



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
Ron 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

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

By Dr. Edna Briggs

The term “anniversary” is defined as “the date on which an event took place in a previous year.”

The first meeting of the California African American Genealogical Society, Inc. (CAAGS) was held on the third Saturday in March 1986. Saturday, March 21, 2015 will mark the Society's 29th anniversary.

Due to the actions of its Founders and Charter Members, CAAGS will always bear the only flag which identifies it as being the first, and hence, oldest African American genealogy group organized and established in California.

Looking back and understanding the past is necessary in order to move on into the future. Many members and non-members have been motivated to learn more about their ancestors. Whether published or unpublished, many of their searches have contributed to our collective history in some way. In addition, the emergence of all other genealogy groups in California was fostered and supported by past leaders and members of CAAGS. These two accomplishments are just two mere examples, as others are too numerous to list here. Sure, there have been failures, but as an old adage says, “our good times will always outweigh the bad times, and for this we must be grateful.”

As we push forward toward 30 years and beyond, we will need a new blueprint, one that incorporates methods, technology and tools geared more toward the 21st century. The 2014 Annual Report will be distributed

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

during the week of the March 21st meeting. It will highlight major accomplishments during last year and reflect on plans for the future.

As Oprah writes in her O Magazine every month, “*this I know for sure*” -- CAAGS Board will need **everyone’s** help in moving forward with ensuring that the original vision shared by the Founders and Charter Members for this organization will continue to move forward successfully.

2015 Calendar of Events

March 14

13th 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. Visit discoveryourroots.org or call (800) 533-2444.

March 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 27

CAAGS Writers Group, Fourth Friday monthly 10-12

April 18

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

May 16

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

** 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.

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.

Who Do You Think You Are? back on March 8th!

Just in case you haven’t heard the news, Who Do You Think You Are? returns to TLC on Sunday, March 8th. The

schedules occasionally shift even after they’ve been announced, but as of this moment, these are the slated dates for each celebrity:

March 8	Julie Chen
March 15	Josh Groban
March 22	Angie Harmon
March 29	Sean Hayes
April 5	Tony Goldwyn
April 12	America Ferrera
April 19	Bill Paxton
April 26	Melissa Etheridge

And here’s a flavor of what you can expect:

Melissa Etheridge, who heads to Quebec to trace the history of her paternal side, learns about the scandalous marriage of her 6x great-grandparents.

America Ferrera, who brings the series to Honduras for the first time ever, learns about the father she barely knew, and unravels her great-grandfather’s role in the violent Central American political system.

Tony Goldwyn, who is familiar with his prestigious paternal Hollywood lineage, but knows little about his mother’s side of the family. In his episode, he comes to learn about his 3x great-grandparents, who fought for women’s rights and westward expansion.

Josh Groban, who discovers his 8x great-grandfather was a highly educated and renowned scientist that studied astronomy, and was quoted by Isaac Newton himself.

Paperless for Windows and Macintosh

Dick Eastman · Software

Remember when everyone talked about how we would someday become a paperless society? Now it seems like we use paper more than ever. Let’s face it – everyone still uses paper. Getting rid of paper in your life is one of the greatest joys imaginable. Digitizing everything makes life easier as everything can be found quickly by every-word searches. Going digital saves space, cuts clutter, and also reduces frustration. It’s also easier to make backup copies of digital files than it is to make backup copies of paper.

Genealogists are especially susceptible to clutter and filing problems. We often collect photocopies of birth certificates, marriage certificates, deeds, census records, and much, much more. We soon encounter issues about how to file all this information and, even more important, how to retrieve what we want at the moment we need it.

Most of us can benefit from better organization of paper documents. However, the problem is not limited to genealogy purposes. Almost all of us end up with piles of

paper – bills, receipts, financial and insurance statements, medical prescriptions, and more.

The trend toward government and business entities wanting digital documents is growing. In fact, ruling Rev. Proc. 97-22 from the Internal Revenue Service stipulates that the agency will accept digital documents in place of paper. The changes in health care also makes it more important than ever to be organized. With a good digital document scanning and retrieval system, anyone can file and instantly retrieve needed documents that are in a database of hundreds or even thousands of documents.

A program called **Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh** allows you to organize all your receipts and documents simply and easily. In fact, the program reduces your need to keep paper documents of any kind. Simply scan any document you would normally file in a drawer on any type of paper, and the OCR function of Paperless recognizes the data and adds it to the program's Details window. From here you can use the Paperless tools to assign fields that help you to build and maintain a neat and clean digital filing system. The digital documents that it produces also fulfill the IRS requirements, should that need arise.

Of course, filing is only half the story. Being able to quickly and easily find and retrieve a document when you want it is just as important as filing it. Paperless excels at both.

NOTE: I wrote earlier about using a scanner designed for use only with Evernote. That combination of hardware and software works well for anyone who uses Evernote, but it is expensive at \$450. It includes a scanner designed for the purpose. The software does not work with any scanners other than the one sold by Evernote. In contrast, Paperless is a program that works with a long list of scanners, not just the \$450 Evernote scanner. If you already own a different scanner, or if you are looking for a lower-cost solution, or if you prefer to not use Evernote, Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh may be a better solution for you. Any scanner that supports WIA or TWAIN should work with Paperless for Windows. Macintosh users will find that Paperless works with nearly any scanner that supports Apple's Image Capture method. Check the scanner's documentation to see if it is compatible with WIA or TWAIN on Windows or with Image Capture on Macintosh.

