

Sonoma Ca 4/22/11

Friday, I drove up to Sonoma to visit Big Man. This was a special trip because the wonderful people of Sonoma were giving Big Man a surprise dinner to Honor his 50th yr of Community Service. This event was the master plan of activist and radio personality Mary Moore and Morris Turner who worked with the Party in Sacramento under Charles Bronson. Morris later moved to the Bay area where he worked closely with the Merritt College BSU and now lives in the Sonoma area.

I arrived early, about 3pm, and the dinner was at 6:30. Big Man and I talked about the upcoming 45th yr celebration we are planning for October. The dinner was at "Worth It's Weight", a restaurant that is owned by former Party member Evelyn (Tweety) Cheatham who use to work out of the SF and W. Berkeley offices. Over 50 community leaders and friends came together to honor Big Man. It was a total surprise to him.

The food was very good, served and prepared by Evelyn's staff. People took turns talking about what Big Man had done since he moved to the area only six years ago. My turn came and I spoke of who Big Man is and what he means to me. He is a friend, comrade, Original Panther, International and National Spokesperson of the BPP, First Editor of the BPP newspaper, Coordinator of the Free Bobby Seale and Ericka Huggins campaign in New Haven, World Traveler for the BPP, Coordinator of one of Bobby Seale's Campaign offices, and Administrator at Grove St. College, to name a few things.

Big Man and his wife Carol helped start "Patch" a police monitoring program. Big Man has a radio program which is called Jazz Styles. He was a board member of another radio station in the area. He has spoken at a number of schools and colleges in the area.

I later told the story about how Big Man's book came about and how he hooked up with his wife, Carol. Some years back, Big Man and I spoke at Mississippi U; this is when he lived in Memphis. I told Big Man of the upcoming Bobby Hutton Day we sponsor yearly in Oakland. I asked him to come out and be a part of the event. Over the next few months, I had Big Man write some articles for our newspaper and website. Then I told Big Man that he had enough material for a book. I suggested that he check with Paul Coates at Black Classic Press and the rest is history

Big Man and Carol got together through the "It's About Time" website. Carol had lost track of Big Man in the early 1970's when Big Man was doing a lot of International travelling for the BPP. She often spoke of Big Man to her friends. When Big Man came out in 2006 for his book tour, I placed an ad in the Bay View newspaper and posted the info on our website. Carol was leaving town when her friend heard about Big Man being in the Bay area. She called Carol, but Carol brushed her off, because her mind was on her vacation. When she came back from vacation, her friend called her and asked if she called to see if that was Big Man. So Carol checked the newspaper and website saw Big Man's

number and called him. They reunited, ended up getting married, and I was the best man. Now that's a story.

Big Man and my connection is based in the Party. Even in the BPP we used to run together. He taught me a lot about Jazz and we would sneak off to Keystone Corner in SF to catch some shows. Big Man's lady friends at that time liked me and used to come get me and take me out with them. We would go to Circle Star and the Berkeley Jazz Festivals, We even went to the 1973 Monterey Jazz Festival. He is one of my closest friends and advisors.

The Dinner was a job well done. Thanks to Mary, Carol, Evelyn and Morris.