











Neville said the university does not object to the project as such but does object to the rezoning, which, he charged, "seems to conflict" with the Schellie Plan.

He admitted that the university has no time-table for expanding the College of Engineering, moving M. H. Kinch, commissioner of public works and a member of the Commission to remark:

"I think you ought to have a time-table. You can't just go on forever and ever."

# Perpetual Action

Replied Neville, "That's what planning is, Mr. Kinch, something that goes on forever and ever."

Neville said a report spelling out the university's specific objections will be furnished commission members in time enough for them to study the objections before arriving at a decision.

Commission member Robert Finfrock pointed out that the commission merely will pass on the advisability of rezoning the required site, and not on the project itself.

According to the developers, the towering structure will house 200 apartment units and will be designed to be "studentoriented."

There are 100 two-bedroom units of 1,080 square feet each, 75 one-bedroom units of 807 square feet each and 25 studio apartments of 560 square feet each planned for the building.

In addition there will be two electrically - operated elevators, two enclosed 'stair-wells and an incinerator within the building.

# Fireproof Building

Metcoff told commission members that in addition to being fireproof, the building can be serviced by existing units of the Urbana and University fire departments in case of emergency.

The building will occupy only 21 per cent of the total site. The remainder, according to the planners, will be given over to a landscaped park.

Each of the full-sized apartments will have a large entry foyer and the two bedroom suites will contain two full baths.

Laundry and storage rooms together with 30,000 square feet of parking, adequate for parking over 100 cars, will be located on the lower level.

Traffic will be circulated so that pedestrians, passenger vehicles and service trucks will enter and travel over separate thoroughfares on the grounds, the developers said. It is hoped by the developers that the project will be ready

# CHAMPAIGN-URBANA COURIER



'TOWER' PLANNERS

Shown above are developers of "Urbana Towers," the proposed 26 - story apartment building for University of Illinois students. Left to right are Chicago architect James Metcoff: John F. Hoover repre-

senting Mid-Central Mortgage Co., of Chicago, financial backers; and Mrs. Frances Moreland, of Urbana, who conceived the idea of the structure. The plan for the building was presented to the City Plan Commission Monday afternoon. The meeting was continued for one week to allow Commission members to study various reports before passing on the requested rezoning of the site.

# Urbana (Continued From Page 3)

for occupancy by September of 1970.

Hoover told the commission that "a reasonable delay" would not hamper the development. He had said earlier that "an unreasonable delay would have serious repercussions."

# CHAMPAIGN-UR

# Urbana Speeds Action On 26-story Building

By William C. Groninger Action is expected to be taken next Monday by the Urbana City Plan Commission on a proposed 26-story, \$3.7 million apartment nouse to be built immediately adjacent to the University of Illinois campus.

tober 23, 1968

The project was outlined Monday afternoon to the Commission by the developers: Architect James L. Metcoff, of Chicago; Mrs. Frances Moreland, of Urbana, and John Hoover, representing the financial backer, Mid-Central Mortgage Co. of Chicago.

Commission members appeared enthusiastic over the possibilities of the project, to be called "Urbana Towers," but referred to the matter to the regional planner, Richard Maltby, for study and report to the commission next Monday.

An indication of the commission's feeling toward the project was that members voted to waive the usual five-day notice period and proceed directly with Maltby's report.

Maltby customarily mails commission members his report five days prior to the next meeting, but this was waived in order to give him time to complete his report and still meet Monday's date.

U. of I. Objects

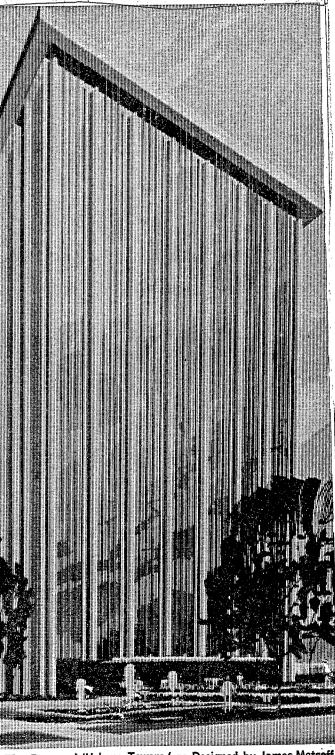
The only objector at the meeting was Don Neville, representing the University of Illinois.

Neville said that the proposed site of the project will interfere with the planned expansion of the University's College of Engineering.

The planners have asked that the site be rezoned from the present R-2 multiple family zone to the R-4, multiple family high density classification.

The site is composed of 1302 through 1308 W. Clark Street, 402 and 402½ N. Romine Street, and 403 N. Mathews Avenue.

According to Maltby, the planned 26-story building meets all qualifications of the proposed zone.



The Proposed 'Urbana Towers.' as Designed by James Metcoff



HIGH RISE APARTMENT SPONSORS. Looking over the plans for the proposed 26-story Urbana Towers a p a r t m e n t building during a press conference Monday were, from left, James L. Metcoff, \* \* \* whose Chicago firm is architect and developers; Mrs. Frances Moreland of Ur-, bana; and John L. Hoover, of Mid-Central Mortage Co. of Chicago.

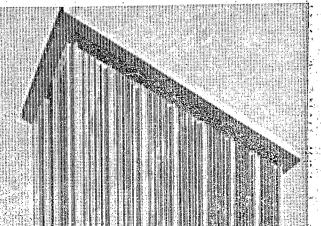


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Announcement of a proposed 200-unit, 26-s t ory apart m e n t building to be constructed by the fall term of 1970 for student occupancy was made at a news conference Monday by the proj-



construction is to be started once the site on Clark between Romine and Mathews, has been cleared of the existing buildings. Construction of the building, to be known as Urbana Towers, is estimated to take about 18. months.

Cost of the proposed project was given by the architects at about \$3.7 with both permanent and construction mortgage financing arranged by Mid-Central Mortgage Co. of Chicago.

Mrs. Moreland, who was present at the meeting to make a ent at the meeting to make a short statement, said she had given the architects "sketches of things I had in mind," and they had developed the plans from that point. "I feel this is something worthwhile and will be an asset to the town and the people therein," she added.

### Present Plans

Metcoff said the plans for the project would be presented to the Regional Planning Commission immediately. When asked if he foresees any difficulty in getting approval for the structure from the Urbana City Council, he replied in the negative.

"We feel this project is a definite asset to the community and we feel the council will approve it as such," Metcoff said. At present, a limit of seven stories is provided for by the City of Urbana's zoning ordinance. In order to approve the project the council would probably have to change the ordinance or grant a variance. "Actually. I don't know what course the council would take," said Ald. Jeanne-Marie Wyld, who was present at the news conference. "We've never had anything like this come up before.'

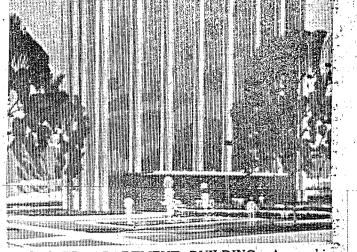
A prime feature of the building, according to Metcoff, will be the selection available to prospective tenants in choosing the block she lives in, which is either north or south exposure for either one or two-bedroom apartments. There are 100 twobedroom units of 1,080 square feet each, 75 one-bedroom units of 807 square feet each and 25 studio apartments of 560 square feet

Entry Fovers

Each of the full-isze apartments will, according to the plans, have a large entry foyer and the two-badroom suites will contain two full baths. Laundry tual dates," he said. and storage rooms together with 30,000 square feet of parking will be located on the lower level.

be in the form of a porticosaid Metcoff.

On the east side of the grounds Į the plans show a landscaped park with traffic circulated so that pedestrians, passenger vehicles and service trucks will enter and travel over separate b



PROPOSED APARTMENT BUILDING. An architect's drawing of the proposed Urbana Towers apartment building shows the design of the 258-foot structure which would consist of 26 stories with 200 units. The architects say the building will be located on Clark between Romine and Mathews in Urbana

marily student-oriented, area residents will be welcomed.

# '\$3.7 Million Miracle'

Forecast By Pastor God may enact a \$3.7 million miracle in Urbana, according to the prophecy of "Brother Billy" Melker, pastor of the Great Holy Temple Interdenominational Church of Christ, Urbana.

According to Mrs. Frances Moreland, sponsor of Urbana Towers, a proposed 26-story apastment building; Melker prophesied during a church service in October of 1965 that she would come into property. houses and impossible riches.

Mrs. Moreland said she envisioned the completed Urbana Towers in a dream about eight months after the prophecy. On faith, she paced off the part of now the proposed site for the proposed structure.

"I don't remember the words of the prophecy," said Melker. "My people write my prophecies down word for word, but I don't remember the words," he said. He stated that he is aware he is making a prophecy when it is happening.

He said he often makes prophecies during his church services. "The Lord gives ac-

"When the Lord told me it was her time, I told Mrs. Moreland and she went out and sought means," Melker said in The center of the building will reply to a question of how the 200-apartment building was belounge with recessed private ing financed. He would not ansitting areas, and the various swer how Mrs. Moreland arlevels will be served by two ranged financing or why she high-speed electric elevators, went to Chicago to find money.

ALBERT SHELTON, OWNER OF SHELTON LAUNDRY, 1981 ILLINOIS SMALL-BUSINESS ...in Urbana facility — he and his mother started business in their back yard PERSON

# (<u>8</u>) Q Q State Small-Business Work Shelton's Person S

By JOHN HALLADAY News-Gazette Staff Writer Albert E. Shelton of Ur-sana is a winner. the commercial industry reflects his understanding of a ingredients which ute to the more "a veritable Horatio Alger story." Ramos said, "Al on's ascent to the

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Auce. bana is a winner. The 45-year-old Shelton, t owner of Shelton Laundry j Inc., 1104 N. Goodwin Ave., u U, is the 1981 Illinois U, is the 1981 Illinois ll-Business

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vice." Shelton said his desire un for accomplishment was Ma sparked when he was at-tending University High m School in Urbana. While ha there, he won 13 varsity fr there, he won 13 varsity fr there, he won 13 varsity fr there, he won 14 varsity fr there, he won 15 varsity fr there, he won 16 varsity fr there, he won 17 varsity fr there, he won 18 varsity fr there, he won 18 varsity fr there, he won 19 varsity fr there of the second football team to high school football team to of which he was captain) r Going to UHS, Shelton 1 - wis

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Ashelton said, ''I don't resaily have much to say —
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mercial laundry south of
 e Chicago.
 Asked to comment on the
 secret of his success, Shelton said, "It's hard work
 and listening good," using
 "all the good ideas you can
 get" in your business, and
 "keeping your mind open."

