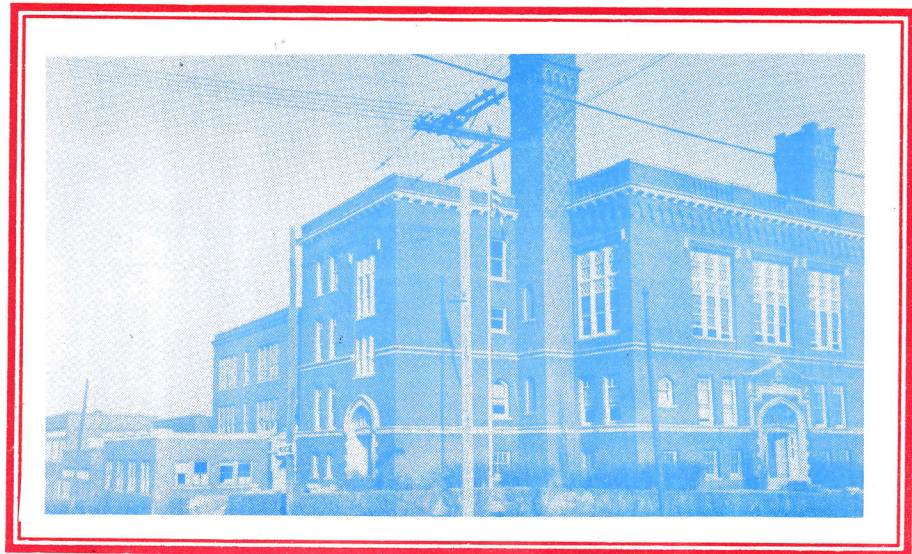
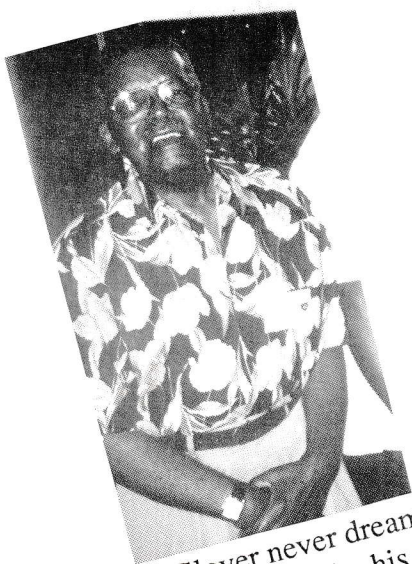


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The ole Col



The 1946 Jeeps



School days 1943
Pastor Allen (L)
Arthur Williamson (R)
"Draped down"

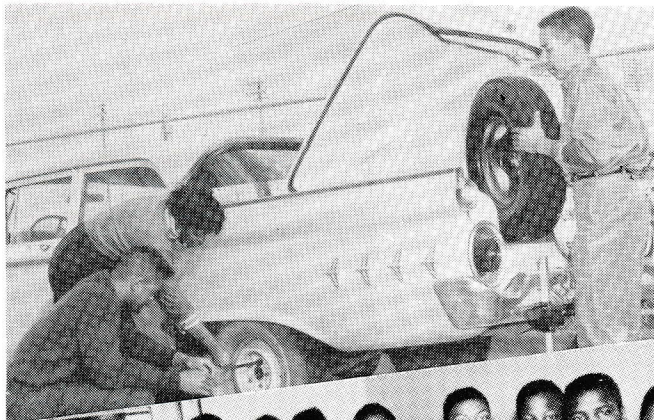


Redaels



Lincoln High band participates in the American Royal parade.





