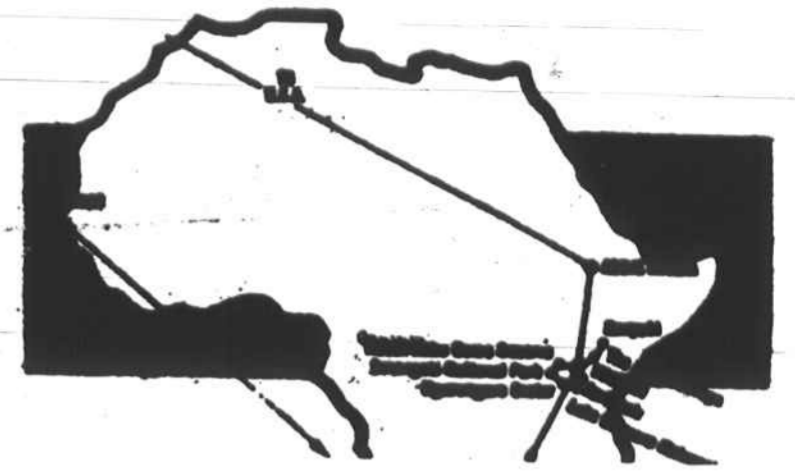




Senior Honorees 1975 Honors Convocation. L-R Deborah Lundy, Bertha Scarborough, Denise Harper, Ophelia Foye, Sally McKeller and Rita Nzeribe.

African Spotlight



Thanksgiving

It's food time again! It's that time of year when lips are a' smackin' and stomachs are a' bulging. You ate too much of Aunt Lucy's collard greens and dressing, Grandma Sarah's turkey and giblet gravy served with rice cooked so fine that each grain even separates in your mouth, Mama's standard pumpkin pie, and all those downhome goodies that cousins and aunts bring together to make that South Carolina Thanksgiving day something to refer to on those lean days.

African Americans look upon Thanksgiving as a day for kinfolk to get together and be grateful for all the bounty that has come their way during the year. It is a warm and a close time, a gathering of the clan, with a spirit that one wishes would last year round.

Feast days are not especially plentiful among black Americans, but in West Africa, there are many celebrations in appreciation for a good life free from hunger and physical adversity. When life is difficult just about any type of abundance is looked upon as a source for rejoicing. Not only is food of vast importance, but also in many instances symbolic.

For example, the yam has helped many West Africans to survive. Accordingly, their gratitude to it is so great that eating it is almost a religious exercise.

Yam feast days are common; they are celebrated at their best, among the Ashanti of Ghana, where yam dishes figure in the ceremonies that accompany birth, death, marriage and recovery from accidents or disease.

On these occasions the Ashanti will eat yam in any of a number of ways, often accompanied by an egg sauce, because egg is for him an immemorial symbol of fertility and triumph. An old African saying goes: "The sun is but an egg that hatches great things."

Elsewhere, Indian corn holds first place in the emotions and among the dishes of the people. One great Ghanaian harvest festival, called "Hooting at Hunger", commemorates the time when the Ga ethnic group migrated to the coast of Ghana and prayerfully sowed Indian corn for the first time. The crop was a success.

Hooting at Hunger is celebrated with colorful costumes and pageantry and, above all, with kepkple, a farina prepared from Indian corn meal and eaten with a fish and palmtree soup. Neither the yam nor corn is indigenous to the land, but the Africans have gratefully made both their own.

Another foreign but first-line reinforcement of the yam is cassava, or manioc. It is found in most tropical and subtropical areas of the world and goes by a multitude of names; generally it is the tuber from which tapioca is made.

Cassava leaves are used in cooking, but it is the flour of the tuber that helps give bulk to the West African diet. The form in which cassava flour is considered most delectable is a slightly fermented one known in Ghana as gari. It is especially popular among the Ewe ethnic group, and is praised on a grand scale.

Nmayem, is a festival held at the end of September in the Ghanaian city of Odumasi-Krobo. In one of its aspects Nmayem is a harvest festival, offering thanks to the gods who have blessed the land with a crop of millet; it is also a gathering that celebrates the unity of Ga Adangbe people.

In Odumasi-Krobo, Nmayem is something like the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving in one. Among the attractions of the festival are appearances by various chiefs in their regalia, considerable dancing and merrymaking, and feasting that continues for a week.

Black people, all over the world, have their own ways and reasons within varying seasons to celebrate their bounty and good luck.

Let's make this Thanksgiving a happy and a safe holiday. Eat up!

Robena Egumonye

Seniors Honored At Bennett Convocation

Seniors honored for outstanding academic achievement at Bennett College's annual Honors Convocation were Deborah Lundy, Macon, GA, Pre-medicine; Bertha Scarborough, Lynchburg, SC, Mathematics; Rother Harper, Snow Hill, NC, Early Childhood Education; Ophelia Foye, Selma, NC Psychology; Sally McKeller, Lumberton, N.C. Pre-medicine; and Rita Nzesibe, Nigeria, Pre-medicine.

Black Colleges to Get Grant

Continued from Page 1
Colleges in North Carolina will receive \$12,634.

The Sears-Roebuck Foundation is a non-profit corporation organized and endowed by Sears, Roebuck and Company to carry on charitable, scientific and educational programs with established groups with a view toward improving the well being of American society.

Shaw University in Raleigh will receive \$2,828 from the UNCF grant. Other grants include: Barber-Scotia College in Concord, \$1,498; Bennett College in Greensboro, \$1,572; Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, \$2,196; St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, \$2,805 and Livingston College in Salisbury, \$1,735.

The United Negro College Fund conducts national fund raising campaigns in order to raise money for operating expenses of 41 predominantly black colleges and universities.



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