Two new outbursts of t competition in food mer-chandising promise to cut costs for consumers (meaning all of us). The rise of low-cost (no-frills) stores and of unbranded ("generic") products are related developments and could become a revolution in the grocery business.

of than supermarkets (less an 1,000 as compared with 12,000) and many of the it 12,000) and many of the By cutting service — no bagging or carry-out — d these stores sharply trim e prices. According to a d study by the Economics and Statistics Service of the Department of Agricul-ture, box stores can make to 13 percent, as compared with 18 to 21 percent for be conventional supercent for

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Champaign County No. 1 Selling Team

568-7126 Penfield, III.

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The no-frills stores, sometimes called warehouse or box stores, are located mainly in large cities so far. They stack cut-open boxes of canned, bottled and packaged foods on shalves or on the floor

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ucts each week. It displays its own cheaper brands more prominently than be-fore. I visited a new no-frills store in Des Moines at mid-week. It was jam-med. Prices on most items were lower than in my

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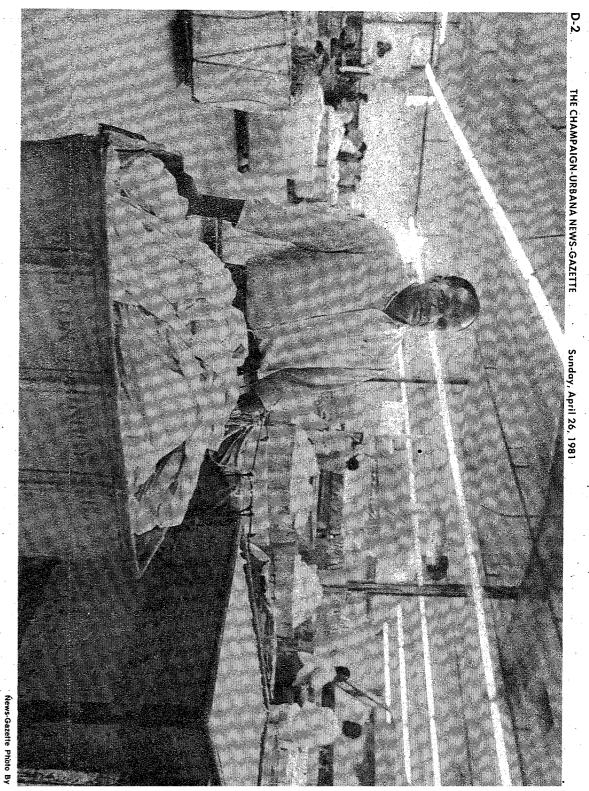
After graduation from i high school, Shelton re-jected athletic scholarships i to three universities to pursue the goal of being "the best laundryman in

home had generated enough work to build a block facility in the Shel

uo merciai markets during ine Week. Nis 1950s and '60s and was in-Sales in 1980 exceeded of vi- corporated and relocated to \$1.2 million, and the com-its present 14,000-square-pany's labor force has its present 14,000-square-pany's labor force has individuals. indi

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ALBERT SHELTON, OWNER OF SHELTON LAUNDRY, 1981 ILLINOIS SMALL-BUSINESS ... in Urbana facility — he and his mother started business in their back yard News-Gazette

# 8 ard Work Shelton's State Small-Business Person Winning Secr

By JOHN HALLADAY News-Gazette Staff Writer Albert E. Shelton of Ur-

bana is a winner. The 45-year-old Shelton, owner of Shelton Laundry Inc., 1104 N. Goodwin Ave., U, is the 1981 Illinois

also was named by the SBA as Small Business Subcontractor of the Year "in recognition of outstand-Shelton was honored this past week during cere-monies co-sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Addesire past laundry business, a f that was begun in backyard and now has his "courage, tenac management initiative Shelton's vice to the nation's need." Shelton also received a certificate of appreciation Champaign chambers ( from Governor James Thompson in recognition of his "courage, tenacity, ministration aundry mall-Business ie Year. The n's operation or ry business, a with to learn. ion and the in and Urbana of commo named by of commerce. that honor, Person Shelton out of his firm and of of

the branch office, said story's accomplishments Phil Ro l Ramos, manager of SBA's Springfield h office, said Shelaro

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"a veritable Horatio Alger story."

- Ramos said, "Al Shel-ton's ascent to the top in the commercial laundry industry reflects his unique understanding of all those ingredients which contrib-ute to the profitability and ness. ongevity of a small busi-

Shelton ,'Anything "Anything you do, you have to work hard to get to the top — we're not at the top yet, but we're working said Friday,

to get to that point." Asked to comment on the honors he has received, Shelton said, "I don't re-ally have ..... y have much nice for the nice." company;

, it's nice." Shelton's involvement in the laundry business began in 1942 when his mother created the business to

r support a growing family. Shelton still remembers. his mother washing with a washboard and large kettle f in the backyard of their s home. That big black kettle now sits in Shelton's office as a memorial to his mother's hard work and a reminder of the growth and a mou... reminder o. humble origins. Today, Shelton Laur roest Illinois c to his k and a firm's

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secret of his success, Shel-ton said, "It's hard work and listening good," using "all the good ideas you can Asked to comment on the

"do my best" and to "give the business." people good quality ser- The SBA sa vice."

to forego playing on the high school football team (of which he was captain) to re-establish the business after a fire in 1950. Going to UHS, Shelton there, he won 13 varsity there, he won 13 varsity athletic letters, but he had to forego playing on the high school football team Shelton said his desire for accomplishment was sparked when he was at-tending University High High While

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only strengthened their teamwork and Mrs. Shelton remains indispensable to the business." The business grew and week, a joint income k, but succes success h hened has

The business grew and began to penetrate com-mercial markets during the 1950s and '60s and was in-corporated and relocated to its present 14 000 14,000-square-n 1968. Its washers proceed than 3,300 pounds dry per hour and a trucks delivers the product within a 2 reading country \$1.2 million, pany's labe

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tracts with Chan Force Base, Sc Force Base, Illinc University and local nursing home As the SBA say day, Shelton Laund no resemblance backyard operation Its washers proce

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odern laundry in Illinois, the gegest in the state outside Chicago. he say himsell, 'it just happens be øwned by blacks.' Shelton's is a thriving enterprise. deesn't bother Albert Shelton, He what he says is the most erf laundry in Illinois, the

as businesses in the two cities — most of the initial of the order of Minority Business Enterprises in 1977, repre-menting 1.2 percent of business estab-liking in Champeign-Urbana. Na-tionally at that time, 2.3 percent of businesses were owned by blacks. Business in control by blacks. Business in only one indicator of the size of the black "mindle class" the size of the black "mindle class" y in Champaig inesses in the f them small he filtnois Off on's is a thriving enterprise, les exceeding \$1.2 million in a a black-owned firm, it is also y in Champaign-Urbona. Only

and percentage of blacks in profes-sions is also small. There are no black doctors in Champelga-Urbans, only one dentist, one architect, one bank officer, two one architect, one bank officer, two reporters, five attorneys, three prac-ticing engineers, four insurance sgents, eight to il real estate agents as University of Illinois faculty men-bers out of a total of 2,940, and 45 black academic professionals out of 170% in fall toos

05 in fall Richard Richard Barksdale, a UI staff mber, said Champalgn-Urbana "is a community where black profes-nais have been welcomed with als have arms." tried

les conti of the added the Graduate College adanin-, "but it's an uphill struggle, think anyone is going to come think of the sent of the sent." 's reputation is not the best." dale said he knows of several 3 d to change that im Barksdale, associate the Southwest als who have 5 larger rather chosen

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ifeida are the percentages of black professionalis comparable to the community's black population. "The total percentage of blacks em-ployed in sit UI non-cademic job grouph has risen from 12 to 15.2 per-cent' between 1977 and 1980. Though the keyset number can be found in the keyset number can be found in the keyset standard groups - 3,797 cm phoreas, we the professional-non-ficility group in-risen form 2.136, or 1600 generative to 2.209, or 12.2 percent, 1600 generative to 2.209, or 12.2 percent.

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17:00 ALBERT SHELTON

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quiren Urbana. ected did not meet ac puirements. Among thos ue estimated "only a umber" resided in ( those Champaign-VOFY

Albert Shelton balayes education is the key for bringing blacks and, profes-sions. "Many people are unemployed because they did not finish school, he said. "Man, you know that's a no-no these days. If you're not qual-ified when the opportunities come, the opportunities come and make a fool of you.

"Our parents did not teach us the "Our parents did not teach us the salue of education," he added. "They taught us how to work hard. A tot of people work hard in this world – all kinds of races — and they never

believes the only way to the economic ranks is to

move up the ecotomic ranks is to work at t — in more than one way.
The unemployed, he said, "should y take whatever job they can get, and the ge back to night school.
"I can do what you want to be, but it costs you something to do that. Give a man a eight hours work for eight hours pay to the twill you want to be but it costs you want to be but it costs you something to do that. Give a man eight hours work for eight hours pay the year of the something. It will be something it will be something the something it will be something to do that. Give a man eight hours work for eight hours pay N ... you stick with something it will be rereased opportunities for the individual with "a coincided with "a block and be whites. He would like to see more in the something.

and Many of the ones who have 'made "Many of the ones who have 'made not employ their poorer brothers sisters," he said. "We have be-te too dependent on white Ameri-s to hire us and to educate our

be successful ... putting in a position to help other Police Chief Dye says "I think we're on the threshold. More and more young black people are going to universities to learn about business and what it takes to themselves

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car't allow the environment to come down on them so hard that they give up, because if they do, they become a burden oit the black community. . ...'In spite of, all the grunnbling. The added, 'I' see a completely different anded, 'I' see a completely different pe and They

y gineef who lives in Champaign, was it claid in inner-city Chicago, the only one in the housing project where she resided to attend college or obtain "the academic background to ever aspire to anything." attitude on the part of young people Bertha Mitchell, an electrical of

this na you, tell you you then you don't l "When ture you've overcome hurdles have people persecu 1 you can't make it on't let any individu

pisted before like I say, they don't give degrees in black female en-"I have developed some of the and I'm able to share them in both my personal environment and social environment also." 'I don't think the society we func-swers. I think it's going to take indi-viduals, problems that causes people viduals, problems that creates the negativeness that causes people in factor in places like Cham-ness to the time in which the indi-

then you don't, let eavy individual stand before you and tell you whiat you can or cantob do... Mitchell was the first black female to graduate'r from the UV Collage of Englineering.

"I have encountered some very strange incidents here," she said. "People are now being forced to open up their minds to things that never existed before. Like I day, they don't give degrees in black /emaile ep-

siness Horizons

THE CHAMPAIGN-URBANA NEWS-GAZETTE

RY KAY SWEIKAR zette Staff Writer. Laundry, 1104 N. Ave., U, found its eginning with a wash rub board and a demother who super family of six. were the days when k "Gone With the oots were used for buttermilk and soda d to remove rust, and hot, soapy water was ote for black grease. the late Mrs. Arah lton started taking in in her home back in e laundry has exts services considera-

is currently has conith large institutions University of Illinois, Clinic, Chanute Air ase. Fort Harrison at olis, Ind., and even Ilner.

ing to Mrs. Verma who owns the laundry drying and pressing, which arly 25,000 sheets, normal-sized

employes to keep all this moving. stacked. used for hospital uniforms. Bulky towels, like the ones used for the UI Intramural Physical Education Building,

are folded by hand. Loved Her Work Mrs. Shelton recalled how her mother-in-law, Arah Mae,

ARAH SHELTON ... started business

low cases and 10,000 wash ate University, during cloths are run through the laundry here every week.

