

# Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association

From the website:

The Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association (MAMGA) a 501 (C) non-profit organization (formally the Colored Carnival Association) was incorporated in 1938 under the trusteeship of W. L. Russell, D.D.S, J.T. McKinnis, a local Mortician, Sam Besteda, Jr., a local Tailor and J.A. Franklin, M.D. of which the current 15 Franklin Primary Health Clinics are named.

Dr. Wilborne Russell, a respected dentist and civic leader was president for fifty years. He envisioned the carnival association as an outlet for the youth of the African-American community and vigorously supported the Mission Statement of MAMGA to: “promote knowledge, arts, sciences: to create and cultivate interest in the celebration of carnival activities at Mardi Gras and to encourage its members to participate in all events that will enhance our civic and national betterment.” He wrote the proclamation that is read every year at the coronation ceremonies and read it for fifty consecutive years until his retirement in 1987. In the 2nd century of MAMGA, members have selected seven (7) presidents each with a maximum of two 2 year terms to continue the legacy and great traditions.

Mrs. Frederica Evans was another pioneer that was committed to MAMGA. She was an instructor at Bishop State Junior College (formally Mobile State Junior College). One of her most honored awards was the appointment to the National Youth Administration by President F.D. Roosevelt. It was Mrs. Evans who suggested the official title of King Elexix I to rule over Mardi Gras. Mrs. Evans as Chairperson of the Auxiliary Ladies group worked tirelessly with the Royal Coronation every year until her demise in 1967. To honor her memory Mrs. Evans is referred to as the “Mother of the Colored Carnival”.

MAMGA held its first parade in 1939 and presented its first Royal Court in 1940. The late Alex Herman was king and Aliene Jenkins Howard was the first queen who currently lives in Mobile today.



## **The late Alex Herman**

**served as the first King of The Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association in 1940.**

He was the son of Mrs. Alice Sigmund Herman and Mr. George Xavier Herman of Mobile. After graduating from high school in 1916, Herman attended Tuskegee Institute. From working in his father's bakery, Herman's colorful life led him into professional baseball, part ownership of a professional team on which the Great Satchel Paige played, to president of the Unity Burial Association and the Exalted Ruler of the Gulf City Lodge 244, among other notable accomplishments. His daughter, Alexis Herman, served as MAMGA Queen in 1974. She went on to work in the Carter Administration and the administration of former President William Jefferson Clinton as U.S. Labor Secretary.

## **Aliene Jenkins (Howard)**

**served as the first Queen of The Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association in 1940.**

She is the daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Jenkins of Mobile. After graduating from Dunbar High School, she earned her B.S., A.A. and Educational Specialist degrees from Alabama State University. She also received her M.A. degree from Teachers College, Columbia University. The former queen has served as teacher-principal of Cottage Hill School, vice principal of Mattie T. Blount High School and Hillsdale Middle School, Glendale Elementary School and W. H. Council School.

1940 Alex Herman, Aliene Jenkins

1941 Dr. T. W. Tobin, Bernice Walker

1942- 45 World War II, No Monarchs presented

1946 Alvin Donald Sylvester, Lya Battle

1947 Benjamin E. Franklin, Yolanda Stuart

1948 Hilliard P. Smith, Edna Godwin

1949 Clarence Cook, Verma Powe

1950 Leo Hagan, Vivian Jones

1939

# Colored Carnival Procession Plans Near Completion

## Many Groups, Individuals Registering To Participate In Mardi Gras Fete

Plans are rapidly being completed for the most gala and enthusiastic carnival procession Mobile's colored populace has ever witnessed. Under supervision of the Colored Carnival Association, the parade, on Mardi Gras Day, will be confined to the business section of the north side of the city, particularly on Davis Avenue.

Fifty dollars, which has been donated by the Mobile Carnival Association, through Sidney Simon, will be distributed as follows into prizes: Three prizes of \$10, \$5 and \$2.50 for the best group display; four prizes of \$7, \$5, \$3 and \$2 for the best decorated bicycles, and four prizes of \$7.50, \$5, \$2.50 and \$1.50 for the best individual maskers. In

addition merchants are being asked to help make possible additional prizes of \$25 and \$15 for the two best decorated automobiles or floats.

Additional details on the colored carnival celebration will be published during the week. The prizes will be awarded immediately following the parade and from the porch of the Community Building on St. Anthony and Lawrence Streets. All groups or individuals intending to

enter the parade and compete for a prize are asked to register at the office of E. S. Peters, secretary of the Y.M.C.A., at St. Anthony and Lawrence Streets, not later than February 17.