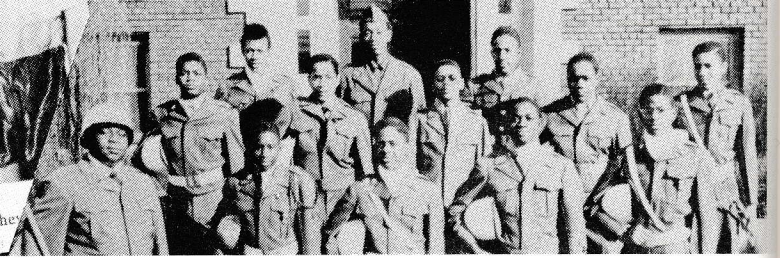
MAJORETTES



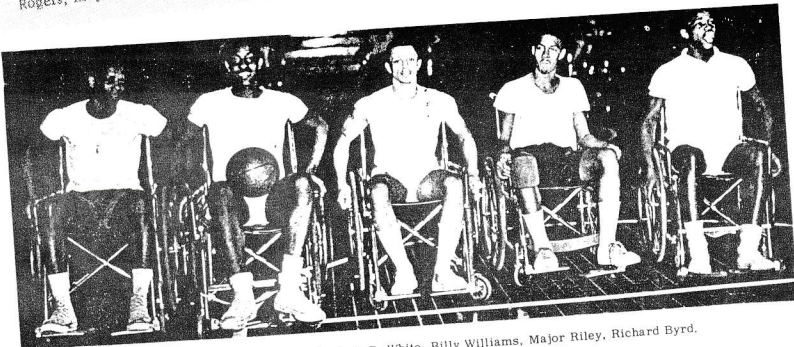
Thomas, Marian Love, Beldora Linebar, Odessa McDowell, Joann Robinson, Gwendolyn Griffe, Delores Jackson, Lois Jean Wilson, Cecilia Smith, Barbara Boydston, Mary Nolan.



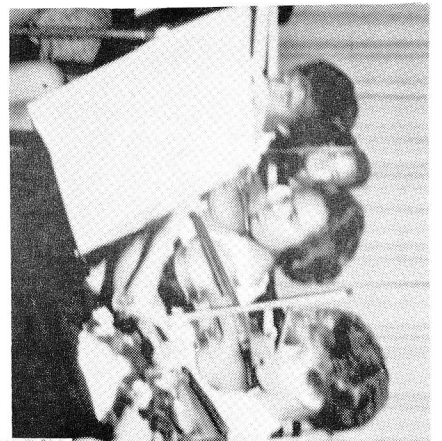
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LEFT TO RIGHT: Milton Branham, J. D. White, Billy Williams, Major Riley, Richard Byrd.



Theoretical Copy: Linda Bruce, Marya Kibel, Joyce Meade, Margaret Tinsley, Nevada Harris.

Violin Quintet

Senior Boys vs Handicapped For Charity.



Orchestra



Playwright reflects on a long career

William H. Lawrie Jr., a former Independence resident, was a founder of a black theater troupe

By MARY SANCHEZ
Staff Writer

By his own admission, playwright William H. Lawrie Jr. has passed up many opportunities in show business.

But the 80-year-old former Independence resident said he does not regret the choices he made and has had a pleasant existence anyway.

"Life has been really fascinating to me," Lawrie said. "I have met some really interesting people."

- Lawrie, who now lives in Los Angeles, was in Kansas City earlier this month for the opening of a traveling exhibit on Josephine

Baker, the legendary dancer and singer from St. Louis.

Saturday through Tuesday the Baker exhibit will be at the Student Center of the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Lawrie's first memory of Baker is a theatrical performance in the late 1920s at the then all-black Lincoln High School, where Lawrie was a student. Lawrie graduated from the school in 1927 and left Kansas City for Los Angeles in 1929.

He met Baker once and was associated with others who knew her well. Over the years, he collected memorabilia of the star and donated some of those items

to the exhibit.

Other well-known persons Lawrie has known are poet Langston Hughes, with whom he founded a black theater troupe in Los Angeles; television host Arthur Godfrey, who hired him as a chef; stars Tony Curtis, Harry Belafonte, Bea Arthur and Rod Steiger, with whom he attended a New York acting school.

"I used to see them later and think, 'There but the grace of God go!,'" Lawrie said.

It was not acting but catering, however, that Lawrie made most of his living and met many celebrities.

"The people that I have worked for have been such an education for me," he said.

Lawrie has had several of his

plays produced, though. In November, a trilogy of plays titled "Blues, Blues, Blues" was performed in Memphis by an acting group from the Blues City Cultural Center.

