The Clerk's Black History Series

Debra DeBerry Clerk of Superior Court De Kalb County Amanda "Mandy" Randolph

(September 2, 1896 – August 24, 1967)

"First African-American Performer Reoccurring Role on Network T.V." "First African-American Woman Musician to Record Jazz Piano Rolls"

> Amanda Randolph was born September 2, 1896, in Louisville, Kentucky. Her father was a Methodist minister and her mother, a teacher. Her professional career began as a teenager playing piano and organ in theatres around Cleveland, Ohio.

When the family moved to Cincinnati in 1919, Amanda began working as a musician in Ohio's Lyric Theatre. She is the first African-American woman to record Piano Rolls of hot Jazz. A piano roll is a continuous roll of paper with perforations, used to create musical notes on a player piano. She is listed as the performer of "The Yellow Dog Blues", piano roll by W. C. Handy in 1919 as Mandy Randolph. She wrote several songs and cut several records in the early 1920s.

Throughout the twenties and early 1930's, Amanda worked in black vaudeville and in several all black musicals. She also appeared in films and on the radio while cutting new records and performing live. She was known as a mistress of every entertainment medium. She could do it all. Her first film,

"Black Network" was a short film where she shared her comedic talents. Most of her earliest movies were considered "race films" - produced

and directed by independent African-American entrepreneur film maker, Oscar Micheaux. She married Harry Hansberry in 1940 and had two children. The couple separated after the birth of her 2nd child.

With all of her movie and musical accomplishments, it was television that made her a true pioneer. She was the first African-American to star in her own tv show, The Laytons, that premiered on the DuMont Network in 1948. Amanda was also the first African-American to have her own daytime program "Amanda," a mid-day musical TV program, which ran on Dumont from 1948 to 1949. She

appeared on numerous tv shows including Amos 'n' Andy, Beulah, and The Danny Thomas Show throughout the 1950's. Amanda's sister Lillian Ran-

character actress.

In 1955, Amanda opened a restaurant in Los Angeles called "Mama's Place", where she did the cooking.

"Mandy" Amanda Randolph a stroke in Duarte, California, on August 24, 1967, at the age of 70.



