



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

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**California African American Genealogical Society**  
P.O. Box 8442  
Los Angeles, CA 90008-0442

**General Membership Meetings**  
Third Saturday monthly at 11:45am (dark July and August)

**Mayme Clayton Library and Museum (MCLM)**  
4130 Overland Ave., Culver City, CA 90230-3734  
(Old Culver City Courthouse across from VA building)

**2014 Board of Directors**  
Dr. Edna Briggs – President  
Ronald Higgins – Immediate Past President  
Ronald Batiste – First Vice President  
Carolyn Conway – Second Vice President /Membership  
Cartellia Bryant – Corresponding Secretary  
Open – Recording Secretary  
Christina Ashe – Treasurer  
Dr. Stanley Viltz – Parliamentarian  
Website – [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org)

**Committee Chairs**  
Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Public Relations/Fundraising Chairman  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Open – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Open – FGS Delegate  
Open – Volunteer Chairman

## President's Message

*"Looking Back, Moving Forward"*

*HAPPY NEW YEAR To ALL!*

Our annual report will provide numbers, however for now in looking back on 2014, we can reflect on:

- ❖ our monthly meetings that welcomed newcomers and provided beginners education almost every month;
- ❖ general membership education presented by guest speakers who inspired us, and a field trip to the Los Angeles Central Library;
- ❖ the Marilyn E.P. White project and her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration;
- ❖ the establishment of CAAGS Writers Group;
- ❖ many opportunities to work on brick walls, to generate increased interest in DNA research for African Americans;
- ❖ opportunities to network, and to fellowship.

While all of our accomplishments may not be stated here, we move forward with the hope to make our 2015 calendar of events look more promising, for individuals and for the organization as a whole.

The New Year will start with the addition of two newly elected officers - - Ronald Batiste, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, and Dr. Stanley Viltz, Parliamentarian, we will also continue to appeal to the membership for support in filling several vacant officer and committee positions. Volunteer support is welcomed everywhere within our structure.

*Neither the newsletter editor nor CAAGS guarantees publication of any submission. Submissions for the newsletter are due by the third Saturday of each month. Please email your submissions or inquiries to [CAAGS@hotmail.com](mailto:CAAGS@hotmail.com)*

I offer my personal “thank you” to everyone who supported me during my first year as President, and look forward to 2015 with thankfulness and great anticipation!!

Thank you for allowing me to serve,  
*Dr. Edna F. Briggs*

### 2015 Calendar of Events

#### January 17

CAAGS Board meeting, 10 am - 11:30 am  
Beginner/Intermediate Classes, 11:45 am - 12:45 pm  
General membership meeting/Guest Speaker, 1-3  
Installation of 2015 Officers; Dr. Joice Lewis – speaker  
Healing the Nation’s Racial, Political, Social and Economical Wounds Through an Understanding of American History, her book “Our Ancestors Voices” will be available for purchase.

#### February 21

CAAGS Board meeting, 10 am - 11:30 am  
Beginner/Intermediate Classes, 11:45 am - 12:45 pm  
General membership meeting/Guest Speaker, 1-3

#### March 14

13<sup>th</sup> Annual Discover Your Roots Conference - Open a Window To The Past. Historians, family history researchers, genealogists and other experts will host presentations and conduct specialized classes focusing on a diverse range of American American genealogy subjects. Pre-registration before Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> \$30 (includes box lunch). Visit [discoveryourroots.org](http://discoveryourroots.org) or call (800) 533-2444.

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Membership Renewal

If you haven’t done so, please renew your CAAGS membership for 2015. Current members whom have not renewed by March 2015 will be dropped from our roster.

### Tour to Dakar, Senegal, Banjul and The Gambia February 14-25, 2015

\$3532 per person based on double occupancy. For general information contact CAAGS member Colette DeVerge’, genealogist and Los Angeles travel consultant; Phone 323 933 8381. Registration form and full details can also be found at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org)

### Websites of Interest

#### Colorado State Archives: Online Indexes

Includes some unique items, such as voter registrations, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Enrollment Index, inheritance tax, and old-age pensions.

<http://www.colorado.gov/dpa/doit/archives/>  
See the indexes and search the historical records at  
<http://www.colorado.gov/dpa/doit/archives/hrd/index.htm>

#### Pennsylvania State Archives

Various military records, including Pennsylvania National Guard Veterans’ Card File, 1867-1921; World War I Service Medal Application Cards and Mexican Border Campaign Veterans’ Card File.