If she could, she would have worked 'til the day she died. She said she would have made the deliveries if she could This volume of washing, drive."

The late Mrs. Shelton, who with her husband Al-would take weeks with was 72 when she died in 1973. household worked until Sept. 19 of that ith towels, 12,000 pil- machines, is accomplished year and died two months la-

loved her work: "I've never

seen a person like her. She

must have loved the business.

Sunday, August 15, 1976

# with the aid of five 400-pound ter.

washers, five 200-pound dryers. A native of Covington, three flat irons, a folder, three Tenn., the late Mrs. Shelton ton's first simple laundry set flat press units for uniforms, a grew up with the laundry busshirt and a pants unit, and 35 iness.

Mrs. Shelton explained the must have gone into the laun- she could expand the business. workers can feed the pressing dry every day of her life." machine with about 100 sheets in 20 minutes, and they come trained to iron a shirt every electrical irons that eased the out pressed, folded and three minutes by the time she workload somewhat and encalls how her mother did the The other pressing units are laundry for the UI sorority and fraternity houses back in the 1940s. Since she washed and pressed the students' personal since the 1950s. And as Mrs. items; they all were marked Shelton explains it, they stay with some kind of identifica- there each night until the tion.

"If we would ruin something, like shrink it, mother would always replace it," she said.

the entire family to work any kind of shipment delay. when the laundry business first began. Even seven-yearold Albert, the voungest, started the fire to heat the wash water. He later made laundry, another Shelton laundry deliveries with his Laundry may expand the prewagon, and eventually with a sent operation someday, actruck when he was older.

## Larger Laundromat

A fire destroyed Mrs. Shelup in the garage at her Urbana home. Undaunted, she Her daughter, Mrs. Frances took out a money loan and Moreland, believes "Mother built a larger laundromat so Next came the modern Mrs. Moreland said she was wringer - washers and the reached third grade. She re- couraged the hard-working woman to take on more and more customers.

> The Albert Sheltons have been working in the laundry work gets done.

Shelton himself seems impatient to get things done. He recently drove to Virginia just to ship back a new clothes Mrs. Shelton reportedly put dryer. He couldn't wait for Mrs. Shelton said.

> The Sheltons seem content with their present work load. but if they contract more cording to Mrs. Shelton.

# rbana Laundry Outgrows Wash Tub, Scrub Board



MRS. VERMA SHELTON AT URBANA'S SHELTON LAUNDRY ... has seen mother-in-law's hard work pay off

THE CHAMPAIGN-URBANA NEWS-GAZETTE

# **Business Horizons** Urbana Laundry Outgrows Wash Tub, Scrub Board

By MARY KAY SWEIKAR News-Gazette Staff Writer

Shelton Laundry, 1104 N. Goodwin Ave., U, found its modest beginning with a wash tub, a scrub board and a determined mother who supported her family of six.

Those were the days when the black "Gone With the Wind" pots were used for washing, buttermilk and soda were used to remove rust, and lard and hot, soapy water was the antidote for black grease. Since the late Mrs. Arah Mae Shelton started taking in laundry in her home back in 1942, the laundry has expanded its services considerablv.

Sheltons currently has contracts with large institutions like the University of Illinois, Christie Clinic, Chanute Air Force Base, Fort Harrison at Indianapolis, Ind., and even Ilthe summer.

According to Mrs. Verma bert, nearly 25,000 sheets, normal-sized



ARAH SHELTON ... started business

low cases and 10,000 wash laundry here every week.

This volume of washing, drive."

with the aid of five 400-pound ter. shirt and a pants unit, and 35 iness. employes to keep all this moving.

Sunday, August 15, 1976

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used for hospital uniforms. Bulky towels, like the ones used for the UI Intramural Physical Education Building, are folded by hand.

## Loved Her Work

Mrs. Shelton recalled how loved her work: "I've never would always replace it," she recently drove to Virginia just seen a person like her. She must have loved the business. If she could, she would have the entire family to work any kind of shipment delay. linois State University, during cloths are run through the worked 'til the day she died.

15,000 bath towels, 12,000 pil- machines, is accomplished year and died two months la- truck when he was older.

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## Larger Laundromat

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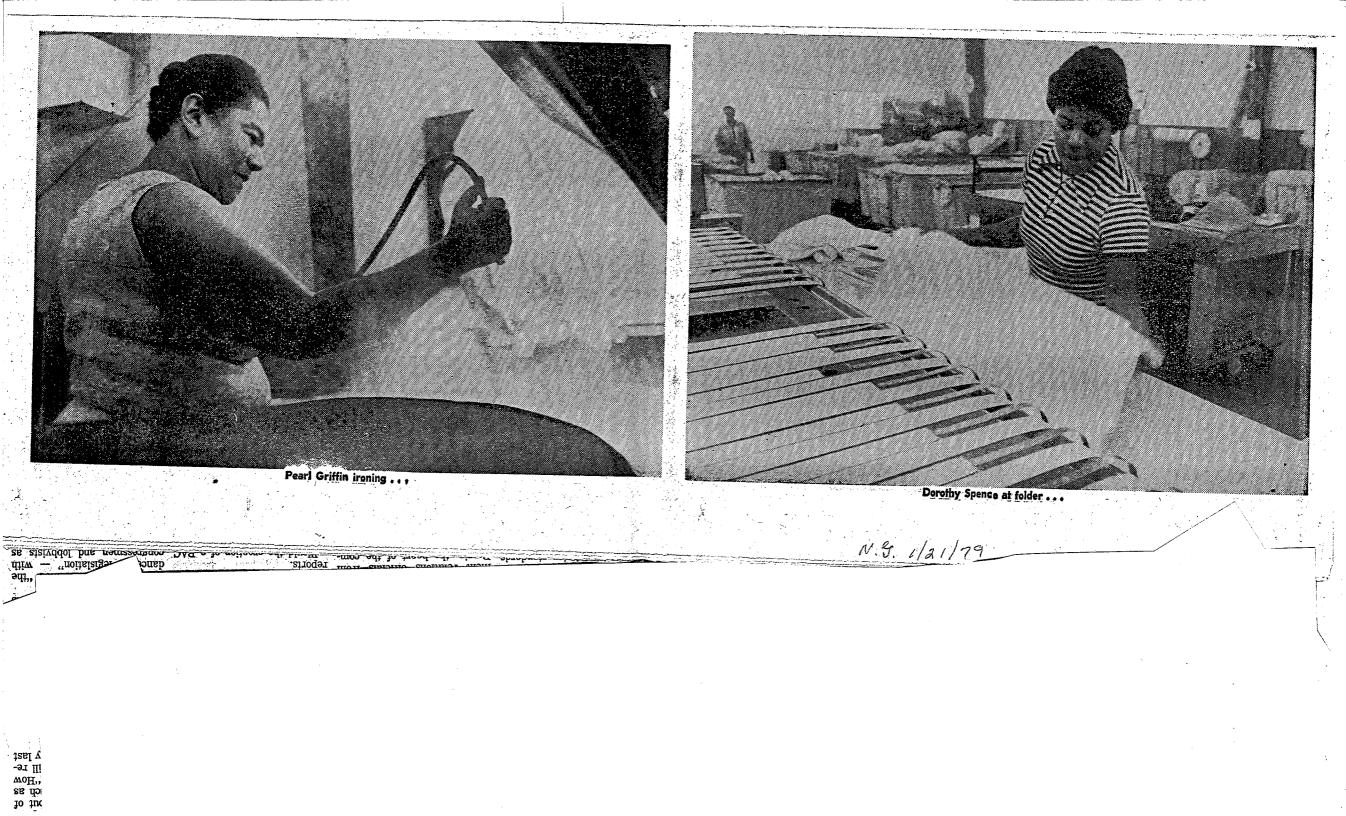
The Albert Sheltons have been working in the laundry work gets done.

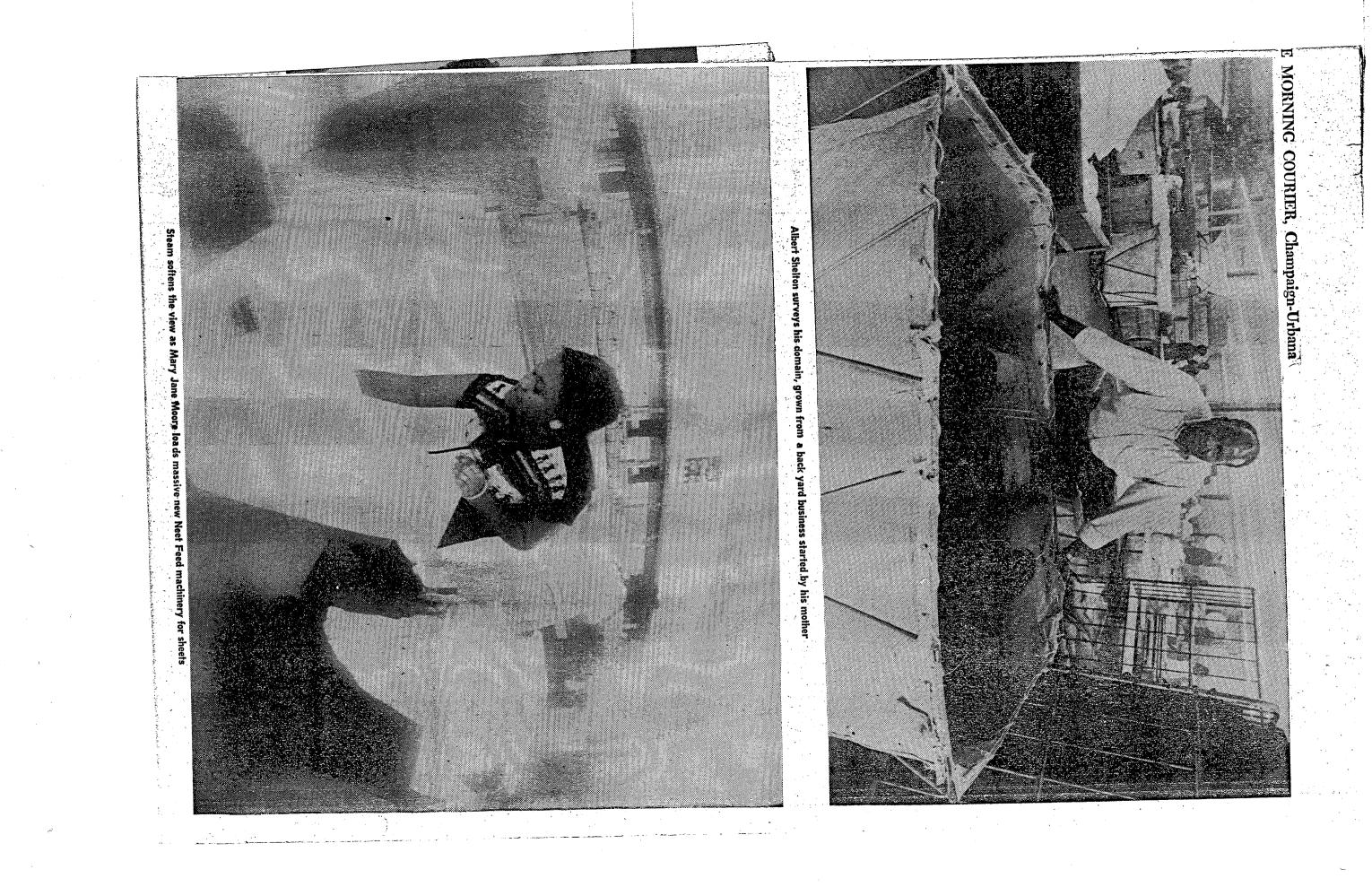
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MRS. VERMA SHELTON AT URBANA'S SHELTON LAUNDRY ... has seen mother-in-law's hard work pay off





