



# Heritage Newsletter

January 2007

*Happy New Year!*

## **California African American Genealogical Society**

P.O. Box 8442  
Los Angeles, CA 90008-0442

2007 Volume 19 Number 1 ISSN 1083-8937  
**Ten Issues Published Annually**

### **General Membership Meetings**

Third Saturday monthly at 10 am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

### **2007 Board of Directors**

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste - First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas - Second Vice President /Membership  
Melrose Bell - Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun - Recording Secretary  
Christine Watkins - Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes - Parliamentarian/Former President  
Gena Weaver - Webmaster ([www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org))

### **Committee Chairs**

Open - Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer - Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell - Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson - Librarian  
Marilyn White - Historian  
Monica Maurasse - Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge - Fundraising/FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bocage - NGS Delegate

## **President's Message**

Ronald Higgins

Our general meeting in November was an exciting one. Starting with Edna Briggs presentation on how to make a video. Her presentation was so insightful and informative we had to stop her before she was actually finished. I would like her to present the remainder at another meeting.

When I walked into the meeting there was a big surprise waiting, CAAGS first president, Dr. Edgar Love was in attendance. Thanks to Marilyn White for bringing him to our meeting. It has been many years since we have had so many of our charter members attend a meeting. They included Dr. Edgar Love, Herbert Laffon Jr., Jamesetta "Jamie" Glosson-Hammons and Ron Higgins.

We had another first on this day. Five of our past presidents were in attendance, they included former president #1 Dr. Edgar Love, #2 Jamesetta "Jamie" Glosson Hammons, #6 Ronald Higgins, #8 Ronald Batiste and #9 Marjorie Sholes.

We also had a historic guest at the meeting. This person has made the world of genealogy research much better with his book "Black Roots, A Beginners Guide to Tracing the African American Family Tree." This internationally known genealogist, author and teacher was Tony Burroughs. Thanks to Colette DeVerge for bringing Tony to our meeting. Tony and Colette shared the stage in the nationally televised PBS Ancestry series back in 1977. Tony was gracious enough to answer questions from members in attendance.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the pot luck and who helped in the kitchen. There were a

*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) or submit them on computer disk to the editor. Visit our new website at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org).*

variety of tasty dishes. A special thanks to Dorothylou Sands for her tireless work in coordinating everything for us. We are in need of your continued support in providing the same for December which is our traditional Christmas holiday meeting.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Kwanzaa!

### 2007 Calendar of Events

#### January 20

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm

#### January 24 – 26

Three-Day Intensive Family History/Genealogy Training Course - Los Angeles Regional Family History Center Located downstairs in the Visitors Center behind the LA Temple 10741 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90025 for more info to to larfhc.org

#### February 2

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

#### February 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm

#### February 17

#### **Genealogy Society of Riverside - 8th Annual Genealogical Seminar - Rolling Along The Ancestral Trial**

Magnolia Presbyterian Church 7200 Magnolia Ave, Riverside, CA. Pre-registration: Members \$15; Non-Members \$17; Registration at the door \$22 Class Syllabus: Pre-order \$9; at the door (while supplies last) \$11 Keynote Speaker: Jean Wilcox Hibben. For more info [www.gsor.org/](http://www.gsor.org/)

#### February 24 – Whittier, CA

The Whittier Area Genealogical Society (WAGS) has announced their 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar featuring Curt B. Witcher. For more info contact Barbara Wilks, Seminar Director at (562) 696-5915, [barbwilks@earthlink.net](mailto:barbwilks@earthlink.net) or John Hergesheimer at (562) 941-3184.

#### March 2

CAAGS Board Meeting, 6:30pm

#### March 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Websites of Interest

➤ Periodically we all need to refresh our skills in genealogical research and at the National Genealogical Society's Learning Center, we want to offer you an opportunity to take advantage of special discounted pricing on the NGS research-intensive Home Study

Course. Now exclusively available as a CD, this course is recommended by the Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG). To view our offerings of the Online Course Specials please visit <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/Courses/course.cfm>

➤ **Genealogy LookUp Forum** is a web site of volunteers who will do various types of genealogical look ups such as births, census, cemetery, deaths and marriage.

They are also looking for new volunteers that have access to records that may help others as well.

Please visit the site to locate a volunteer in your area. I am sure you will not be disappointed on how helpful these folks are with genealogy.