Lawrie said his interest in theater was kindled by his parents, who took him to plays and shows in Kansas City.

"Whatever came to town we saw, even if we had to sit in a segregated section," he said.

His father was the first black doctor in Independence and lived to celebrate his 100th birthday.

With only a few gray hairs in his short hair and mustache, Lawrie said he is healthy and hopes his father's longevity is hereditary.

"I'm very happy to say I feel good," he said.

Mr. William "Bill" Lawrie, distinguished black actor, director and collector of Black memorabilia, has an impressive background.

- 1930's One of the original members and actor of the Morrison Players Little Theatre, Kansas City, Missouri.
- Assisted in organizing and directing the New Negro Theatre, the first Negro Little Theatre in Los Angeles, founded by Langston Hughes and presented his play "Don't You Want To Be Free."
- 1940's Studied at the Dramatic Work Shop of New School, New York.
- Productions: "The Flies"
"The Aristocrats"
"The Wedding"
- Pasadena Playhouse, Pasadena California - Summer Festival of American playwrights.
- Production: "The Petrified Forest"
- Glendale Center Theatre - First Black to have performed in theatre.
- Production: "The Hasty Heart"
- 1950's 3 years voice study under Mary Ledgewood, Carnegie Hall
- 1950's Super with the City Center Opera Company in New York
- Productions: "La Boheme"
"Carmen"
"Love Of Three Oranges"
- Sky Loft Players - Harlem
- "The Silver Cord"
"Family Portrait"
"Murder Without Crime"
- Super with the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York
- Productions: "Salome"
"Boris Godunov"
"Aida"
- 1960's Director of North Church Drama Group, Newark, New Jersey.
- Program Coordinator of the Waden Branch Library of San Francisco, California.
- Director of Black Heritage, and evening of Music, Drama and Dance for the African-American Historical and Cultural Society in San Francisco.
- 1970's Guest Director - Black Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, California directing Hall Johnson's "Run Lil' Chillun"
- 1980's Director of Close Circuit Television Series "Getting By"
- Guest Director - Tuskegee University Theatre, Tuskegee Alabama.
- Production: "Agnes of God"
- Director of "One for the Cause" in Hollywood, California
- Mr. Lawrie was an associate and friend of Mr. Hughes, having directed several of Mr. Hughes plays.
- 1990 Guest Director - Blues City Cultural Center Memphis, Tennessee
- Production: Blues! Blues! Blues! written by Mr. Lawrie.