ŊZ,

1978

Take the principles of hard work and quality service. They provided the foundation for the Urbana laundry when it opened "We simply want to do the best job in the business," he vaid. "We want to have the uality not only to stay in the ield but be above it in order o o get the work and keen " Shelton Laundry Inc. up-to-the-minute business umble beginnings. Near the tub, howev lve large washers ant Shelton's business now oper-es inside a modern plant at 04 N. Goodwin Ave. The com-ny handles millions of winds of laundry each year, d Shelton has landed a handid Shelton bana laundry wh years ago in a West Eades Stree The setting is different today, d so is the volume of busi-ss. Yet the principles endure, cording to President Albert Shelton e Mrs. Arah Mae Shelton, ad to stand for hours over washboard and a large tub her back yard — taking all kinds of laundry in order feed her six children. Inat tub is sitting in the Inat tub is sitting in the Inat tub is sitting in the output of the current Shelton int. It serves as a reminder, doubt, of the company's levertheless, By Michael Murphy Morning Courier Staff outgrew dle 2,250 a time. hich quick lar arge washes of laung e 2,250 pounds of laung time. Next to them a 10-foot-tall dryers, ei wet clothing, blan d other bedding, blan tick tour of the plant shows that Sho<sup>11</sup> ad, a fleet of six trucks daily pick-up and deliv-ns to the University of six-figure respects, has been his Shelton howev y Inc. is an ousiness that, remains old nen it open a back ya r each year, nded a hand-commercial loth ver, star that ca shelt 1 still re-) ove year. 'They closed their own laun-dry plant down at the time, and they sent out requests to bid to 81 firms, but we sent - in the only bid,' said Shelton. I laundry Illinois, Chanute Air Force Base, Scott Air Force Base, near Belleville, and the U.S. Army's Ft. Harrison, near Indiduring the 1950s, some of during the 1950s, Shelton, who still handles sales and contracts himself, al-ready is "working on some new business" in the event that the Air Force would shut down Albert, Shelton, who bought the laundry from his mother in April 1972, obtained the con-tract for Chanute that same Strict military contract spe-cifications also play a major
 role in quality control, accord-ing to Shelton, who added:
 "We must meet military military contracts, Shelt directly has assured goo ice to other clients and tively good wage to th pany's 45 laundry worker To qualify for the Sc Force Base contract, said he agreed to pay prevailing wages — \$ hour — for laundry v in the St. Louis metry hour — for laundry , in the St. Louis metry area. Furthermore, She lieves that the need for supervision rises if em are not treated fairly. "I've found in this I that, if you treat the right, pay them a decen they will do good wo son provi H standards, which are high. you meet their standards, y C nenus hanute. "You can't stay in business you just rely on one ac-ount," he said of the \$220,000 nnual Chanute laundry con-Having obtained the large U for provide h of I business, some of Shelton's first picked up about Sunday, January 21, 1979 Suroi.10 \$220,000, if employee the peop ecent livin work," I - \$3.41 a netropolita Shelton t d for clo Ft. R. MULTIN busin nd a rel supple annual accordott Air Harr . com ton went vac-in her yard. Since then, Shelton Laundry Inc. has been on an upswing, and Albert Shelton said plant expansion is being considered. As for business, Shelton said a contract is being negotiated a contract is being negotiated shelton said plant e can meet anybody's."
The laundry was doing about \$1, \$100,000 worth of business a loan, guaranteed by the federal to Small Business Administration, r provided the capital to build the north Urbana plant.
e At the time, Shelton's was accepting virtually any kind of it shundry business, much of it still coming from families, fraoternity and scoreity houses and t elsewhere on the U of I cammus. Eades St. "I've been working here for as long as I can remember, after school and during the summers when I was young," said Shelton, now a youthful looking 43-year-old. In those days, making your own soap and bleach was a prerequisite to laundry busi-ness. So the vats of lye, too, were stored in the backyard. Shelton said he remembers vividly the day that his mother bought a used wringer-wash-er, a large technological ad-vance from the backyard tub and washboards. Within two years, though, the garage in which the laundry family moved down to 1408 Eades St. Within two years, though the garage in which the laundry was located caught fire and burned to the ground. "We had the building insur-ed, but nothing else;" said Shel-ton, "so we paid off what we owed, and I went out and work-ed construction for a year or so." Jy72, "when things weren't go-ing so well," he said.
The late Mrs. Shelton stayed on to work for another year.
She died in 1974. Mrs. Shelton came to Urbana from Tennessee in 1923 and opened her laundry operation in her back yard at 1206 W. Eades St. At the other end of the ma-chine, a Jensen Folder has been installed to expedite work previously done by hand. "It doubles the production on this machine," said Shelton of the new equipment, more of equipment. One apparatus, known as a Jensen Neet Feed, opens up sheets to full size before feed-ing them into a large ironing Mot only is Shelton's still around, it is thriving and con-stantly expanding its laundry handling capacity in the 15,000 sq. ft. plant. Shelton, whose sister, Fran-ces Moreland, still works at the laundry, bought the busi-ness from his mother in April 1972, "when things weren't gothe new equipment, which is on order. Shelton, whose siste Ξ president said. "We just couldn't get them. People ap-parently didn't trust us, didn't think we would be around that The irrepressible Mrs. Shelon went back to doing wash Recently, for example, the mpany bought two large sees of automated folding We had no those days, sident sai no big nys,", the said. "\ contracts company TH

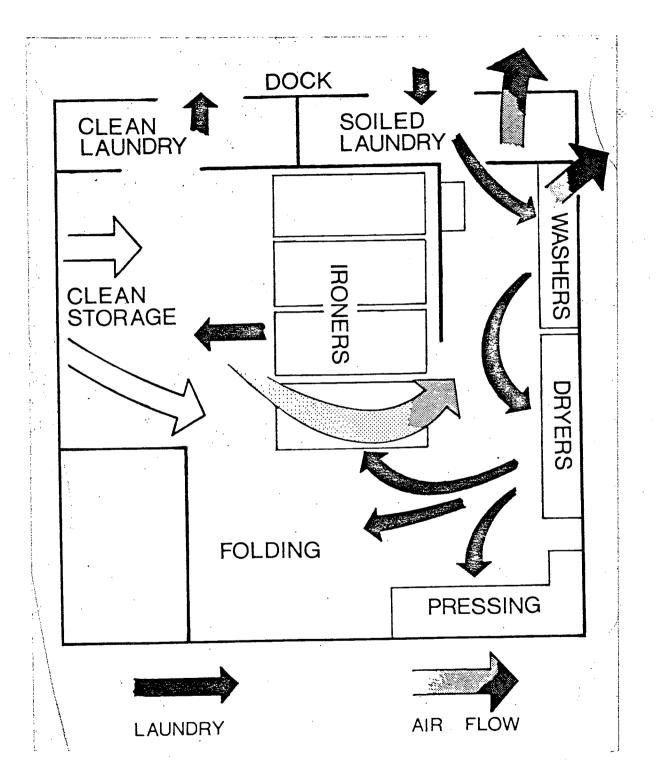


Albert E. Shelton of Urbana is a winner. The 45-year-old Shelton, owner of Shelton Laundry Inc. in Urbana, is the 1981 Illinois Small-Business Per-son of the Year. The local entrepreneur is a model of tenacity — he and his mother started their firm into thriving business. in their back yard, and he has since built the firm

# A Winning Business Man



SEVENTY-SECOND FOUNDERS' DAY COMMEMORATION this certificate with sincere appreciation for your endeavor to In recognition of proprietors of Black Owned Businesses serve the community in which you live. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. A Public Service Sorority Albert Shelton we present to signature: Callan date: 2 Ś 985 



K.S. 1/20/99

# Shelton Loundry Increases Capac

Shelton Laundry at 1104 N. Good-win Ave., U, has announced the ad-dition of several new machines that greatly increases the plant's capac-

ident Albert Shelton, are a Jensen Channel Cook Dryers. Neet Feed, Jensen Folder and three The new items, according to pres-

makes the laundry "more efficient and competitve." Shelton said the new equipment

capacity steam dryers," Shelton of all five of the previous 100-pound capacity gas dryers does the work "Just one of the new 400-pound

cessing capabilities to about 4,000 sheets per hour. have doubled Shelton's sheet pro-9,600 pounds of laundry per hour The Jensen Neet Feed and Folder This enables the laundry to dry

eral other large institutions: Harrison in Indianapolis and Air Force Base, Fort Benjamin ihę the Joint Commission for Accredita The ion of Hospital Requirements aundry in Illinois to be so honored. hought to be the only institutiona Shelton Laundry is accredited by University of Illinois, laundry provides service for Chanute sev-

Champaign-Urbana. many hospitals and other businesses Shelton also does the laundry for in 8 250-mile radius óf

Mrs. Arah Shelton started the

LIC JUHER THE GENERATION

יייו ויוייטאר.