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~genealogylookup/index.html>  
(<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~genealogylookup/index.html>)

#### ➤ **Records of Freed Slaves to Go Online**

The Virginia Freedmen Project plans to digitize more than 200,000 images collected by the Richmond bureau, one of dozens of offices established throughout the South to help former slaves adjust to free life. [www.blackamericaweb.com/site.aspx/technology/record\\_s102706](http://www.blackamericaweb.com/site.aspx/technology/record_s102706)

#### ➤ **Journal of Genetic Genealogy**

If you're into genetic genealogy - and I mean seriously into it - you'll definitely want to read Journal of Genetic Genealogy. It's online, free and edited by some of the best minds in the biz, including my Trace Your Roots with DNA co-author, Ann Turner, M.D. (in case you haven't guessed it, she's the smart one!). They're aiming for quarterly, but so far, it seems more like twice a year - - but that's probably a good thing because they have the kind of articles that you'll want to ponder for a while. [www.jogg.info/](http://www.jogg.info/)

#### ➤ **Digital Genealogist**

The last thing you need is another publication to read, but darn it, this one's really good! Of course, it would be since it's edited by Liz Kelley Kerstens and has some of the best writers around.

Check out the free, 42-page sample issue of this online magazine. If you decide, that you have to have it, you can order it for \$20.

<http://digitalgenealogist.com/sample/dgnovdec06.pdf>

### Correction

We inadvertently announced our new Treasurer as Catherine Watkins in the December newsletter.

**Christine Watkins is CAAGS treasurer** and our congratulations to Christine in her new position.

### CAAGS Surname Search

To aid our members with their research, each month we will list CAAGS members and the surnames they are researching. Each member's name will be in bold print followed by their email address. If we do not have an email address you will need to refer to your roster for a phone number or address to follow up with the individual.

**Earnestine McNeil** - Researching: Porter, Matthews, Storey, Scott- OK, KS, AL, MS

**Vera Merritt** - email [vmerrit@msn.com](mailto:vmerrit@msn.com); Dickerson- OH, NJ; Green- VA; Carroll, Posey, Price- MD

**Rita Miles** - email [yitalia@hotmail.com](mailto:yitalia@hotmail.com) Researching: Campbell, Lincoln, Shaw, Warren- TX

**Emantha Moore** - Researching: Crout, Moore- AL

**Cliff & Sharon O'Daniel** - email [sharon\\_odaniel@hotmail.com](mailto:sharon_odaniel@hotmail.com); Researching: Johns, Rose- St. Landry Parish, LA; Hadley, Thompson- Bradley Co., AR

**Ruth Odell** - email [labe12@aol.com](mailto:labe12@aol.com); Researching: Odell, Miller, Jefferson

**Helen Page** - email [hbjams@msn.com](mailto:hbjams@msn.com); Researching: Harris- GA; Henderson- SC, TN, AR; Pullan- GA

**Ruth Palmer** - email [baybeeruth@hotmail.com](mailto:baybeeruth@hotmail.com); Researching: Ellis, Ellys, Harris, Redd, Williams, Jackson

**Barbara Phillips** email [barb-fil@yahoo.com](mailto:barb-fil@yahoo.com); Researching: Brooks, Haskins, Jones

**Richard Procello** email [rprocello310310@aol.com](mailto:rprocello310310@aol.com) Researching: May, Jordan- AL; Knoll- OK; Procello- CA, TX

### Thank You

Thanks to everyone who participated in the November and December Potlucks by bringing your favorite dish to share with us. A special "thank you" to those who helped in the kitchen and with set up and clean up.

### ISFHWE Annual Writing Contest

The International Society of Family History Writers and Editors (ISFHWE) is sponsoring its annual "Excellence in Writing" competition to recognize excellence in

genealogical columns and articles. The contest is open to all members of ISFHWE, both published and unpublished authors.

Contest entrants must be members of ISFHWE, which is open to all. The contest is judged by professionals in the fields of genealogy and journalism. The contest has four categories — newspaper columns, published articles, unpublished genealogy research stories (Category III) and Category IV is for "want-to-be" writers in the field of genealogy/family history or local history.

Submissions in the latter category should be original and unpublished and between 500 and 1,000 words. Do you have a story to tell about your ancestors or hometown? Here's your opportunity.

*Ancestry Magazine* has again agreed to consider publishing the first-place winner in Category III — the genealogy research story. Upon acceptance and publication, the author will be paid up to \$500.

Winners in each category will be awarded a cash prize and a certificate. The awards presentation will take place at the Gala ISFHWE Awards Banquet to be held at the National Genealogical Society conference in Richmond, Virginia, 16 May 2007. (Those unable to attend will receive their awards after the conference.)

