

SRRT—Coretta Scott King Award Task Force

A.L.A. Conference

July 13, 1982

"From the Archives"

FOUNDER'S DAY EDITION

- 1977 "Keep the dream alive!!"
Coretta Scott King
- 1978 "If one child will be inspired to use
their talents to work for peace and
brotherhood our work will not be invain."
- 1979 "If you think of me when autumn leaves
begin to fall, will you somehow know
that my love will always be a part
of you."
Glyndon Greer (Founder)
- 1980 "Knowledge is power. Those with it
control those without it."
- 1981 "Today's presentation is tomorrow's
history."
- 1982 We welcome all who would like to
join us.

FOUNDERS AND ARCHIVAL COMMITTEE

Harriett B. Brown
382 Central Park West
NYC 10025

Ruth Hayford
Mable McKissick
Beatrice James
Susie Shurney

GLYNDON FLYNT GREER

(Through the eyes of her sister - Susan Flynt Shurney)

Glyndon was born on a lovely spring day in the green hills of Tennessee. She learned to read at four as her father taught her two older sisters their lessons. In first grade she assisted teaching her classmates to read. On the completion of the eighth grade, she obtained a job with the Public School and taught for many years before saving enough money to take leave and attend college full time. Glyndon graduated from A & T State College with honors. She was the first and only girl to receive a degree in Agriculture. She became a supervisor of two black county schools and traveled in rain, snow and mud to teach them better ways of farming.

Glyndon moved to N.Y. with her husband and obtained a job with the New York Public Library. Her Masters degree in Library Science at Columbia University was followed by extended work on her Ph.D. The Greers built a house in Englewood, N.J. She taught for several years before returning to the Secondary School System as a Librarian.

While attending an A.L.A. Library Conference in 1969, she met with Mabel McKissick, and John Carroll. Plans for an award for Black Authors were made. She returned to her room and discussed the plans with her roommate Harriett Brown until the wee hours of the morning. She was determined once the award was born to keep it alive. She contacted publishers, writers, businesses and persuaded them to become contributors and sponsors.

Her dream was fulfilled in 1979 when the award was placed under the umbrella of the SSRT Task Force. The award had finally become a permanent part of the American Library Conference agenda. She could now rest easy.

GLYNDON FLYNT GREER

(Through the eyes of her co-worker Ruth Drake Hayford)

Glyndon cared about kids. To her a school library was not a repository for books. It was a place kids came to find out about - - well you name it. Glyndon relished helping them in their search for knowledge because noone realized better than she how knowledge enables a person to pull himself up by his own bootstraps.

She took a deeply personal interest in each young person with whom she came in contact. She taught Sunday School at Galilee Methodist Church. The Rev. Walter Taylor was the pastor and the first Black mayor of Englewood, N.J.

I started working with Glyndon in early 1968. I watched the ideas for the C.S.K. award develop in her brain. It was definitely her baby, but I am proud to have been a part of it. Day after day we wrote to people - librarians, publishers, writers. Where she got the names and addresses I cant't tell you. She was like one possessed. She infected every one with whom she came in contact. She would not let you say "NO". She infected me most of all with her joy of working with kids. She encouraged me to go back to college and become certified as a teacher librarian. And what an advantage I had working in the library with Glyndon. I knew exactly what my instructors in college were talking about.

Today I am the librarian and I have tried to carry on as Glyndon would have done. She started a Library Council. It consists of 75 kids who help in the library for half of their lunch period. The things that they can do are amazing. I owe a debt of gratitude to Glyndon. She was the older sister I never had.

MABEL R. McKISSICK - A PROFILE
(One of the C.S.K. Award Founders)

In June 1968, I moved to New London, Conn. from Union, S.C. I served 4 years as a social studies teacher and the remaining 21 years, as head librarian at the Sims High School, Union, S.C.

In September 1968, I was appointed the first Black librarian in the New London school system and organized the first centralized library for the New London J.H.S. I served here from 1968-1979. In September 1979, I was transferred to the New London High School to become the head library/media specialist.

I met new friends. The late Betty Fast of Groton Ct. and Bernice (Bunny) Yesner of Woodbridge Ct.. We started attending regional and national level conferences together. We attended A.L.A. in Atlantic City in 1969. It was here that I met another dynamic and dedicated school librarian G.F. Greer. Glyndon became my co-worker, co-founder and friend. We met at the booth of John Carroll. Since it was the day before the Newberry/Caldecott awards, the discussion turned to Black authors such as Little Patterson, who was writing a biography of Dr. King.

It all ended up with John Lillie, Glyndon, and I outlining the purposes, criteria, the name and means of financial support for the award. John Carroll agreed to provide the plaque (with the aid of her publishers.)

Of all my awards, I cherish most the Rheta Clark award, the highest achievement award in library service presented annually by the Connecticut Educational Media Association. The Coretta Scott King Award and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. award presented annually to those Black citizens who have made a contribution to the community.