...new equipment greatly adds to capacity of Goodwin Avenue business

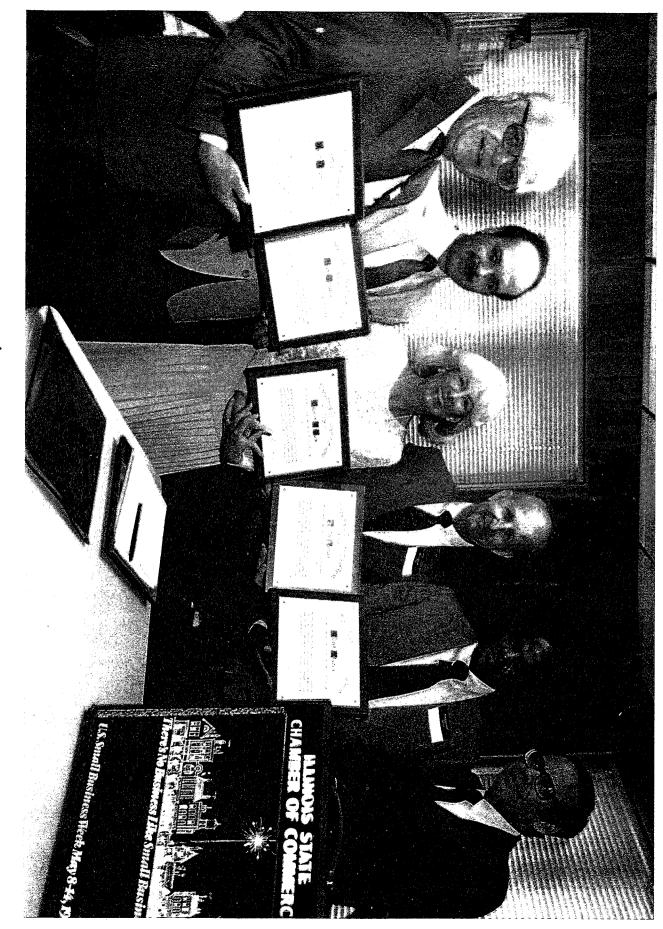
be the largest institutional laundry this small beginning it has grown to began taking in laundry, and from laundry business in 1942, when she

and has a fleet of six delivery in Illinois outside of Chicago. The business now occupies 15,000

space.

Plans are on the drawing board

for adding 7,200 square feet of floor

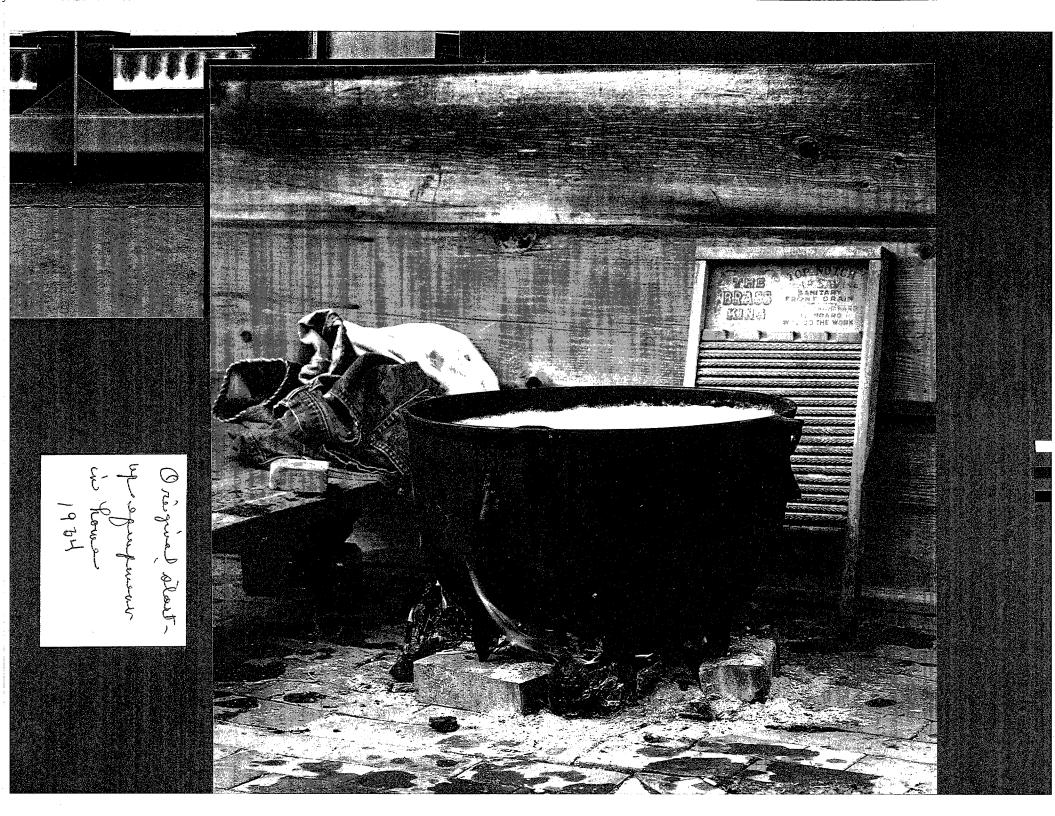


Champoring Chomber of Commerce 1983

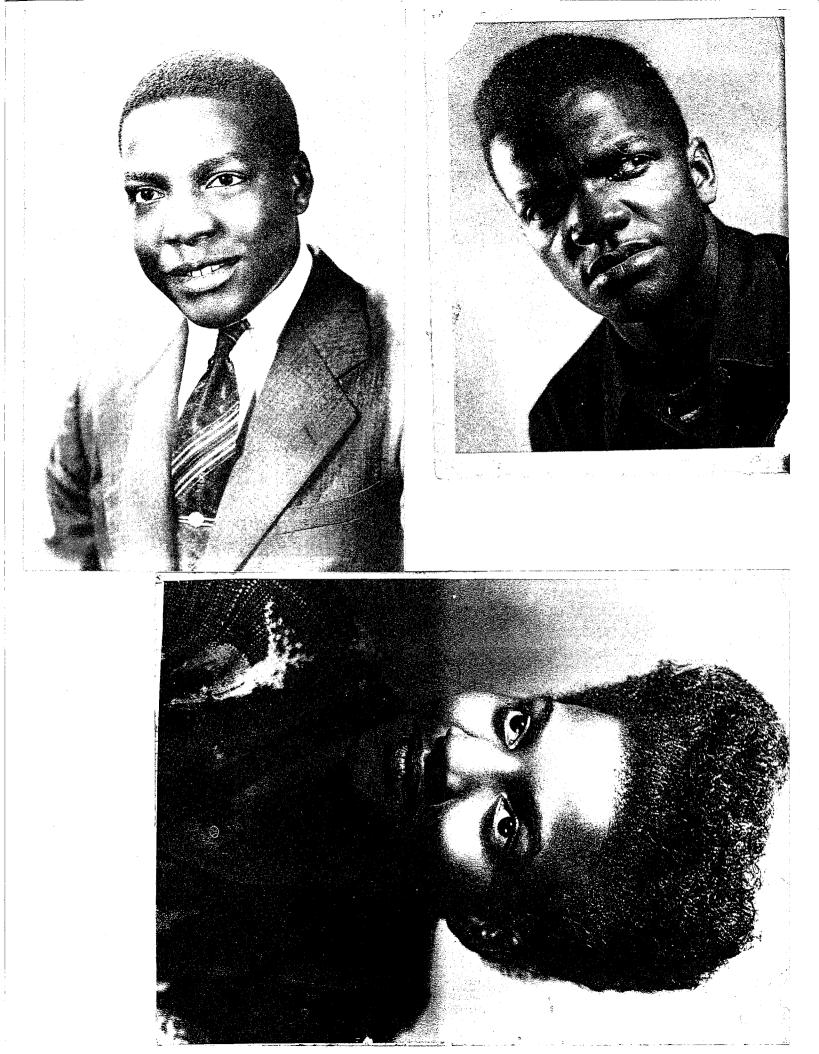












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African-American History: Today and Tomorrow

The lifeline of any newsletter is the reaction of its readers. Please help us spread the word! Xerox and share this newsletter with others. Send your comments c/o Early American Museum, P.O. Box 1040, Mahomet, IL 61853 or phone 217-586-2612. If you live in Champaign County and would like to be included on our mailing list, please call 217-586-2612. More importantly, share in our mission by writing and sharing your reflections of our local history. We need YOU!

Visit our website at: http://www.prairienet.org/years and http://www.advancenet.net/~early The Champaign County African-American History Committee gratefully acknowledges both The Champaign-Urbana Convention & Visitors Bureau and Busey Bank for sponsoring the printing of *Through the Years*.

Champaign-Urbana Convention & Visitors Bureau 1817 S. Neil, Suite 201 Champaign, IL 61820 217/351-4133 or 800/369-6151

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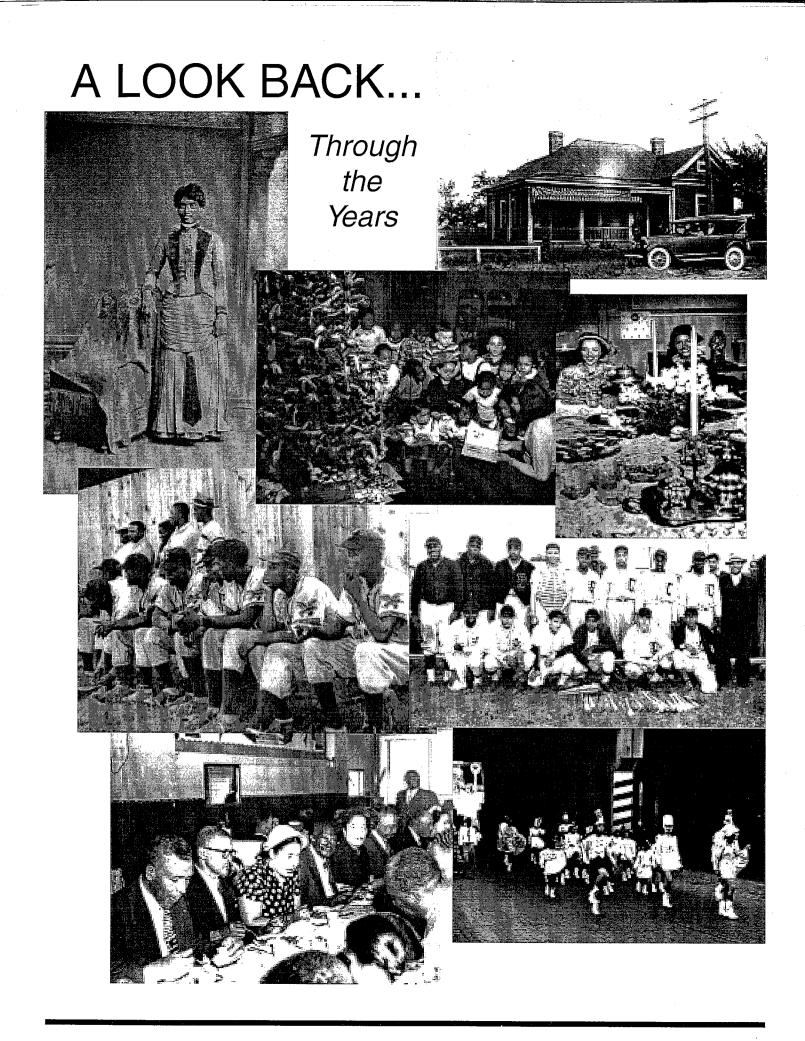
The *Through the Years* newsletter is a semiannual publication of the Champaign County African-American History Committee. *Editor*, Cheryl Kennedy; *Graphic designer*, Cheri Mayberry; *Writers*, Doris Hoskins, Frances Friedman, Sister Esther Matthew, Erma Bridgewater. In Recognition of Committee Members Through the Years:

Mary Alexander \*Carrie Banks \*Erma Bridgewater Rev. Roland Brown \*Jean Burkholder Mike Cain \*Nathaniel Dixon Linda Duke Joan Fortschneider \*Doris Hoskins \*Kathryn Humphrey \*Cheryl Kennedy Cal Lee Hattie LeNoir-Price Val Littlefield Walter Matherly \*Cheri Mayberry \*Barbara McGee \*Estelle Merrifield Charlotte Nesbitt Walt Smith \*Hester Suggs \*Mary Grace Thomas \*Charlsie Tice Preston Williams \*Barbara Wysocki

\* denotes active members

### *<b>ILLINOIS*

5-2000 1.5M24



# **Early Occupations**

### By Erma Bridgewater

From a transcript found at the Urbana Archives, the committee discovered the following occupations listed for African Americans in 1870: farm laborer, day laborer, barber, and teamster. Added to this list in 1878-79 were: pastor, cook, porter, mason, washwoman, gardener or yardman, janitor, farmer, waiter, and plasterer. By 1900: domestic, hair dresser, park and/or merchant police, coachman, drayman, wallpaper cleaner, bricklayer, carpet layer, white washer, and carpenter. By 1912 there were a significant number of listings with the Illinois Central Railroad. Several were listed as proprietors of show shining shops, barber shops, and hairdressing salons.

