set. Representing Gov. Kenny Guinn was Jackie Brantley, who presented a gubernatorial resolution. Piper Overstreet represented Congresswoman Shelley Berkley.

Other hard hitters included Hannah Brown, president of the Urban Chamber of Commerce; Barbara Robinson, a member of the Clark County Housing Board; Judge Wendy Cooley, CCSD Trustee Shirley Barber; Charles I. West principal Karen Williams; and NAACP President Dean Ishman. Justice of the Peace Judge Karen Bennett-Haron also attended with husband Fred Haron.

After speaking with several designated marketing



Sweet Georgia Browns co-owner Cassandra Black (left) schmoozed with local dignitaries, among them Sarann Knight-Preddy, during the eatery's March grand opening.

personnel, it was obvious they all were on the same track.

"We hope to bring Southern cuisine geared on service," said son Elbert Black, senior vice president of marketing. "I feel that we are providing service. No one can touch our product."

J.U.G.S. Lillian McMorris was doing her usual in making things move. Hank Black called her their marketing expert.

There were several J.U.G.S. in the house including President Nona Carroll and Dr. France Holland, the chaplain who delivered the invocation, past president and current treasurer Betty Brewer, financial secretary and restaurateur Cassandra Black and Wanda Collins, the publicist.

Vice President Alex Thomas of 100 Black Men attended, along with President Larry Mosley and his lovely fiancée, Cynthia Evans. Julius Conners, recruitment chair, Dr. Ken Williams, chairman of grant endowment and former member Jesse Bates were all there celebrating the success of Sweet Georgia Browns.

H & H was a church dining spot for many a congregation, their presence confirmed their loyalty. Several ministers attended, including the Rev. Gary Hunter, Bishop Abner James Thompson and his wife BeBe Thompson, the Rev. Marion Bennett and Deacon Chaney, a Nevada Bank employee.

The room was filled with entertainers, writers, you name it, and they came from north and south to taste southern cuisine Las Vegas style. Several of the strip entertainers were in house, famous dancer Norma Miller, who even cut a step for her dear friend. Local celebrity Sarann Knight-Preddy was accom-

panied by her grandson Avree "Joey" Walker. Favorite strip entertainer, Early Clover, now excelling as a solo act and member of the famous Coasters; balladeer Freddie Empire; Leroy Larkin of the group Experience, who just finished a successful stint at the Friday Night Entertainment Set held at Jerry Nuggets.

Celebrities and families of celebrities were there to show their support, including Michelle Edmonds, sister-in-law of Babyface Edmonds of Edmonds Entertainment, Miss Nevada USA Victoria Franklin, Rubie Ducksworth of Las Vegas Urban Promotions, Jonathan Simon of New Creations, offering entertainment and media services, V108 Marketing Consultant and Production Manager

Calvin "Smooth C" Knight, Beverly Jackson, Debbie and Jean Foxx, daughter and former wife of the legendary Redd Foxx and well-known father of superstar Michael Jackson, Joe Jackson.

The media was in full effect, Pete Allman, Ramon Savoy, Sentinel-Voice publisher, and Associate Publisher Kathi Overstreet.

Friends of the family traveled to celebrate the opening, including her Godmother Mateal Mason. Though not related, Brenda Terry from Oakland joined the gay event. UNLV Supervisor Dr. Vertie Logas Hobson, Event Planner Betty Carter, Marketing Consultant Tyna Nelson-Dillard, Camille Leath,

Franklin Simpson. There were several club owners there to wish the Sweet Georgia Browns well, including Ashley Tatum of Jasmine Gardens and Mr. & Mrs. Louis Connors of Seven Seas.

There was so much networking and congratulating, many forgot why they were there, which made the food line seem unending. The menu remained the same as the former H & H. The ambiance is what has taken a drastic leap. The southern cuisine consisted of ribs, chicken (cooked several ways), oxtails, pork chops and more with sides of Black eyed peas, macaroni and cheese, green beans, different potato dishes, just too many entrees and
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