Entries must be received no later than 15 February 2007. Employees and current contract writers for *Ancestry.com* or its parent, *MyFamily.com, Inc.*, are ineligible to submit to Category III. Rules, tips, membership information and the entry form are available at:  
[www.rootsweb.com/~cgc/contest.htm](http://www.rootsweb.com/~cgc/contest.htm)

### Most Common Reasons for not Finding Ancestors

- ✓ Looking in the wrong place
- ✓ Spelling of name
- ✓ Thinking narrowly
- ✓ Believing oral history
- ✓ Believing undocumented research
- ✓ Not understanding local history & events
- ✓ Not thinking like your ancestor
- ✓ Not consulting original records
- ✓ Believing the internet & printed family books
- ✓ Not doing a chronological study in date order

## Little Names Can Make Big Challenges

by George G. Morgan

We all know what nicknames are. Often, they are simply altered versions of a person's real name. Patrick or Patricia becomes Pat; James becomes Jimmy or Jim; or Richard becomes Rich, Rick, Dick, Ricky, Dickie, or even Dickey. Sometimes a nickname is a variant that has evolved over time. Dorothy becomes Dot or Dottie; Henry becomes Hank; or, Elizabeth becomes Bette, Betty, Bess, Liz, Lizzie, or Bep. Margaret is a name with many variations: Margie, Margo, Meg, Peggy, Peg, and a number of other forms.

My own research has included any number of these naming variations. For example, my great-grandmother had a forename of Ansibelle, and there are no U.S. federal censuses that list her christened name at all. In fact, her first name was never listed the same way twice. The variations included Annie, Nancy, Nannie, and Ancie. Her middle name was Penelope, and that name has been passed on and been reused in the family. In its more recent incarnations, Penelope has become Penny, Nep, and Neppie. If you encountered the name “Neppie” on a census document and didn’t know the real name it represented, what would you have guessed?

Perhaps the document type most frequently used by genealogists is the census. Put yourself in the place of an assistant federal marshal in 1860, riding or walking about and filling out census forms. You are performing a function called enumeration for the government, and you probably had no idea that what you were doing would be looked at 146 years in the future! You are simply trying to visit every household, take down the names of every resident, ask the questions you had been given, and fill out the answers on the forms: population schedules, slave schedules, agricultural schedules, manufacturing schedules, mortality schedules, and a social statistics schedule. You had a job and a deadline and that was that. It’s no wonder that abbreviations and perhaps diminutive forms of names were written on the forms by the enumerators. They also wrote precisely what they were told. Who can blame them if they were given an unusual name and, asking the respondent how it was spelled, was told that the respondent could not read or write, much less spell the name?

I spent some time recently with a friend poring over a number of census documents from various eras. We puzzled over what some of the abbreviations for names might have been. We saw Jno. and Jhn. and wondered whether the name was John, Johnathan, or Jonathan.

Nat. could have been Nathaniel or Nathan, or even something else. A particularly perplexing entry appeared as Hy., and it was not until we found other documents for the same individual in the same area during the same era that we were able to determine that the abbreviation stood for Henry. (It might have stood for Hiram or some other name, but we could not be sure without checking elsewhere.)

Our ancestors were not as literate as we are today, and therefore cannot really be blamed for misspellings of their names. How many times have you seen a document signed by an ancestor with his or her X? People also changed the spelling of their name(s) over time, and even the way they signed it if they were literate. Another of my ancestors, William Whitefield, suddenly changed the spelling of his surname to Whitfield (omitting the first “e”), beginning at the time of his third marriage. This was really confusing because it appeared that there were two men with similar surnames, different wives, and different children. Therefore, my great-grandmother Morgan became a big challenge to locate under the maiden surname Whitefield, when in fact she was the youngest child of the third marriage, and spelled her surname as Whitfield.

I always urge people to learn how to “misspell” the surnames they are researching. I’ve spent a lot of time perusing Soundex microfilm and using the Soundex option in the Ancestry databases. While it may seem like more work to look at names that definitely are not ones that you are researching, original spelling errors and variations may suddenly appear to you as possibilities to be explored. You never know who made the error: your ancestor, the person who created the document, a transcriber, an indexer, or another researcher. Therefore, you need to be alert to spelling variations at all levels.

In addition to the surname spelling variations that we’ve had to deal with in our research, it’s important to also be aware of the use of forenames, middle names, nicknames, diminutives, and simple initials. Investing the time to examine all the possible variations is essential when you are searching for records of “difficult ancestors” if you don’t want to miss an important record. By exploring all the possibilities, you may just find that your ancestor was there all along... just hiding behind a misspelling.