Some common employers included: Doane House, Beardsley Hotel, St. Nicholas Hotel, St. James Hotel, Inman Hotel, Griggs House, Sigma Chi House, White Star Laundry, King Restaurant, Crescent Cafe, McCormick's Cafe, Big 4 Dining Car, Swanell and Son Champaign Creamery Company, Champaign National Bank, and J.P. Grubb.

This is just a beginning, please send us your recollections of early Champaign County history.



Above: In 1935 black health females were trained and certified for Home Hygiene and Care of the Sick by the Champaign County Chapter of the Red Cross. This allowed them to go into homes andprovide for the sick. Most of these women provided home services for wealthy white homebound or bedridden patients. Only in the major urban areas where Negro nurses given full nursing degrees. Minoriites were not admitted to local nursing programs until the 1950's. This group! was sponsored by the local black chapter of the Elks. They are seen here with Edgar harris, an oficer in that Elks, who was a local editor and publisher of "The Illinois Times", the popular Black news weekly. Below: This certificate of completion was discovered in papers of the late Callie Glover.



# Committee Seeking Photogrpahs for Millenium Issue

The Champaign-Urbana Convention & Visitors Bureau and the African American History Committee propose to publish a third newsletter this year and the success of this special printing will be totally dependant upon your support! This issue would offer a look at the African American experience in Champaign County through photographs that have been shared by members of the community like you. With your permission, this information will be added to a growing archive of Champaign County African American history and may well be featured in future newsletters!

Again, we need your help! We are looking for pictures that depict business and church happening and milestones, school activities, sports events, military and/or legion activities, social and fraternal club activities, or family and individual civic contributions. We encourage you to bring your pictures and any background information you might be willing to share with us to the Douglass Branch Library on Tuesday, may 16th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or to the NAACP Local Office at 310 E. Bradley in Champaign on Saturday, May 20th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you no longer live in this area but have pictures and information you are willing to share, please contact any member of the committee or Cheryl Kennedy at the Early American Museum, 217/586-2612, to let us know you are interested. Thank y o v



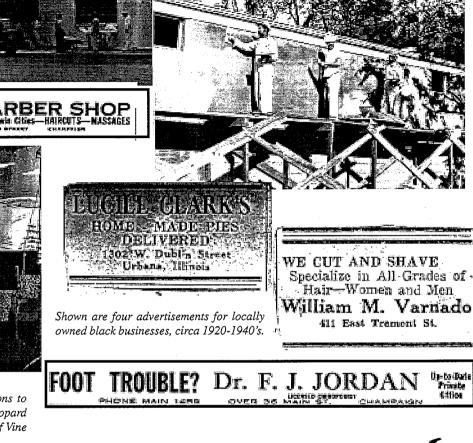
Right: The local black community played an active role in support campus events. Students in the earlier years relied upon the "townies" as a support system. This group of women from all walks of life - domestics, maids, cooks, local mothers, and a few professionals - recognized the calue of education and organized to supply this greatly needed service. ..circa 1941

Left and below: One of the most prominent black businesses in the couthy during the late 40's and fifties was Picken's Plastering. John Pickens, a skilled plasterer, was denied membership in the local union even though he held a valid union card from California. He decided to start his own nonunion business training members locally and recruiting black plasterers from Kentucky and Tennesse



SANIT

Many restaurants were operated as extensions to residences as shown in this photo of "The Leopard Room" which was located in the 400 block of Vine Street.



# **Black Owned Businesses**

Just east of the Illinois Central Railroad tracks in the early 1900s was a triangle shaped area bounded by First Street on the east and Water Street on the west that contained businesses owned by members of the black community. They included restaurants and a pool hall. The Harris and Dixon Taxi Cab Company was located in this area as well and catered primarily to women who were cooks on the campus of the University of Illinois. These women had to be on the job at very early hours in the morning; however street cars were usually available to them in the evenings when they returned home from work.

Many hairdressers worked in their homes with other businesses located in homes as well. At this time there were no parking requirements for businesses. One such business was located at 503 E. Grove Street in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Will McDuff. It was known as the "Chicken Shack." It was open until late at night and was an ideal place to go after a party or dance. In the 600 block of Grove Street was a miniature golf course created in the back yard of a home across the street from what is now the Washington Grade School. It became a good place for young people to go on Sunday afternoon.

### SHELTON continued from page 2

stead of Chapter 13 — and by gathering all of our assets, we managed to pay off all of our bills. The building, which still stands at 1104 North Goodwin, was worth \$750,000, added to that our equipment helped us to clear all indebtedness. Our mother always taught us the value of honesty and integrity. To our family, the legacy ended here but we will always remember our status as the family who owned and operated "The Shelton Laundry" from 1934 to 1986 --- more than five decades."

### SHELTON

continued from page 1

West Eads and went to a vacant house on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Vine Streets where they would do the laundry. This arrangement did not prove satisfactory to Mother so we went back to the basement at 1206 West Eads. Needing more space, we moved to 1408 West Eads where there was an old garage building which she converted into a laundry. She and my youngest brother Albert would go to Chicago to negotiate with dealers and purchase machinery. We had a wooden washer that was motor driven and mangles to sit down to use and hand irons. At that time, we were doing work for fraternities and sororities, plus McKinley Hospital and the Illini Union. In 1950, we had a terrible fire which destroyed the garage, but with the help of the insurance settlement, we were able to put up a cement block building. We had two more fires in 1953 & 54, but by it being built of block, the damage was confined to the ceiling and Mother rebuilt and we continues our business there until around 1965.

Because of the increase in clients, and the need for more space, Mother went to the Small Business Association in Chicago and was able to negotiate a loan of 1/4 million dollars. With that we purchased the building at 1104 North Goodwin Avenue in Urbana. We started expanding the business doing not only laundry, fraternities and sororities, but continued doing the sheets and linens for the Illini Union and McKinley Hospital. It was still a family business encompassing the help of all of us. In 1972, Albert, who was Acting President, purchased the business from Mother and was in instrumental in getting large contracts from Chanute Air Force Base, Scott Air Force Base near Belleville, the U.S. Army's Fort Benjamin Harrison near Indianapolis, Indiana, and St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Danville. Mother continued to work with us until her death in 1973. Having secured all of the large contracts, newer and more sophisticated equipment was bought - no longer was it necessary to measure soap and bleach - the computerized equipment took care of that. A new fleet of trucks with semis were added to



haul laundry to and from outside the Chicago area. At that time, Shelton's Laundry was labeled the largest Illinois Commercial Laundry outside of Chicago, Illinois. We were very proud of that distinction but never forgot that it came about because my mother was a very hard working individual who always wanted the best for her children. Albert always said, "You can't get anything without hard work." I've always said, "no pain, no gain." Pain entertains a lot of doing without in order to get. Mother didn't mind that because she knew how to sew, and made our clothes. That saved a lot. She was very frugal. Mother left us a legacy. It's your integrity, your honesty and how to put whatever it takes to put it together to make the most of it. She took an old black pot, a washboard and an old iron and turned it into a multimillion dollar business, so all the credit goes to my mother and father, Arah and Merritt Shelton. Father did his part even though he worked for the railroad. He died in 1972.

Our employees were a 'melting pot', made up of Africans, Hispanics, a young man from India (who later married into the family), African Americans and Caucasians. We were the first business to hire the "Boat People" from North and South Vietnam. Full wages and benefits were provided for all. There was a break room with the latest amenities, including a microwave. There were pop vending machines and a Canteen. Due to the fact that we have government contracts, unannounced inspections occurred often, one inspector noted that our place of business was always "spic and span", and that the floor was clean enough to eat off of. Albert always insisted on it being that way.

In 1981, Albert was selected the 1981 Illinois Small Business Person by Phil Ramos, manager of the SBA's Springfield Office who said, "Shelton's accomplishments are a veritable Horatio Alger's story." Albert in return credited our mother's hard work beginning with a scrub board and big black kettle which sat in his office - a reminder of the firm's humble beginning. Albert's marriage to Verma McNair in 1955 formed the basis of a strong management team along with other family members. The business grew and began to penetrate the larger commercial markets. By that time our employees had grown to 75, the bulk of them Vietnamese and other minority individuals.

We did all bid work which included all the local hospitals. We lost one or two bids, but sometimes they came back.

In 1986, Albert found himself in a "bid war" in Indianapolis, Indiana. Out of that experience he was underbid and we lost many contracts, so the business began a downswing and we were forced to close the operation, and to declare bankruptey. We chose Chapter 7 - in

continued on page 3



# **AFRICAN - AMERICAN HISTORY IN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY**

# THE SHELTON LAUNDRY 1934 - 1986

### By Doris Hoskins as told by Frances Shelton Moreland

From a humble beginning in 1934, the Shelton Laundry grew to a state of the art "business," spanning more than five decades.

Frances Shelton Moreland, 76, tells us her story:

"I was six months old when my parents, Arah Mae and Merritt Shelton moved to Champaign in 1923 from Covington, Tennessee. In Tennessee, they were farmers. In Champaign, Pop Shelton worked for the Illinois Central Railroad. Our first home in Champaign was in an area called 'Happy Hallow,' near the railroad tracks. From there we moved to Poplar Street (now called Phillips Drive) and from there we moved to 1206 West Eads Street in Urbana where the laundry actually started in the backyard and later in the basement. I had three sisters: Ethel mae Shelton-Jones, Mary Shelton-Jones (both deceased), Martha Freeman and two brothers, Merritt, Jr. and Albert (deceased).

