

Coleman Organized "Famed" House Of Prayer Concert Band

By Jalyne Strong
Post Staff Writer

In 1948, when the House of Prayer was located on Long Street in Charlotte, a young member named Herman Coleman, who was capable of playing almost every musical instrument, was requested by then Bishop C.M. Grace to organize a concert band for the church.

Though the church had a Shout Band, Coleman began his band with only one member: Moores Roosevelt, a trumpeter. Coleman instructed Roosevelt on what to play and during worship services the lone trumpeter did solo performances.

"When other members saw how he played," remembers Coleman, "they began to join the band."

Today, the concert band is named McCollough Concert Band, in honor of current Bishop W. McCollough, and is approximately 80 members strong. There are three sections to the band: wind

reeds, brass and percussion. And the band has a repertoire that includes military, concert, classical, spiritual and rock music. Plus, Coleman is still the band's director after 40 years.

Over these years, Coleman and the concert band have heralded the House of Prayer in parades and concerts in cities from Buffalo, N.Y., to Augusta, Ga. They were in fact the only military band in the United House of Prayer until the 1960s, according to Coleman.

Locally, the band was one of the most attention-getting in the city. "We



Herman Coleman
.....Concert Band director
always played for the

Queen City Classic." Coleman points out, referring to the exciting football games between West Charlotte High School and Second Ward: a traditional heated rivalry. "And we've played with the Carolina Carrousel Parade since it was first organized."

During Coleman's four decades as the band's director, he has seen his share of musical style changes. "We're playing more rock now because we have to keep modern. I will not fight progress. I still

like originality," he expresses.

"My favorite music remains the concert music, overtures by Beethoven and Chopin, fanfares, spirituals, and military," Coleman admits.

To travel with the band has always been exciting to Coleman. "But after 40 years, quite naturally, it wears you down a little," he smiles. The McCollough Concert Band presently participates in exhibitions in Washington, D.C., Savannah, Ga., and Char-

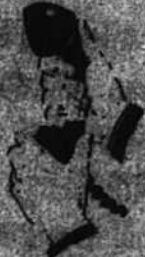
lotte. Along with the McCollough Concert Band, the Mother House of Prayer in Charlotte now has a Brass Band, Shout Band, the McCollough Tigers (spiritual players), and the Number Two Shout Band.

The long-time concert band director, who's come a long way since having one trumpeter to play for him, concludes, "I love the House of Prayer. To me, it's the best place to be."

Coleman is the father of seven children.

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