*Taken from Ancestry.com*

*About the Author Visit George’s website for information about his company, speaking engagements, and presentation topics. You can also listen to George and Drew Smith’s Genealogy Guys podcast.*



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

February 2007 Volume 19 Number 2

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### Committee Chairs

Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions

Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor

Ruth Odell – Public Relations

LaVerne Anderson – Librarian

Marilyn White – Historian

Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor

Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate

Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

It's Black History Month and on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual African American Family History Conference also known as Discover Your Roots V will be held. This year it will be at a new location, 1209 S. Manhattan Place, Los Angeles, CA 90019 (near Western and Pico). This conference is co-sponsored by CAAGS. Please plan on attending and register early.

Thanks to our volunteers that worked the booth for CAAGS at the Martin Luther King Day Festival held by the City of Inglewood at Hollywood Park. We were represented by Ruth Palmer, Emma Willie, Maria Alequin-Sosa, Sandra Jackson, one of our young people, Brittany Cotton along with myself. We met about 300 people during the festival. Everyone did an excellent job.

This world needs more of us to step up to the plate and stop beating around the bush. More leaders and less players. More muscle, less beef. More courage, fewer excuses. Consider volunteering with our society (it's rewarding to give back).

February is also the month of Love. To all CAAGS members, family and friends have a beautiful Valentine's Day. Lastly, to the outgoing CAAGS board members, thanks for a job well done.

To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain perpetually a child. For what is the worth of a human life unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history?

- Marcus Tullius Cicero, 106-43 B.C.

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## 2007 Calendar of Events

### February 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Barbara Thomas presentation, Computers and Genealogy

### February 17

**Genealogy Society of Riverside** - 8th Annual Genealogical Seminar - Rolling Along The Ancestral Trail - Magnolia Presbyterian Church 7200 Magnolia Ave, Riverside, CA. Pre-registration: Members \$15; Non-Members \$17; Registration at the door \$22 Class Syllabus: Pre-order \$9; at the door (while supplies last) \$11 Keynote Speaker: Jean Wilcox Hibben. For more info [www.gsor.org/](http://www.gsor.org/)

### February 24

Discover Your Roots V

### February 24 – Whittier, CA

The Whittier Area Genealogical Society (WAGS) 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar featuring Curt B. Witcher. For more info contact Barbara Wilks, Seminar Director at (562) 696-5915, [barbwilks@earthlink.net](mailto:barbwilks@earthlink.net) or John Hergesheimer at (562) 941-3184.

### March 2

CAAGS Board Meeting, 6:30pm

### March 3

Escondido South Stake Family History Fair keynote speaker Kory Meyerink. For more info go to [www.familyhistoryfair.org/](http://www.familyhistoryfair.org/)

### March 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Mark Greenfield, former CAAGS president, special presentation

### March 24

**North San Diego County Genealogical Society** - Spring Seminar 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, "Prescription for Genealogical Addiction." Topics: 1) Flesh on the Bones: Putting Your Ancestors into Historical Perspective; 2) The Silent Woman: Bringing a Name to Life; 3) The Immigrant Experience: From Steerage to Ellis Island; 4) Love Letters, Diaries, & Autobiographies: Let's Leave 'em Something to Talk About. \$25 NSDCGS members, \$30 non-members. Lunch \$6 Mail: NSDCGS, PO Box 581, Carlsbad, CA 92018-0581. Held at Carlsbad Senior Center, 799 Pine, Carlsbad; [www.cagenweb.com/nsdcgs/springsem.html](http://www.cagenweb.com/nsdcgs/springsem.html)

### April 28

**Orange Family History Fair, Orange, CA** (8am – 5pm) Free classes - sign up for syllabus & sack lunch A registration flyer will be available in PDF format around March 1<sup>st</sup> at <http://zroots.com/OFHC.htm>

\* *Calendar is subject to change without notice*

## Websites of Interest

**The Southern California Genealogical Society's** online catalog has recently been updated to reflect recent acquisitions. Use the catalog to plan your next visit to the SCGS Library. Or, if you live at a distance, you can use the catalog to identify possible resources for your research and request a look-up from our Research Team.

The catalog is found at <http://www.scsgsgenealogy.com/catalogMain.htm>. Highlights of the collection can be found at <http://www.scsgsgenealogy.com/coll-highlights.htm>. To request a copy or a lookup, drop an email to [scgs@scsgsgenealogy.com](mailto:scgs@scsgsgenealogy.com)

**Some of you have children and grandchildren.** Some of you work with kids and teens. Do you want help to get them interested in family history? Check out the following Web sites.

