

## E. Shelton Hill's Oral History

*By L.A. Barrie, Oral Historian*

This oral history interview of E. Shelton Hill was recorded by L. A. Barrie in about 1976, as part of the Neighborhood History Project conducted under the auspices of the Portland Parks Department. Mr. Hill was active in the civil rights movement in Oregon and was a member and one-time director of Portland's Urban League, a civil rights advocacy organization.

Although the content of Mr. Hill's oral history interview doesn't delve especially deep into any specific topic, the scope of issues and time covered make the interview especially valuable for anyone just beginning to learn about African American civil rights struggles in Oregon. Mr. Hill's recollection of the years between World War II and the early 1970s provides a chronology of events that affected racial relations in Oregon and the United States as a whole. Among the topics are: Vanport, shipyard recruitment and employment practices, the struggle for a statewide Fair Employment Law, formation of Portland's Urban League, housing issues, education and bussing issues, relationship between the police and Portland's Black community, Black media and organizations, and churches.

**Further Reading:**Bogle, Kathryn Hall. "Oral History Interview: Kathryn Hall Bogle on the African American Experience in Wartime Portland." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 93, 1992: 394–405.

Pearson, Rudy. "'A Menace to the Neighborhood': Housing and African Americans in Portland, 1941–1945." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 102, 2001: 158–159.

Taylor, Quintard. "The Great Migration: The Afro-American Communities of Seattle and Portland During the 1940s," *Arizona and the West* 23 (1981).

McElderry, Stuart. "Building a West Coast Ghetto: African-American Housing in Portland, 1910–1960." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 92, 2001: 137–148.

Written by Joshua Binus, Oregon Historical Society, 2003.

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