

CECIL WILLIAMS

Cecil Williams is a guitar-plunking, horse-riding, tale-telling cowboy enthusiast who spins yarns and sings songs about the Black West. His six foot two frame reminds one of Gary Cooper and his easy drawl and quick wit of Will Rogers. A delightful narrator of little-known facts of the lives of black pioneer men and women he can charm an audience within minutes as he starts talking about his "chaw stick" (sassafras root) and how to brew tea from it. Williams tells exciting stories and sad stories, all of them true stories.

Born on a ranch in Pawnee County, Oklahoma, Williams' family moved when he was two years of age and settled across the road from the Grayhorse Indian Reservation, Oklahoma. Some of his stories are about his boyhood friends who were full blooded Osage Indians bearing the proud names of Red Eagle, Beartracks, Bears, Tallchief, The Ravens, White Eagle and Little Star and their fine Pinto ponies which were the envy of the county.

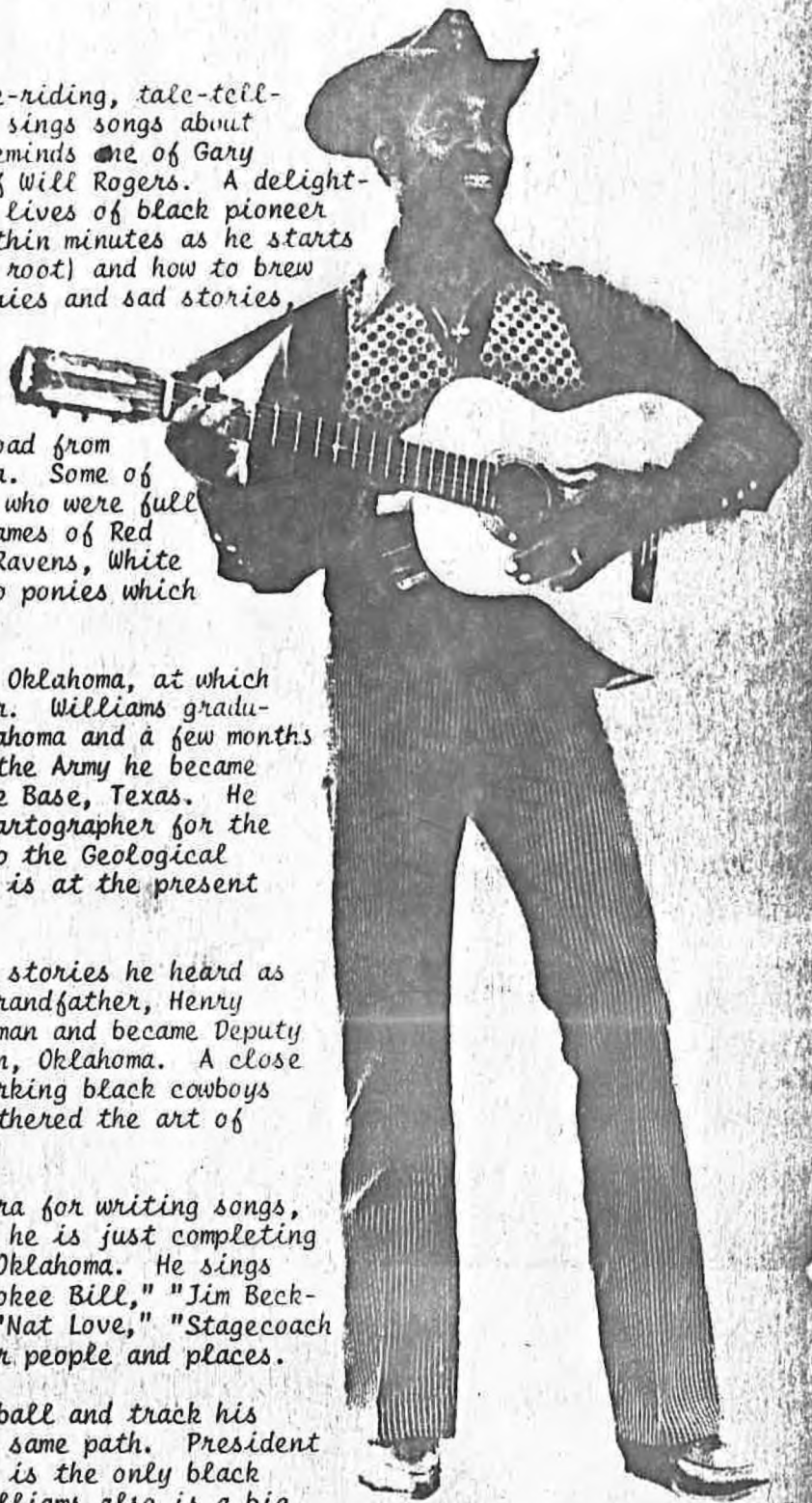
High school years were spent in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, at which time he did ranch work for a local rancher. Williams graduated from Langston College, Langston, Oklahoma and a few months later went into the Army. After leaving the Army he became technical instructor at Amarillo Air Force Base, Texas. He was transferred to Rolla, Missouri as a cartographer for the U.S. Geological Survey and in 1959 came to the Geological Survey in Menlo Park, California where he is at the present time.

Williams spends his free time documenting stories he heard as a child at his grandfather's knee. His grandfather, Henry Williams, chose to lead the life of a lawman and became Deputy Sheriff for the all black town of Langston, Oklahoma. A close friend, Bill Pickett, one of the first working black cowboys and rodeo stars in Oklahoma Territory, fathered the art of bulldogging.

Williams uses his vast knowledge of the era for writing songs, 14 copyrighted so far, and monologues and he is just completing a book about the Blacks of Osage County, Oklahoma. He sings songs about the "Buffalo Soldiers," "Cherokee Bill," "Jim Beckworth," "The Legend of the Dusky Demon," "Nat Love," "Stagecoach Mary," "Ebony Queen" and of numerous other people and places.

An athlete in college in football, basketball and track his recreation in his adult years follows the same path. President of the East Palo Alto Hunting Club, which is the only black registered hunting club in California, Williams also is a big game hunter, backpacker, and student of Go-Ju-Kai Karate.

Cecil Williams is keeping the legends of the Black West alive by telling his stories and singing his songs in schools, on TV, at fairs, folk festivals and historical societies.



For information regarding concerts or lectures please call - 323-8111