- Dear Myrtle Joy of Genealogy  
<http://www.dearmyrtle.com/lessons.htm#Kids>
- WorldGenWeb for Kids  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wkwkids/>
- 101+ Fun Family History Activities for Kids  
<http://www.geocities.com/genealogy4kids/genealogy4kids.html>
- Get Nosy about Aunt Rosie  
[http://www.genealogy.com/genealogy/70\\_tipsoral.html](http://www.genealogy.com/genealogy/70_tipsoral.html)
- Genealogy for Children  
<http://genealogy.about.com/od/children/a/detective.htm>
- Canadian Genealogy Centre - Youth Corner  
<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/genealogy/022-400-e.html>

## CAAGS Surname Search

To aid our members with their research, each month we will list CAAGS members and the surnames they are researching. Each member's name will be in bold print followed by their email address. If we do not have an email address you will need to refer to your roster for a phone number or address to follow up with the individual.

**June Rhinehart** – email [junejr@earthlink.net](mailto:junejr@earthlink.net)  
Researching: Baker- MO, CA, CO; Banks- CA, TX; Halson- OR, CA, NM; Rhinehart- IN, CA; Screech- IN; Thurman- IN, CA; Ware- OH, IN, CA; Williams- MO, CA  
**Sadie Richie** - email [spotty66@dslextreme.com](mailto:spotty66@dslextreme.com)

Researching: Richie, White, Grundy, Wallace, Mahr, Duffy

**Evelyn Ross** - email Evross358@aol.com Researching: Jackson, Chapman, Guest, Dinwiddie- TX; Phillips, Churchill- KY; Ross, Wall, Hart- MS; Clemins, Valley- MO, KS

**Judy Sample** - email jbaps@yahoo.com Researching: Sample, Malone, Antoine, Tillman, Gayden, Joseph, Arthurlee, Gooden

**Columbus Sanders** Researching: Sanders, Boardingham, Fields, Shaw- Falls Co., TX

**Ophelia Sanders** - email phedie@pacbell.net Researching: Browder, Robinson- MS; Conway, Haygood- AR, GA; Sanders- AR

**DorothyLou Sands** – email Bipsylou@aol.com Researching: Sands, Butcher- MD; Morman, Haley- VA; McDonald- MI; Kirk- OH; Wright- SC; Whiting- WV; Mitchell- NC

**Fatima Secrease-Pope** – email fballmom32@aol.com Researching: Turner, Johnson, Tolmar- LA

**Marjorie Sholes** – email MHigg71503@aol.com Researching: Sholes, Scott, Sample, Spears, Gayden, Johnson, Dickey, Brown- LA

## How Do I Know I Have the Right Family?

By Michael John Neill

When families migrate from one area to another, it can be hard to determine if you have really located the same group of individuals. The difficulty is compounded if the last name and first names are relatively common. It's important to be certain that the "true" family has been located and that one has not mixed up families with similar names. Male cousins bearing the same first and last name are particularly easy to confuse.

One quick way to track families in the post-1850 era is through population census schedules. The listing of all household members facilitates the matching process, and every-name indexes make the use of these records much easier than before, especially when the residence is not known. However, the first close match on the list of results is not necessarily the correct family. All matches to the search terms should be analyzed and eliminated based upon what is known about the family. What appears to be the "right" entry must be compared in light of other records to determine if there really is consistency.

On the other hand, searches of databases must not be overly strict, as this can sometimes eliminate potential matches. I generally perform a variety of searches for individuals I am seeking, including some using Soundex and wildcard functionality. Sometimes it is easy to

determine if the correct person has been found (the person has an unusual name, the person is living in the right location, names, ages, and birthplaces of family members match up, etc.). Other times it is not possible to make a definitive decision that the desired person has been located. When families are eliminated, the researcher should keep notes as to why these families were stricken from consideration.

Generally speaking, when searching online census databases it is helpful to track the type of search that is being performed as it is being performed. Key elements in this tracking are:

- The first and last names that were put in the search box
- Whether a Soundex option was used
- Whether a search was performed with wildcards
- What year of birth was used (and what range of years)
- What birthplace was used

Reasons for tracking the search include:

- It is impossible to effectively modify an unsuccessful search when one is not certain how one searched originally or how one searched last week.
- Searching the same static database in the same way will typically produce the same results.
- It is impossible to remember each combination of search techniques that was applied. The "correct" combination will always be overlooked. It's Murphy's Law applied to genealogy.
- 

One quick and easy way to track your online searches is to make a spreadsheet with column headings for the various search boxes for the database being searched. This spreadsheet can be printed and written on while searching or those who are adept at toggling between computer windows can fill out their chart as they search. Personally, I prefer to fill out my chart of searches before I search, making certain no combination of terms was eliminated. Then I can use the chart to make certain I have conducted all the desired searches.