Music will be furnished by the Alabama State Teachers' band of Montgomery, the St. Peter Claver School, the Most Pure Heart of Mary drum corps with answers pending from the Excelsior Brass Band and the Melody Masters.

All colored churches, schools, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boy Scouts, Order of Elks and other organiza-

# PEOPLE PARADE

## Winston A. Allan and Ruby Morgan Rule Over Celebration of Group

Mobile's colored population celebrated their first organized Mardi Gras yesterday.

There was a parade Tuesday afternoon, participated in by floats, decorated bicycles and numerous marching organizations.

Last night Winston A. Allan elected by popular vote, was crowned king and Ruby Morgan, of the Dunbar High School, queen, at ceremonies in the Colored Community Center. Following these exercises, the rulers paraded, the queen riding in a limousine and the king on a float which participated in earlier carnival processions.

Manuel Carter was grand marshal of last night's parade.

### Afternoon Parade Also

The Mobile Colored Carnival Association, a group separate from that which conducted the evening parade, staged its procession at 3:30 p.m., with marching groups, decorated bicycles, pedestrian maskers and a number of floats.

Colored organizations represented were that branch of the Boy Scouts, Broad Street School, Dunbar High School, Williamson School, the colored Y. M. C. A., Alabama State Teachers' College and others.

Band and drum corps included those of St. Peter Claver's School, Most Pure Heart of Mary School, 'Bama State Band, Excelsior Band, Melody Masters, a clown band and a jazz orchestra from a traveling minstrel show.

# Parade And Dance Will Top Colored Carnival Program

# 1940

## 'King' Arrives Today; 80-Piece Band From Tuskegee Institute Will Play

Alex Herman, colored insurance man, will rule as Elexis I over Mobile's colored carnival celebration. The colored king will arrive on his royal yacht at the foot of Elmira Street at 4 o'clock this afternoon, according to the Colored Carnival Association.

Immediately after his arrival, Elexis will be escorted to the Colored Community Center, where his queen, Aline Jenkins, and court will await him at a carnival tea.

Hostesses to the royal party at the tea will be Y. W. C. A. officials: Lois Chandler, Deloris Dickerson, Vivian Pearson and Juanita Rice, assisted by nine girls from Mobile Branch Junior College.

Other features of the celebration planned by the Colored Carnival

Other features of the celebration planned by the Colored Carnival Association include the coronation of the queen, Monday night at 9 o'clock, in the auditorium of the Community Center, followed by the coronation dance, with music by the Alabama State Teachers' College "Collegians."

### Educators Mobile Visit

Visitors, in response to personal invitations throughout the state, are beginning to arrive. Expected are Dr. H. Council Trenholm, president of Alabama State Teachers' College at Montgomery, and Dr. F. D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute.

The parade Tuesday will include floats, decorated automobiles, decorated bicycles, marching groups and individual maskers.

According to Dr. S. A. Herman, secretary of the association, the total amount of prizes to be awarded is \$100, divided as follows:

friends in the library of the Branch Junior College.

The Mardi Gras dance Tuesday night will begin at 9 o'clock in the auditorium of the Colored Community Center with music by the Tuskegee Institute "Swingsters."

Participants in the parade will report to the chief marshal, Edward Langster, not later than 2:45 o'clock Tuesday afternoon for placement and spacing, according to Herschel Williams, chairman of the publicity committee.

The route of the parade follows: Formation at the Community Center, St. Anthony Street; east on St. Anthony to Hamilton, south on Hamilton to St. Francis, west on St. Francis to Warren, north on Warren to Davis Avenue, west on Davis Avenue to Lafayette, countermarch on Davis Avenue to Franklin, south on Franklin to St. Anthony, west on St. Anthony to Community Center, disband.

The queen and her court will view the parade from a reviewing stand in front of the colored Elks Club, Warren and State Streets.

# 1948

# COLORED CARNIVAL CLOSURES IN GAIETY

## Spectacular Parade Closing Feature Of Mardi Gras

The gayest, most spectacular Mardi Gras celebration in the history of the Colored Carnival Assn., Inc., was climaxed Tuesday afternoon with a mammoth parade featuring seven floats and nine marching bands.

The procession, stressing the theme Early American Explorers, gaily portrayed important voyages and settlements in the Western Hemisphere.

Preceding the floats were: The 1948 colored mayor of Mobile (John Sylvester), and His Majesty King Elexis I (Hilliard Smith).