While paperless will work with scanners that only scan one side of the paper, you will find it to be much more convenient to use a scanner that scans both sides in one pass. The Fujitsu ScanSnap iX500, the S1300i or the S1100 scanner all have been tested and work well with Paperless although many scanners from other manufacturers will probably work as well.

I would not want to use Paperless with a handheld "Magic Wand" or "Flip-Pal" scanner, however. Those are controlled manually and do not have an interface that allows the computer to start and stop scans. Paperless also is not designed to work with cameras that snap digital pictures of documents. To obtain the most out of Paperless, you will want to use it with a scanner that includes WIA or TWAIN on Windows or Image Capture on Macintosh.

You can use Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh to scan your receipts, bills, statements, warranty cards, business cards, genealogy photocopies or any other type of paper. The size of the paper is only limited by the size of document that your scanner can handle. The built-in OCR (optical character recognition) function of Paperless recognizes the data and displays it with the program's Details window. As with all scanners, the OCR capability works well on clear, typeset documents but is useless for handwriting. However, you can use the Tools available with the Details window to manually add notes, assign categories, and even insert additional text, should you wish to do so.



To use an example dear to my heart, let's say I have an 1910 U.S. Census record for my Theriault ancestors. The family spoke only French, and the census taker apparently spoke only English; as a result, the name was almost unrecognizably spelled as "Tahrihult." I could scan this record (or, in my case, allow Paperless to import the previously scanned page), and display it in the Details window. I might then add the proper spelling to that actual image, where it will also appear when printed or placed in a report that I generate with my genealogy program. I can also enter a note to explain the different spellings—or to remind myself to check this against other records—which would not appear in print. I will want to create a Library for all my genealogy, as opposed to libraries for expenses, medical, automotive, and others. As with my old paper files, I will also specify a collection and one or more categories for this record, such as "Theriault Family," "Census Records," and "1910 Census." I can also tag this image with other words that can serve as search terms when I want to retrieve it, like "French" and "Ashland, Maine."

Any fields I choose to use for this record, including any I create, can be used later to sort my database or search for this record along with other records that meet the same search criteria.

With Paperless, you can create a database for everything from financial records to medical to those product manuals for all your tools and appliances. Besides genealogy photocopies such as the one described above, you could also use it to scan and organize your 2nd grader's pictures and all the other cool stuff she or he brings home from school. Everything is safely and securely saved on your computer's hard drive.

Needless to say, you will also want to make backups, stored locally as well as online "in the cloud." After all, your hard drive may crash someday, and you don't want to lose all your documents. By making both local and online backups, your documents will be safer than they would be on paper. Even better, those documents will also be safer and easier to find when they are electronic.

If you already have a large number of digital documents, Paperless will import them easily into its database. You do not need to re-scan anything. You can also rename, change the creation date, categorize, sub-categorize, tag, and add notes to those existing documents as well as to any future documents you create.

I have used Evernote for some time to scan, store and retrieve documents. I even purchased the Evernote Scanner to make the process simpler. I find that comparing Paperless to Evernote produces mixed results. Evernote is superior at some things while Paperless is better at other functions.

Paperless is better than Evernote at searching and retrieving documents. The search algorithms in Paperless are better than those in Evernote. Paperless has a better method of finding words you search for that are buried inside a scanned document, such as a doctor's name.

On the downside, Paperless is available only for Windows and for Macintosh. Unlike Evernote, Paperless has no Android or iOS version for iPad or iPhone retrieval. You won't be able to retrieve a document while standing in the doctor's office unless you have a Windows or Macintosh laptop computer with you. Carrying your iPad or Android tablet will not help retrieve anything from Paperless although an iPad or Android tablet will retrieve similar documents from Evernote. I hope the producers of Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh will add an iPad and an Android version soon in order to compete with Evernote on these devices.

In short, I am impressed with Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh but will not be switching to it for my own use. I already have thousands of digital documents stored in Evernote, and I use an iPad frequently to retrieve documents when at a doctor's office, at an insurance agency, and once when renting an automobile at an airport. (I needed proof of insurance that covers rental cars. I have that included in my normal auto insurance but needed to show proof of that coverage to the rental agency.) As good as Paperless is, I won't use it until the company releases versions for handheld computers. If you do not use a tablet computer, or if your requirements are different from mine, you might prefer Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh because of its superior OCR and retrieval capabilities. Of course, if you have a scanner and no OCR software or did not invest in the Evernote scanner and software package, Paperless may be the right solution for you.

Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh sells for \$49.95 U.S. If you are already using a competitive scanning and OCR program, the producers of Paperless may offer a "competitive upgrade" price of \$34.95. Details may be found near the bottom of the page at <http://marinersoftware.com/products/paperless/>.

The manufacturer also offers a package that includes one of three Fujitsu ScanSnap scanner models along with the Paperless software for Macintosh or Windows at prices ranging from \$239 to \$495 U.S. For details on these bundles, see

<https://marinersoftware.com/products/paperless/paperless-bundle-u-s/>.

Before investing in the Paperless software, you might want to first read the entire user's guide. You may download the guide at <http://marinersoftware.com/products/paperless/#open-userguide>.

You can read more about Paperless for Windows and for Macintosh at <http://marinersoftware.com/products/paperless>.

Genealogy Quick Tip

If you do research using the census and are familiar with Microsoft Excel then create a document to keep track of what years in the census you are researching.

Separate the worksheets in the book into the families you are researching. Start with the oldest ancestor and add children, their spouses, and their children. The columns have the name, date of birth, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, then death date.

In the cell for a census year enter the person's age. This way, you can see a progression of age and might catch an error if you have found the wrong person.