## The Brices

An earlier column mentioned the family of William and Anne Brice and how they were tracked in census records from Illinois to Kansas to Missouri between 1860 and 1900. As an example, let's look at how their entries were obtained and what leads me to believe I have the same family in four separate locations over four census enumerations.

Generally speaking, census enumerations on any family should not be viewed in isolation. (Space considerations do not allow us to include the complete analysis in this column.) Rather, other records should be utilized in order to determine if the tentative family structure and migration paths are supported by other documents. Wherever possible, obtain maps of all relevant areas to assist in viewing the family's overall migration path. Search for reasonable alternate spellings before assuming the "actual" family has been located and consider if there are alternate situations that could explain the records that have been found. We should search to see what is found, not search to prove an already determined conclusion.

#### **1860 Census—Ursa Township, Adams County, Illinois**

*William Brice, age 21, born Ireland, married within census year*

*Anne J., age 22, born Ireland, married within census year*

The reference to the marriage within the year caused me to search the Illinois State Marriage Index. An index entry appears for William Brice and Ann Jane Belford indicating an April of 1860 marriage. It seems very reasonable that this is the same couple, especially since there were no other marriages in the index for a William and Anne Brice (or any reasonable spelling variant).

#### **1870 Census—Chili Township, Hancock County, Illinois**

*William Brice, age 34, born Ireland*

*Ann, age 33, born Ireland*

*William, Jr., age 6, born Illinois*

*Mary A., age 4, born Illinois*

*Robert, age 1, born Illinois*

Chili Township in Hancock County, Illinois, is close to Ursa Township in Adams County. The ages of William and Ann are consistent with the earlier enumeration. In both cases, William is a farmer (it is important to note any extreme inconsistencies with occupation as well). The ages of the Brice children are consistent with an 1860 marriage. The initial census search was conducted for a William Brice (and Soundex variants) born in 1838 in Ireland, plus or minus five years.

#### **1880 Census—Bruno, Butler County, Kansas**

*William Brice, age 45, born Ireland*

*Anne J., age 48, born Ireland*

*William, age 16, born Illinois*

*Mary, age 14, born Illinois*

*Robert, age 11, born Illinois*

*Sarah J., age 9, born Illinois*

*James, age 6, born Illinois*

*John, age 2, born Kansas*

The family structure is consistent with the 1870 enumeration. The ages of the parents are off slightly from earlier enumerations, but not so far off as to warrant any special concern. The initial census search was conducted for a William Brice (and Soundex variants) born in 1838 in Ireland, plus or minus five years.

#### **1900 Census—Grant Township, Caldwell, Missouri**

*William Brice, age 62 (born March 1838), Ireland*

*Ann, age 62 (born March 1838), Ireland*

*Jno. H. M., age 20 (born Mar 1880), Kansas*

An unexpected move of the family. However, this was the only "match" using our previous search terms that came even close to our desired family. Anna Brice's death certificate (obtained via the Missouri State Archives website) indicates that she was born in Ireland on 28 March 1836, the daughter of Daniel and Mary Jackson Belford. This is the same maiden name for the "known" Anne Brice, wife of William. Further research needs to be done, but it appears I have the same family.

#### **Wrapping It Up**

- Perform searches that are not overly narrow so that close matches (which maybe the right family) are not overlooked.
- Constantly review information in light of already known information to be reasonably certain the same family has been located.
- Track what you do, so search terms can be modified as necessary.

*Taken from Ancestry.com – For more info you can e-mail the author at [mjnrootdig@myfamily.com](mailto:mjnrootdig@myfamily.com) or visit his website at: [www.rootdig.com](http://www.rootdig.com)*

#### **Common Mistakes When Reading Census**

- ✓ Spelling of name
- ✓ Not boning up on census year oddities
- ✓ Not considering neighbors and people nearby
- ✓ Failure to look at adjoining pages
- ✓ Failure to properly read columns
- ✓ Believing enumerated place of birth and age
- ✓ Depending and believing one census only instead of an overall study
- ✓ Believing all children in family belong to head of household





# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society  
Celebrating our 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary*

**March 2007    Volume 19    Number 3**

Ten Issues Published Annually  
ISSN 1083-8937

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

### **General Membership Meetings**

Third Saturday monthly at 10am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

### **2007 Board of Directors**

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
Melrose Bell – Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Christine Watkins – Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes – Parliamentarian/Former President  
Gena Weaver – Webmaster ([www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org))

### **Committee Chairs**

Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

## **President's Message**

Ronald Higgins

It's Black History Month and on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual African American Family History Conference also known as Discover Your Roots V will be held. This year it will be at a new location, 1209 S. Manhattan Place, Los Angeles, CA 90019 (near Western and Pico). This conference is co-sponsored by CAAGS. Please plan on attending and register early.