<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/overview.htm>  
For best results spend some time learning how to use ARIAS (Archives Records Information Access System) to search its 1.5 million records.  
<http://www.digitalarchives.state.pa.us/>

MY GENEALOGICAL WILL - A web page with a template of a will for leaving one’s genealogy belongings.  
[http://www.dunelady.com/laporte/gen\\_will.htm](http://www.dunelady.com/laporte/gen_will.htm)

### Locating Hispanic Ancestors Getting Past Frequently Misspelled Names

Spelling errors for Hispanic names occur for various reasons:

- Unfamiliarity with Hispanic names and their spelling on the part of a census enumerator, tax collector, or other recorder.
- Transcription errors on the part of an indexer/transcriber of handwritten records.
- Use of abbreviations or phonetic substitutions on the part of the original recorder or the transcriber as a “shortcut.”
- Inadvertently reversing two letters when writing or transcribing information.

Spelling errors occur not only when transcribing handwritten names into typed lists but also when creating typed indexes (e.g., Texas Birth Index, Texas Death Index). Use some the following tricks to locate Hispanic ancestors whose names may be misspelled in various types of records:

- Reverse the “ua” with “au” (e.g., Gaudalupe for Guadalupe or Jaun for Juan).
- Truncate online searches after the first syllable using the wildcard symbol \* for multiple letters. (e.g., Ben\* retrieves Ben, Benito, Bengamin, Benjamin, Benancio, Bennie, Benny).
- Replace ending vowels that indicate gender with single character truncation (e.g., Fidelio? retrieves Fidelio and Fidelia).
- Try “anglicized” forms of the name (e.g., Richard or Richardo for Ricardo, Charlie or Charles for Carlos, Joe for Jose, Albert for Alberto, Mary or Marie for Maria, Rosie for Rosa, Louis for Luis, Pete or Peter for Pedro, William or Willie for Guillermo, Alfred or Fred for Alfredo, Nick or

- Nicholas for Nicolas, Alex or Alexander for Alejandro or Alexandro).
- Replace single vowels with the single character truncation (e.g., Guad?lupe retrieves Guadalupe and Guadelupe).
- Try abbreviated forms of the name (e.g., Franca for Francisca, Franco for Francisco).
- Try diminutive forms of the name (e.g., Lupita for Lupe or Guadalupe).
- Replace diminutive endings with the truncation symbol (e.g., Guadalup\* retrieves Guadalupe, Guadalupita, Guadalupito).
- Try nickname forms (e.g., Lupe for Guadalupe).
- Try replacing consonants with other consonants that are phonetically similar (e.g., Birginia for Virginia, Venancio for Benancio, Dionisio for Dionicio, Felan for Phelan, Ozuna for Osuna, Lopes for Lopez).
- Try replacing vowels with other vowels (e.g., Erma for Irma, Deonicio for Dionicio, Ygnacia for Ignacia, Elaria for Ilaria, Dalfina for Delfina).
- Replace “ll” with “y” and vice versa (e.g., Aguallo for Aguayo).
- At the beginning of names, try substituting “G” or “L” for the letter “S” (e.g., Salinas may have been transcribed as Galinas or Lalinás because of unclear handwriting).
- Be creative. Use phonetic spellings (e.g., “Monwell” or “Manwell” for “Manuel,” Morralles for Morales).
- Try “tion” at the end of names that normally end in “cion” or “sion” (e.g., Concepcion for Concepcion).

This list is not comprehensive but may get you thinking about alternate spellings (or misspellings) that appear in various types of records. Create a list of all the misspellings that you’ve found for future reference and routinely search using these misspelled forms of the name.

Where possible, compare spellings provided by indexers/transcribers to original handwritten versions of records. You may immediately recognize a spelling error that was introduced by an indexer versus a spelling error on the part of the person who handwrote the record (e.g., the census enumerator or tax collector).

You can help yourself and others in the future by submitting corrections to Ancestry.com databases. As you find misspellings, use the Comments and Corrections feature where it is available to submit corrections or alternate spellings.

*Taken from Ancestry.com*

### CAAGS Cookbook

A copy of “Recipes to Remember” would make an excellent gift for birthdays or any other celebration. If you would like to purchase a copy(s), inquire at the general meeting, contact any Board member or info@caags.org.

### Family History in Tax Returns

My mother went into a nursing home and we had to clean her house in preparation for selling it. I found many years of IRS tax returns and there was interesting information outlining where they lived, where my father worked and how much he made. It was a gold mine of information. So scan those old records before you shred them. If you wish to post them on your ancestry page, black out the social security number and any sensitive information before you do so.