### FLOATS AND SPONSORS

The floats and their sponsors were: No. 1, "Lief Erickson and the Norsemen Land at Iceland," Utopia Social Club, Inc.; No. 2, "Columbus Discovers America," Krewe of Elks; No. 3, "Ponce De Leon Discovers the Fountain of Youth"; No. 4, "Magellan Lands at South America," Spartans Social Club; No. 5, "DeSoto Made Governor of Florida," Night Hawks Social Club; No. 6, "Landing of the Pilgrims," Pirates Social Club; No. 7, "Lemoyne and Bienville, Founders of Mobile," Gentlemen of Pleasure Social Club.

Nine bands in the parade were: Alabama State Teachers College, Montgomery; Tuskegee Institute; Booker T. Washington High School, Pensacola; Hattiesburg High School; Central High of Mobile; Heart of Mary High School; Mobile County Training School; Owen School, and Excelsior Brass Band.

### FLOAT COMMITTEE

The float committee of the Colored Carnival Assn., Inc., were: J. H. Perres, chairman; Leon Branch, Andrew Brown, Alphonse Russell, Raymond Scott, Jerome Rogers, Sr., and A. C. Taylor.

Directors of Tuesday's parades were: H. R. Williams, Harold Fielder, Richard Griffin, Gerard Raine and Gaston Tunstall. Edward J. Pratt, Jr., was chairman



Mobile Press Register Photo.

## TO RULE NEGRO MARDI GRAS FESTIVAL

King Elexis I and his queen today will take over as monarchs of Mobile's Negro Mardi Gras celebration. The king is Nathaniel Steinback, Mobile florist. His queen is Greta Janice Trenier, resident of St. Louis, Mo. The king will arrive at the foot of Elmira

# MAMGA MONARCHS of the '50's

1951 Korean War, No Monarchs presented

1952 G. Girigorie, Paula Chachere

1953 Sidney Weeks, Gretta Turner

1954 John Chachere, Janice Morgan

1955 Richard Lee Clauselle, Annie Mae Allen

1956 George Joseph Smith Jr., Doris Marie Chatom

1957 Nathaniel Steinback, Greta Janice Trenier

1958 William E. Carson Jr., Carole Loretta Russell

1959 Silas Gary, Janice Gwendolyn Raine

## 1957



## Route Of Colored King's Parade This Afternoon



## Colored Carnival Here Ends 3 Days Of Mirth

### Climax Is Reached In Final Parade Of King Elexis I And His Loyal Subjects Through City Streets

The climax to the 1949 colored Carnival of Mobile was reached here Tuesday evening when the final parade was held and loyal subjects and followers of King Elexis I (Clarence Cooke) marched and danced through city streets.

Everyone joined in the merriment and, following the parade, numerous banquets and balls were scheduled. Not only those persons riding floats were dressed in colorful costumes, but the majority of Mobile's colored citizenry lined the avenues, with masks, false faces, long noses and masquerades of all types.

Tuesday's parade, which got under way about 4 p.m. was led by a group of colored postmen, who in everyday life, are co-workers of the king. Following the postmen, was the celebrated Central High School band, serenading the king's float.

#### Rode Golden Float

King Elexis, his pages and knights rode a bright golden float, which stopped in front of the Elks Club on N. Warren St., where a toast was given Queen Verma Powe. The parade used the theme



# Arrival Of King Elexis I Scheduled This Afternoon

**Leo Hagan And Vivian Jones Selected To Be Rulers  
Over Celebration; Three Parades Planned**

The stage is set for the most elaborate Colored Mardi Gras celebration in history.

King Elexis I, the colored monarch of mirth and merriment, will step from his royal yacht at the foot of Elmira St. at 3 p.m. Sunday to start the celebration off to a joyous beginning.

This year, Leo Hagan will rule as King Elexis and the Queen will be Vivian Jones. Theirs will be a three-day reign of gladness which comes to a tumultuous climax Tuesday night.

**King In Business Here**  
Leo, the son of Rev. Eli

parade in colored Mardi Gras history on the streets at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday. There will be eight floats, including the King's float. Nine bands will participate. They are Alabama College for Negroes, Montgomery, Booker Washington High of Montgomery, Atmore, Eureka High of Hattiesburg, Miss., Booker Washington High of Pensacola, Central High, Mobile County Training School, Pure Heart of Mary and Dunbar.

Wise, the colored mayor, and his wife will lead the parade.

Theme of the procession will be "The Enchanted Prince and His Dreams"

Over Africa  
The story is set for the magnificent Mardi Gras celebration in history. The King and Queen will be Leo Hagan and Vivian Jones. The celebration will start at 3 p.m. Sunday at the foot of Elmira St. and will continue through the city streets. There will be three parades planned. The first parade will be on Sunday, the second on Monday, and the third on Tuesday. The King and Queen will be crowned on Sunday. The celebration will be a joyous one for all.

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