Thanks to our volunteers that worked the booth for CAAGS at the Martin Luther King Day Festival held by the City of Inglewood at Hollywood Park. We were represented by Ruth Palmer, Emma Willie, Maria Alequin-Sosa, Sandra Jackson, one of our young people, Brittany Cotton along with myself. We met about 300 people during the festival. Everyone did an excellent job.

This world needs more of us to step up to the plate and stop beating around the bush. More leaders and less players. More muscle, less beef. More courage, fewer excuses. Consider volunteering with our society (it's rewarding to give back).

February is also the month of Love. To all CAAGS members, family and friends have a beautiful Valentine's Day. Lastly, to the outgoing CAAGS board members, thanks for a job well done.

### **Membership Renewal**

Dues for 2007 must be received on or before Saturday, March 17, 2007 if membership is to continue in good standing. Notification of CAAGS activities will cease if dues are not received by the above mentioned date.

*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) or submit them on computer disk to the editor. Visit our new website at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org).*

## 2007 Calendar of Events

### March 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Mark Greenfield, former CAAGS president, special presentation

### March 24

**North San Diego County Genealogical Society - Spring Seminar** 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, "Prescription for Genealogical Addiction." \$25 NSDCGS members, \$30 non-members. Lunch \$6 for info [www.cagenweb.com/nsdcgs/springsem.html](http://www.cagenweb.com/nsdcgs/springsem.html)

### April 6

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

### April 21

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm

### April 28

**Orange Family History Fair, Orange, CA (8am – 5pm)**

Free classes - sign up for syllabus & sack lunch.

For more info go to <http://zroots.com/OFHC.htm>

### May 4

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

### May 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm

### June 8-10

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree and Resource Expo;** Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, Burbank, CA. For more info visit [www.scsgenealogy.com](http://www.scsgenealogy.com)

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

## Websites of Interest

### LostCousins - A new approach to US genealogy

Who better to help you research your family tree than someone who shares the same ancestors? The LostCousins website has a unique system that identifies living relatives who share the same ancestors automatically, confidentially, and with close to 100% accuracy. And to ensure that as many people as possible have access to the census data, LostCousins focuses on censuses that are available at the free FamilySearch website.

It's a very simple system - but one that's amazingly powerful. LostCousins members enter brief details for their relatives taken from the census transcripts, then click the Search button. Matches with other members who share the same ancestors are identified within seconds, and - because the data is saved - to search again at any point in the future requires little more than a click of the Search button! Although LostCousins is new to the US, the system is tried and tested - thousands of researchers with British ancestry have found living relatives through the site since it first opened. The accuracy has been amazing - only a handful of incorrect matches have been reported.

Registration and basic membership of LostCousins are completely free. However there are advantages to becoming a paying subscriber, and to celebrate the addition of the US census members who enter the code 1776 when registering will receive a free upgrade to subscriber status that lasts until April 30, 2007.

The LostCousins website can be found at:

<http://www.LostCousins.com>

## CAAGS Surname Search

To aid our members with their research, each month we will list CAAGS members and the surnames they are researching. Each member's name will be in bold print followed by their email address. If we do not have an email address you will need to refer to your roster for a phone number or address to follow up with the individual.

**William & Dr. Nelle Becker Slaton** – email

[beckerslat3@aol.com](mailto:beckerslat3@aol.com); Researching: Snelling, Walker- NH, MA, ME, VT, Canada; Becker, Douglas, Payne- MA; Becker- SC, DC, NY; Ockimay, Occmy- MD, RI; White- NC, CT, RI; Perry- RI; Smith, Johnson- TX, OK

**Madison Sosa-McDonald** – email

[madprincess2496@aol.com](mailto:madprincess2496@aol.com); Researching: Sosa, Alequin, McDonald

**Vieyvett Stewart-Gordon** – email [vieyvett@msn.com](mailto:vieyvett@msn.com);

Researching: Cooper, Young- MS; Stewart- LA

**Stewart & Ernestine Stovall** – email

[Ernestine\\_Stovall@comcast.net](mailto:Ernestine_Stovall@comcast.net); Researching: West, Ward, Bradley, Stovall, Moton, Brown, Kemp