- *Madelyn C. Farmer, Ancestry Quick Tip*

### To Pay or Not To Pay? A Guide To Choosing Genealogy Sites On The Internet

- *By Jenny Thomas*

### Getting started - why go online?

Keen to start your family tree, you type the name of an ancestor into a search engine, and literally hundreds of websites come back at you. Some are free, some pay-per-view, some subscription - and suddenly you don't know where to begin.

*Databases and search engines make information accessible in a way in which it wasn't before: searches now take only a few minutes.*

There is an overwhelming amount of information on the internet, and it's difficult to know which of the pay-for services are of value to you. It is fair to say that most genealogy sites for which you have to pay have some worth - it just depends whether they are going to be worthwhile for you. Here are some tips and guidelines to help make order out of the chaos so you can make the right choice when it comes to selecting your website.

The bottom line in genealogical research is that you are going to have to pay for it. You cannot manage without the basic building blocks of certificates and census returns, and money can be liberally spent in travelling to archives, paying online fees, hiring private researchers and whatever else you deem necessary as you continue your research. But there are good reasons why more and more genealogists are going online.

There is a wealth of material available on the web, and it is being added to every day. Databases and search engines make information accessible in a way in which it wasn't before: searches that used to take weeks or months now take only a few minutes. And sometimes it's cheaper and easier to do what you can online and in your own time than travelling to archives and bowing to time pressure there. You may find that you can use online resources for free or more cheaply at archives, but is it worth the time and expense of travelling there? And you will still have to pay for the photocopying!

First of all, there are lots of excellent free resources used by genealogists - here is a small selection:

- **www.freebmd.org.uk** for some birth, marriage and death indexes for England and Wales.
- **www.familysearch.org** for the vast international genealogy website run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- **www.rootsweb.com** for genealogy chat and all kinds of relevant information.

But none of these is guaranteed to hold all the records that you want. So, to start from the very beginning, which sites do you absolutely need in order to build your family tree, and how can you tell where to put your money?

### **Building a basic family tree - choosing your site**

There are some basic things that you might look out for when choosing your first genealogical websites:

Can you find details of all the records held, how they were created and how researchers can use them?

- Does it contain the basic resources of genealogy - in other words, birth, marriage and death certificates (or indexes to the certificates) and census returns? You're not going to be able to do your genealogy without them.

- Is there a full explanation of what else is in the site? Can you find details of all the records held, how they were created and how researchers can use them? Without this information, you might just end up groping in the dark.

- Can you access original documents (digitised) or just transcripts? It is always better seeing the original document in digitised form than what someone else has copied (or miscopied) from it. Some sites just give indexes and you order copies of the original document from there, according to what you find - that's fine because you can see the information for yourself when your document arrives.

- Are you happy with the way you will be charged? If you like to look at everything on a site, it is better to have a subscription that lasts for a certain period of time, during which you may look at whatever you like as many times as you please. If you simply want two or three records, and

you have the option, you might be better off paying only for what you view.

Here are some examples of pay-for sites for basic genealogy:

- **www.genesreunited.co.uk** - contains (among much else) birth, marriage and death indexes and census returns for England and Wales
- **www.familyrelatives.com** - contains (among much else) birth, marriage and death indexes and census returns for England and Wales
- **www.ancestry.co.uk** - contains (among much else) birth, marriage and death indexes and census returns for England and Wales
- **www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk** - contains (among much else) birth, marriage and death indexes for Scotland and digitised images of many of the certificates and census returns for Scotland.
- **www.findmypast.co.uk** - contains (among much else) birth, marriage and death indexes and census returns for England and Wales.

*Hint: Often there is a free trial period for subscription sites so you can decide if it really is for you.*

*Hint: Often when you look at a record on a subscription site, you can return to it for free for a period of time - but make sure you get a print out of the searches you have done, along with the results.*

### **Other kinds of sites**

There are websites of all descriptions, shapes and sizes that cater for genealogists, from databases to message forums, general information, help and support sites, family tree display tools - the list is endless. But unless you are after some specific information obtained from a historical record, you shouldn't really have to pay for these sites. Some of the most popular features are included on subscription sites anyway. If you are in need of a piece of advice, or wondering where you can find your next piece of information, have a look at the following free sites:

You can use these sites to make contact with the genealogy community.

- **www.genuki.org.uk** - a reference site packed with information, advice and valuable genealogical material.
- **www.cyndislist.com** - a genealogical gateway, containing a wealth of information and links to hundreds of websites.

You can use these sites to make contact with the genealogy community, and see if other researchers recommend the sites that you have to pay for.