

New Book Details History of the Yates and Wheatley Football Classic

Written by Forward Times Staff
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A close examination and research of newspaper articles reveal that prior to integration, the Jack Yates and Phillis Wheatley High School football game was the largest attended game of its kind in America. The game had 20,000 plus in attendance each Thanksgiving day.

In hopes of educating present day youth of the rich history of the third, fourth and fifth ward communities and the schools therein Thurman W. Robins details how a football game became the social, cultural most important event in the community in the new book, Requiem For A Classic: Thanksgiving Turkey Day Classic (now available through Authorhouse).

The book takes a historical and cultural perspective as Robins focuses on the origin as well as the intimate aspects of daily life in the communities. Requiem For A Classic gives a vivid description of the myriad events surrounding the Classic and how the citizens of the community felt with the demise of it.

Requiem For A Classic also provides compelling evidence of society prior to 1966 and how the Classic impacted the lives of Blacks in the Houston community. Beginning with the forward section the book describes the Jim Crow era of society and its impact on the Black community. In the introduction Robins informs the reader of the how the Classic met its demise. The book continues as it describes what takes place with the leadership of the schools as well as what happens before, during and after the big game.

Pure history buffs and sports fans will be intrigued with the description of each game beginning in 1927 thru 1966. Further descriptions of events surrounding the big game include the pep rallies, parades, crowing of the school's queens and halftime activities as well as after game dances.

Robins was student at Jack Yates High School who participated in the marching band and experienced firsthand, the magnitude of the Classic for five years. He was also an athlete at Yates who captained the swim team for three years. He went on to earn a college athletic scholarship and participated in the marching band and athletics at his Almamater. His professional career spanned more than 40 years as a teacher, coach and administrator both at

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the high school and collegiate levels.

Robins has authored two other books *Swimming Against the Odds* and *Shimmy To Gold*.{comments on}