When the 'crash' of 1929 occurred, many families found themselves in dire financial crisis, and through the government subsidies offered, we would stand in line at a local site (a church at  $5^{th}$  and Vine) to receive our share of milk and other commodities. Because of disputes as to who was first in line, my mother felt that there must be a better way than this to help support our family, so she decided

to start taking in washings, in addition to doing laundry in the homes of families. Since there was no form of public transportation at that time, she to walk great distances to and from those homes, son in 1934, she started bringing washings to our home. It was our (the children's) job to pick up and deliver the laundry. using an old-fashioned laundry basket with two handles. Our first family to do laundry for was Mrs. Morgan who lived on South State Street in Champaign. We graduated from a two-handled basket to a wagon to put the basket on to pick up and deliver. In the summer, Mother would do the washings on the back porch using the scrub board. The water was heated in a large black iron pot which her father

sent to her from Tennessee. She would heat the water by placing the large black pot on bricks and building a fire under it. In the winter, the water was heated on top of the coal stove and the washings were done in the kitchen as we had no basement to the house at that time. We used the old-fashioned flat irons that were heated on top of the stove to do the ironing, then we graduated to an iron that used kerosene and a pump to heat. Later on when we had electricity in the house, we were able to have electric irons and could do better work with the American Beauty Irons that weighed about 5 pounds. As income increased. Mother was able to have a basement dug and finished so we moved our laundry operations to the basement. We hung lines to dry clothes and did the ironing there.

**G**an **L**. B. B.

Mother had a dear friend named Carrie Burks who joined us, so we left 1206

Spring/Summer 2000

Counterclockwise from top: Arah Mae Shelton, mother who started the business; Shelton Laundry, circa 1965; Albert Shelton who bought the business from his mother; the original start-up equipment in the home, circa 1934.

Part falie frem "The Shellow Law Dry" Part falie furnished by the Rynn Plaine Shelton . ·

Attle uphick par in his office - a recurrence of the firms of American hequinery, Cithest is incarrowing to Verma Mc Mairi in 1985 forma the truin of a along The many the man along with other foundy mundery The business grow and day and to presente the larger formencies markets, By that dense our enpengerap has graver to 75, the busks of them Untrance and university sudividuals. We did all bid work which medicad all the Is al Apejatulo. We lost one on two Iside, but some thinks they carrie was the In 1986, albert found Knielly in a big was in Sugionapendia, hus, Out of that experience the was undictived and due loss maining contract, so the purine ally and donor sting and we were for not to chose the aperation and to de clare banks repeter. We chose Chapters 7- and y gathering all of mi achte, we moneyed to fail of all of and thiss Athe building which still stands @ 1104 71 Stocks when when worth "150,000, a dask to that our equip mut helping the for clean all undertal and of Bur marked had always Taught ne The walker of housing and integrity. To saw fourily, the leg a cy muched there but we will always remember but plating and This Anicej who become and appendices "The Shelton haundry from 1934 13 1986 - Mare There which de carden 

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that We purchased the bird ding at 1104 N. Lordern among in Urbana. We started experiding the burnies doing what andy family laundry, and Fraturely and Anonited but continued dering the should and havenes for the Allenia Unions and Mc Kindy Stanpelado of war plies a formely business in company the help of aci of us, the 1992 albert, who was acting Munder Juncrash the business from Mathers and was in -Alumental in getting large coutre its frious the Chamite air Force Ban, sent air dover Ban man Belleville, + the U.S. anny's Ft. Reujamin Horrison mean chideana palip budiance Mathing Marpital in Banning with with the with the death in 1973. Having a cured all af the Large could be , newer and me are sappliede cated equipporter was baught - no longer ling it Mitunary to much server Array and Aleaster the Computeringed equipulants Tooks Raise of the up Their flick of trucker- with securing were added to have loundry to and from subuches the Chalogo area. and that time Apeltonias Laundry was labeled the lergial welling Communical Laundry outrades of Chicago Selumine. We were very prand of that disting the her wear for yout that it causes about be caused my Mather way as here that washing unde manopulo alunger wouted the heat for her withour hard work "I've always said "hapain Mag en

The Shellers Laurely 1934 - 1986 From as hemelete Magnesser, in 1934, the Shellow Laundry grow to a "state of the Tech" America, apar ning mare Than five & cudes. Francia Stilton Mareland 76, who lives at 703 n. Mattheward annues, Urbana, Allunia, telle un You stay: I wave sig monthe des when my parents are Man and Ment Shelton money. 15 Champany in 1923 from form glores Junclosene - Su Venneene they were painened, Su Champenique Pape phetton wouker firsthe Detricate Cutral Mailroad. Su Champedigne, our firer riques was in an area calles Harry Hellow near the indrand tracked from There we marined to Paplan fitnes Caro Encied Philips Drives) and from their we month to 18 3 to W. & adres She ins Urbour, Where The Loundry a ctuary starting in the backy are and lotten the baginners had there sullers Ethel May Shelton James, Mary Stattons Jours (bath de isanid), Martha Freener and Two brothers Merrit, Jr., and albert ( de cenned.), When the brown of 1939 oc carea, many fourties forme there have in dire financial crisis, and three the presument Aubrachin official, we would stand in here ap a local site (assures at 5 th and U may) to receive our shere of misis and other Counce deties. My mathers feet that there weeken de side at thank this to kelp. support our family

5 stern lakeng in washing , in addition & doing lowed in the home of families there there was no jorne of pulsies there partations at their lines, the had to wask quints distances to and from three homes, so in 1984 she stated bringing washing into the with two How dies, Our first family a Mrs. Maryons Line ou "State ptech in Change aigno. We granderale alto a way in to put the basks on to pick up and delive. the the summer, mathew would be the waching on to her the the the this far where here father such gerne familie and the water the water they flasing the large black pap on large rockes and building as fines the desich In the writer, the Water fire in heater ow the tap of the Cont stance, and The userhinger assess deres low The totals active Part 110 ft - en the Round of De Rounds at the Fines. (1) & the the old fuck fact flat irow that just heat is our take if the stones to do The having, they are grade Last that you when when the kind of the house, when where a lie to here elective irous and could do Chitty warek with the Chusans Character, wour where unifer about Spannan, an income minerice we mound our laundry aperations to the tracement,

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mothers had a dear friends munds Carries function with found days, so have help to 1606 W. Conderance when to as the here here on the lance of le the bring where files worder to barne dry This arrangement did moth prome saturficializy to mothers so she went buck to the backment an 1806, Pull during mare Aperen we mind to 1402 W. Eado where There was an aling garage bill being which she converted into a Daren Day. Als and my your grate brather about would go to chillings to mighter with dualue and pursing machinen, W. Made as were Washer Main who maked driver and mangles that down to the and the is irourd, an this time and some doney use for fratinity & scorelics plan Mie King / tagital area the Selficione Unione, Un 1950 was have as turille files Which dectroypethe garages, but with this belo of the Luxure attimules, we were alle to put up a Commit block building, War Rad town incases officer in 1953 + 54, Inch find to the circles of blocks - the damage was Cran me Configured and triminicon This will and 1968 The causes of the diverse of Chienter are the much ford and appendit, magne white the Aurable Curringen and station in chique and where ally to maphific The a loan of "A mention dallance (William and always wanted the best for her children. Albert said "you can't get anything without hard work." I've always said, "No pain, No gain." Pain entertains a lot of doing without in order to get. Mother didn't mind that because she knew how to sew, she would sew our clothes and that saved. She was very frugal. She would send us to Busey Bank with two dollars to put in a savings account. Mother left us a logacy, it's your integrity, your honesty and how to put whatever it takes to put it together to make the most of it. Mother took an old black pot, a washboard and an old iron, turned it into a multi-million dollar business. So all the credit goes to my Mother and Stepfather, he did his part even though he worked for the railroad. He did his part. We were the first business to take in the "boat people". Had a "melting pot", Africans, Spanish, a young man from India. Finally married into the family. Boat people were from both North Korea and South Korea, realizing that they were in conflict in their country, also Afro-Americans and Caucasians. So it really was a melting pot.

At Christmas, special gifts were given to all employees - Full wages and benefits for all. Also provided a break room with the latest amenities. Would have "surprise" inspections, we always passed. Albert kept the place spic and span. If health officials had come in and found it was not up to health codes, they'd shut the place down. Steam was used to disinfect everything for sanitary purposes. Modern office.

I still see some of the boar people who clevay Again ? We also had bending machines, Populack and also a unitrousal We serve to race gloves to sart the clather The health afficials came in + talk ses to push Seen them in the machine & the steam will beering Them."

back to 1206 Eads back to the basement and in later years, we left there and moved to 1408 West Eads to an old garage and she converted that into a laundry. Mother would go to Chicago, at this time my brother, Albert, was 17 years old and they would negotiate with people in Chicago and that's where she got some of the machinery she used in the laundry. We had a wooden washer that was motor driven and mangles that you would sit down and use and the hand-irons. We had to put out the work and at that time we were doing work for the University fraternity and sorority houses we did sheets and \_\_\_\_\_? And we had about 4 or 5 fraternities & sororities plus McKinley Hospital on the University. We also did the work for the Illini Union. We had that terrible fire in 1950 we were able to come up from that thus having to build a "block" building. We had two fires, one in 1953 or 1954, we had another but by it being block, it only destroyed the ceiling, so Mother re-did that and we stayed there until about 1965 or thereabouts and they were able to negotiate with a small business loan company, U.S. Small Business Administrations in Chicago for a loan and of course they got a 1/4 million dollar loan. The building is still standing at 1109 North Goodwin Avenue, Urbana, Illinois. We stayed there until 1968 at that time we started spreading out in the business doing not only family laundry and sororities houses, except we kept the sheets and the linen. Chanute was getting ready to go private and our business was big enough, so our first big account was Chanute Air Force Base, which we kept until 1980. We ended up with Scott Air Force Base, Benjamin Franklin and Elizabeth Hospital in Indiana, the one that was in Danville. We had all the hospitals here in Champaign-Urbana except McKinley, they discontinued -----? and Mercy. We did all bid work, we lost one or two bids, but then they came back, cause the people didn't keep their contracts. We had Carle, all those hospitals. Albert didn't realize in 1985 or 1986 he was in a "bid war" in Indianapolis. Two people bidding against one another. The person that has the lowest bid gets it. Albert had terribly underbid; in order to keep the deal, so that was lost. Carle left us and came back to us because they didn't like what was going on, promised to stay with us but they re-nigged on their contract, so here we were losing these big contracts and everything was bid. All washing machines in the laundry were computerized. They were able to tell if right amount of soap or bleach was put in the machine, by pushing a button. In all there was about 6 of those. Had three mangles and two were "almost selfefficient". Had it so you could put sheets in overlapped, it didn't matter, cause when they came out, they were pressed & folded, the machine also counted them, after 10 sheets, the conveyor belt would move up. There would be as high as 30 sheets on the conveyor belt. All that needed to be done was to tie the bundles and put them in the proper place. There were two of them. Another mangle for smaller items. Had three dryers one dryer cost \$90,000 - second-hand, when door was opened, and it looked like a big whale, it also would tilt. We had big long tubs as long as the dining table and it would be filled. So from, 1934 until 1986, we jumped from nothing. My brother Merrit, Jr., went to the Courthouse to look for something and found the laundry listed for \$10,000. We went bankrupt and my brother declared bankruptcy. We got Chapter 7, and paid all our debts. Parents always taught us that we make a bill, we pay it. So Albert would not take the 13. The building was worth \$750,000. And it's still standing own propane & gas tanks, mechanics for our fleet of trucks and semi-trucks, hauled laundry to outside of Chicago, Illinois. Shelton's Laundry was labeled as the largest Illinois Commercial Laundry outside of Chicago. It was all because my Mother was a very hard working individual

