

Provident reception for Judge Bell is sumptuous

By Elizabeth M. Liver

Over 500 persons braved a downpour of rain Tuesday to attend the reception held for Judge Robert M. Bell in the Emanuel Chambers Auditorium at Provident Hospital following his induction ceremonies at the Baltimore City court house.

The event for the new associate Supreme Bench jurist was sponsored by the hospital's administrative staff and the board of trustees of which Judge Bell is a member.

Among special guests were Bell's mother, Mrs. Rosalee Bell from New York; his brothers, Ellison and Joe L. Bell and their wives of Baltimore; Mrs. Rosetta F. Sands, chairperson of the Provident board of trustees; Attorney Edward Smith, president of the Monumental Bar Association and members of the executive staff of the hospital.

Highlight of the evening came as guests spoke in awe of the luxurious setting in the beautiful auditorium. A great contrast to the cold and gloom of the outdoors, the huge room was resplendent with miles of refreshment tables complete with fresh flowers, fountains flowing with punch and champagne and a variety of banquet dishes beyond count.

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The sumptuous feast was prepared by Mrs. Lenora Booth, director of dietetics and her staff who really "showed off" for their favorite son, Judge Bell, whose brilliant personality has brought

him in his 36 years to the top of the Maryland judicial hill as the 102nd jurist in the Supreme Bench's history.

Carved ice in the form of swans set off the tables. The glittering aspect was rivaled only by the jovial crowd of persons from all walks of life who mingled in with jurists from the highest to the lowest courts of the state. The interracial group also saw the presence of members of the bar associations, lawyers of all races and creeds who soon made known their fond associations with Judge Bell.

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To each person it was a time of celebration.

Judge Bell did not appear weary after the lengthy swearing in ceremonies at the Court House. He had already stood in line for the aftermath of that affair to exchange greetings, hugs and kisses from neighbors, friends, jurists, colleagues and former teachers of high schools and college.

Wearing the same appropriate grey suit, grey and black tie and black patent slippers with bow ties, he still sported the silver necklace with his birth sign, Cancer, dangling from it. His very plain glasses slipped now and then from a rose wet with perspiration to his broadly smiling, freckled

face. An overly jubilant former high school teacher knocked off his specks as she grabbed and hugged him and then groaned as she stopped to pick them from the floor but the lovable Judge Bell kept on smiling.

A familiar figure about town, he is characterized by his handle bar nose whiskers and his long naturally fuzzy hair and forever pleasant manner.

After a 16-hour day, as Attorney Smith remarked, "He had not changed."

Possessing a remarkable memory for faces and names, the brilliant young man who seems wise beyond his years, seemed to know each guest he greeted. Of special note was his warm handshake and talk with a young man who had come before him when he was on the District bench, a person with bright eyes and hopeful look who had been set on the right path and who is now successfully helping others who have had brushes with the law.

Judge Bell said to persons gathered around him, "I'm proud of this young man and I want him to come see me and keep in touch with me. He is a fine example."

The new associate judge ranked first in his Dunbar High School class and second in the Morgan State University class of 1966. He made exceptional records at Harvard University Law School and was graduated with honors.

As an attorney on the Baltimore staff of Piper and Marbury Law Firm, Judge Bell served as the Provident Hospital labor

consultant. During the reception he also told of his confinement at the hospital when he suffered pneumonia and found it to be better than anywhere else.

In a short speech he thus had to get in a punch for the institution established for black citizens in 1894 and still of great service and very necessary in the black community.

According to Carroll Henson who headed the affair and serves as Provident's public relations chief, Judge Bell's presence on the board has helped Provident maintain its tradition as one of the oldest, largest, non-profit, private health institutions. In addition to Mr. Henson, present also were Dr. Oakley Saunders, vice-president and director Medical Affairs; Col. Arthur Hudgins, vice-president of Support Services; Vernon Washington, director of Personnel; Miss Doris C. Rice, assistant vice president for professional Services and Special Projects.

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Also E. Gaines Lansey, a board member; Dr. Wayne Kong, director of Reserahc, Grants and Contracts Development; Judge William Murphy, member of the board; Mrs. Sarah Dildy, director of Security and Safety; Charles Tildon, former member of the board.

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