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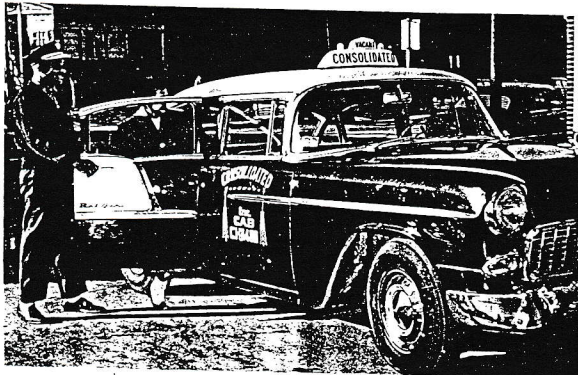
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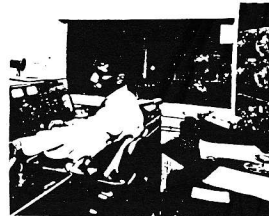
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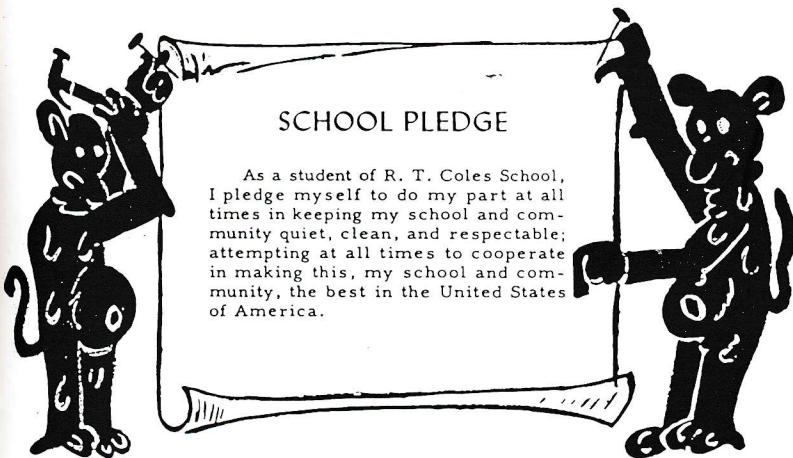
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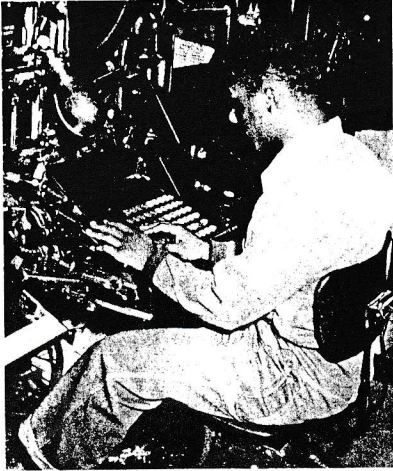
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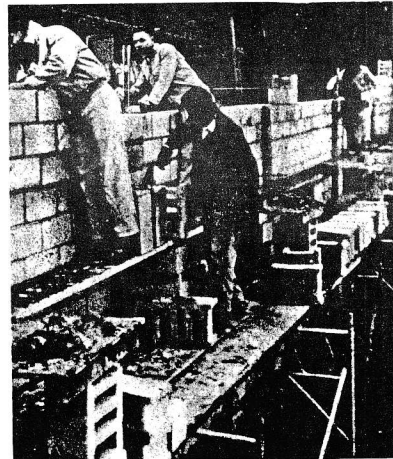
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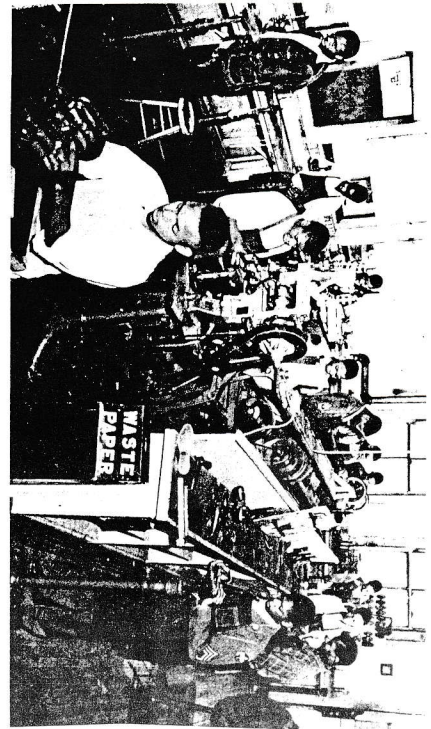


Izetta Jenkins
Beauty Operator

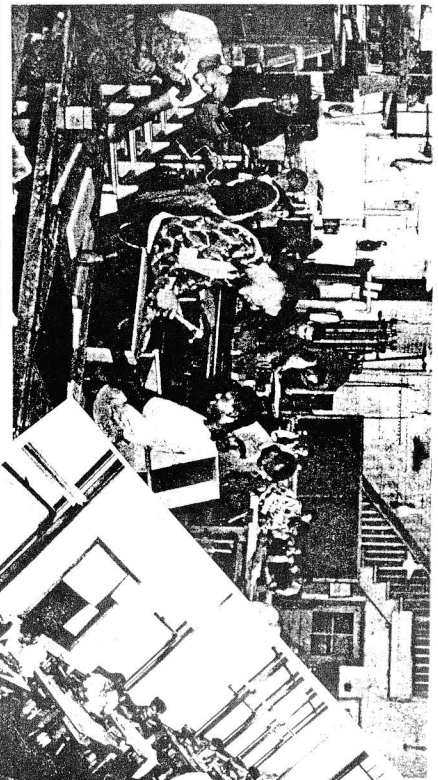


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