### INTERVIEW OF FRANCES SHELTON MORELAND

My name is Frances Shelton Moreland, I live at 703 N. Matthews, in Urbana, IL and I've lived here for 75 years. My family moved here when I was 6 mos. Old, my mother is Arah Mae Shelton and my father was Merrit Shelton, I had 3 sisters and 2 brothers, my sisters were Ethel Mae Shelton-Jones, deceased; Mary Jones, deceased; Martha Freeman, and my brothers were, Merrit, Shelton, Jr. and Albert, deceased. Merrit, Jr. lives in California. My parents came up from Covington, Tennessee, they had lived there most of their lives, they farmed there and my step-father moved up here after my father, which was Mr. Brooks, and we have been here ever since. Our first home was in Champaign, in a place they called "Happy Hollow". After that we moved to Poplar Street, which is now Called Philips Drive from there we moved to 1206 West Eads Street, Urbana that is where the laundry actually started. My mother, after a few years there, she went to 1408 West Eads, Urbana, from there she moved to 1805 South Anderson, Urbana and that was her last home. Pop Shelton died in 1972 and he worked for the Illinois Central Railroad.

Crash in 1929 - back then there were no cars or busses: you had to walk EVERYWHERE. An old church on the corner of Grove & 5<sup>th</sup> Streets (new church there now, tore old one down), they had what they called "Milk Lines", one had to stand in line for milk and other commodities that they were giving, people started fighting as to who was first in line and Mother didn't like that and thought there was a better way. There was, so that was our last line. Decided to start taking in washings, no cars or busses back then, one had to walk and Mother worked for a woman that lived out on Springfield about two blocks East of Prospect, and Mother would walk from 1206 Eads Street to there, so she was more-or-less telling this woman about her plight. Mother started in 1934 thereabouts in bringing washings into the home. Remember her using the washboard, we had a coal stove she would heat water in the wintertime on top of this coal stove, in the summer she would heat it in this old black pot that her father sent her from Tennessee. She would use that and a scrub board. First family we ever did washings for was a Mrs. Morgan who lived on State Street in Champaign; we would walk there and back with the laundry, with an old fashioned laundry basket with one on each handle. Then we graduated to a wagon and put the laundry in the basket on the wagon and pull it home. In the summer Mother would do her washings out on the back porch in the summer, in winter in the kitchen because there was no basement to the house at that time. Before that we used those old fashioned irons, the kind you heated on top of the stove, then we graduated to an iron that you'd put kerosene or some type of oil in it and you had to pump it, but if you slowed down or stopped, you'd have to pump it again. We moved from there and some of the very best irons that were made were called the American Beauty it was about a five pound iron. By then we had electric, so were able to do this work better. After Mother was able to have a basement put in at 1206, we went down to the basement and did the washings & ironing. Mother had a very dear friend, by the name of Carrie Burks, she came in, we left there for a little while and went over to a vacant house on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> & Vine, they would do laundry there. Mother wanted something a bit larger, but Mrs. Burks wasn't in for that, so they more-or-less parted ways. Mrs. Burks went home and she had a small laundry in her garage, so mother went

individuals.

We did all bid work which included all the local hospitals. We lost one or two bids, but sometimes they came back.

In 1986, Albert found himself in a "bid war" in Indianapolis, Indiana. Out of that experience he was underbid and we lost many contracts, so the business began a downswing and we were forced to close the operation, and to declare bankruptcy. We chose Chapter 7 – instead of Chapter 13 and by gathering all of our assets, we managed to pay off all of our bills. The building, which still stands at 1104 North Goodwin, was worth \$750,000, added to that our equipment helped us to clear all indebtedness. Our Mother always taught us the value of honesty and integrity. To our family, the legacy ended here but we will always remember our status as the family who owned and operated "The Shelton Laundry" from 1934 to 1986 – more than five decades.

Pictures of "The Shelton Laundry".

Portfolio furnished by Lynn Davis Shelton.

Family pictures furnished by Francis Shelton Moreland.

Interviewer: Mrs. Doris K. Hoskins.

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entertains a lot of doing without in order to get. Mother didn't mind that because she knew how to sew, and made our clothes. That saved a lot. She was very frugal. Mother left us a legacy. It's your integrity, your honesty and how to put whatever it takes to put it together to make the most of it. She took an old black pot, a washboard and an old iron and turned it into a multi-million dollar business, so all the credit goes to my Mother, Arah and Father, Merritt Shelton. He did his part even though he worked for the Railroad. He died in 1972.

Our employees were a "melting pot", made up of Africans, Hispanics, a young man from India (who later married into the family), African-Americans and Caucasians. We were the first business to hire the "Boat people" from North and South Vietnam. Full wages and benefits were provided for all. A break room with the latest amenities, including a Microwave. There were pop vending machines and a Canteen. Due to the fact that, we had Government contracts, unannounced inspections occurred often, one inspector noted that our place of business was always "spic and span", and that the floor was clean enough to eat off of. Albert always insisted on it being that way.

In 1981, Albert was selected the 1981 State of Illinois Small-Business Person by Phil Ramos, Manager of the SBA's Springfield Office who said "Shelton's accomplishments are a veritable Horatio Alger's Story." Albert in return credited our Mother's hard work beginning with a scrub board and big black kettle which sat in his office – a reminder of the firm's humble beginning. Albert's marriage to Verma McNair in 1955 formed the basis of a strong management team along with other family members. The business grew and began to penetrate the larger commercial markets. By that time our employees had grown to 75, the bulk of them Vietnamese and other minority

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plus McKinley Hospital and the Illini Union. In 1950, we had a terrible fire which destroyed the garage, but with the help of the insurance settlement, we were able to put up a cement block building. We had two more fires in 1953 & 54, but by it being built of block - the damage was confined to the ceiling – so Mother rebuilt that and we continued our business there until around 1965.

Because of the increase in clients, and the need for more space, Mother went to the Small Business Association in Chicago and was able to negotiate a loan of 1/4 Million dellars. With that we purchased the building at 1104 North Goodwin Avenue in Urbana. We started expanding the business doing not only family laundry, fraternity and sororities but continued doing the sheets and linens for the Illini Union and McKinley Hospital. It was still a family business encompassing the help of all of us. In 1972, Albert, who was Acting President, purchased the business from Mother and was instrumental in getting large contracts from the Chanute Air Force Base, Scott Air Force Base near Belleville, and the U.S. Army's Fort Benjamin Harrison near Indianapolis, Indiana, and St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Danville. Mother continued to work with us until her death in 1973. Having secured all of the large contracts, newer and more sophisticated equipment was bought - no longer was it necessary to measure soap and bleach - the computerized equipment took care of that. A new fleet of trucks with semis were added to haul laundry to and from outside the Chicago area. At that time Shelton's Laundry was labeled the largest Illinois Commercial Laundry outside of Chicago, Illinois. We were very proud of that distinction but never forgot that it came about because my Mother was a very hard working individual who always wanted the best for her children. Albert always said "you can't get anything without hard work." I've always said "no pain, no gain." Pain

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first family, to do laundry for, was a Mrs. Morgan who Lived on South State Street in Champaign. We graduated from a two-handled basket to a wagon to put the basket on to pick up and deliver. In the summer, Mother would do the washings on the back porch using the scrub board. The water was heated in a large black iron pot which her father sent to her from Tennessee. She would heat the water by placing the large black pot on bricks and building a fire under it. In the winter, the water was heated on top of the coal stove and the washings were done in the kitchen as we had no basement to the house at that time. We used the old-fashioned flat irons that were heated on top of the stove to do the ironing, then we graduated to an iron that used Kerosene and a pump to heat. Later on when we had electricity in the house, we were able to have electric irons and could do better work with the American Beauty Irons that weighed about 5 pounds. As income increased, Mother was able to have a basement dug and finished so we moved our laundry operations to the basement. We hung lines to dry the clothes and did the ironing there.

Mother had a dear friend named Carrie Burks who joined us, so we left 1206 West Eads and went to a vacant house on the corner of  $6^{th}$  & Vine Streets where they would do laundry. This arrangement did not prove satisfactory to Mother so we went back to the basement at 1206 W. Eads, needing more space, we moved to 1408 West Eads, where there was an old garage building which she converted into a laundry. She and my youngest brother Albert would go to Chicago to negotiate with dealers and purchase machinery. We had a wooden washer that was motor driven and mangles to sit down to use and hand irons. At that time, we were doing work for fraternity & sororities,

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### THE SHELTON LAUNDRY

### 1934–1986

From a numble beginning in 1934, the Shelton Laundry grew to a state of the art "business", spanning more than five decades.

Frances Shelton Moreland 76, who lives at 703 North Matthews Avenue, Urbana, Illinois, tells us her story:

"I was six months old when my parents, Arah Mae and Merritt Shelton moved to Champaign in 1923 from Covington, Tennessee. In Tennessee, they were farmers. In Champaign, Pop Shelton worked for the Illinois Central Railroad. Our first home in Champaign was in an area called 'Happy Hallow', near the railroad tracks. From there we moved to Poplar Street (now called Phillips Drive) and from there we moved to 1206 West Eads Street in Urbana where the laundry actually started in the backyard and later the basement. I had three sisters: Ethel Mae Shelton-Jones, Mary Shelton-Jones (both deceased), Martha Freeman and two brothers, Merritt, Jr., and Albert (deceased).

When the 3crash" of 1929 occurred, many families found themselves in dire financial crisis, and thru the government subsidies offered, we would stand in line at a local site (a church at 5<sup>th</sup> and Vine) to receive our share of milk and other commodities. Because of disputes as to who was first in line, my Mother felt that there must be a better way than this to help support our family, so she decided to start taking in washings, in addition to doing laundry in the homes of families. Since there was no form of public transportation at that time, she had to walk great distances to and from those homes, so in 1934, she started bringing washings into our home. It was our (the children's) job to pick up and deliver the laundry, using an old-fashioned laundry basket with two handles. Our

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