**Barbara Thomas** – email [RATnRET@aol.com](mailto:RATnRET@aol.com);

Researching: Brooks- MS, Waters- WA; Reed- TN, Winchester- CO, OK, WA; Cheltenham, Ferreira, Gibbs- Barbados, Guyana, Panama

**Martha Thomas-Johnson** – email

[msmot2000@yahoo.com](mailto:msmot2000@yahoo.com); Researching: Thomas, Peters, McKenzie, Bickham, Magee, Morgan- LA, MS

**James Thornton** – email [JThorn1977@aol.com](mailto:JThorn1977@aol.com);

Researching: Thornton- MS; Simms- New Orleans, LA; Thompson- TX; Jackson- Mobile, AL

**Roxanne Turner** – email [Roxce@verizon.net](mailto:Roxce@verizon.net);

Researching: Ricks- TX, AL; Davis- TX; Hamilton- AR

**Mary Walker** – email [mwilliamsw@aol.com](mailto:mwilliamsw@aol.com);

Researching: Williams- OK, TX; Scott- OK, AL, GA; Griffith- OK, TX, AL; Smith- OK, MD

**Izetta Walton** - Researching: Brown, Edlers- VA

**Catherine Watkins** - email [nacocjw@aol.com](mailto:nacocjw@aol.com);

Researching: Johnson, Watkins, Barnes- LA

**Christine Watkins** - email [chicruc@msn.com](mailto:chicruc@msn.com);

Researching: Robinson- Amite Co. & Sunflower Co., MS, AR; Watkins, Crayton, Jones- Leake Co & Sunflower Co, MS; Chicot- MS, CO, AR

**Marietta Welch** – email [marisu831@comcast.net](mailto:marisu831@comcast.net);

Researching: Hall- SC, MS, KS; Reed- IA, KS  
**Virgilene West** - Researching: West, Wolfe, Griffin,  
Smith, Hodges- Scott Co. MS;

CAAGS has had a few inquiries regarding getting the newsletter via email. If you would like to receive your newsletter via email please let us know at [caags@hotmail.com](mailto:caags@hotmail.com)

## Using Ancestry: Exploring New Resources in the African American Collection

By Juliana Smith

### Freedmen's Bureau Records of Field Offices, 1865-1872

Following the Civil War, millions of Americans were in need. 4 million former slaves were now free, and in need of a way to make a living. In March of 1865, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands was formed and would become better known as the Freedmen's Bureau. According to "The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy," (Chapter 14, African American Research, by Tony Burroughs, FUGA), "The bureau's agents delivered medical care, rations, and transportation to destitutes and refugees—primarily white Americans. Its activities among freed people (former slaves) were varied and included drawing up and enforcing labor contracts; registering people and supervising work details; legalizing slave marriages; processing Civil War military claims; establishing schools; conducting trials for complaints, outrages, and murders; managing, leasing, and selling land abandoned by Confederates and sympathizers; and in general, presiding over Reconstruction policy."

Since this collection is unindexed, it requires some time and effort to explore, but there are significant records included in this collection that make it well worth the effort. The records are from field offices in Washington, D.C., Florida, Georgia, New Orleans, and North Carolina and can be browsed by state, and then record type. Records included in the collection are broken down by the following categories: Complaints Registered, Court Trial Records, Hospital Records, Labor Contracts, Letters, Monthly Reports of Abandoned Land, Statistical School Reports, and other. The content varies by state, but in browsing this collection, I found quite a few interesting documents.

In Florida's Application for Rations, I found a record stating that "*Richard A. Whitfield have rented to Ben Aldridge, Freedman, Seventy acres of Land...Said land is located in the Second Magisterial District...and is known as Oakland Place, and is 5 miles North East of Tallahassee.*" The application goes on to "*certify that his family is composed of the following named persons*" and lists each person's age. In addition to Ben (age 29), Emaline (age 24), and Jane Aldridge (age 16), John

DeCaussey (age 41), and Hannah Decaussey (age 72) are also included, leading to the assumption that they are related in some way to the Aldridges.

The court records contained a lot of property disputes, and crop settlements, as well criminal cases and many of the court records give us a look into the economics of the era. Take this entry for instance:

*"...Ro Lewis and William Phillips (col'd)...doth agree and contract for the year 1868 as follows—that said Ro Lewis is to furnish the necessary 6 acres and seeds and to board the said 6 acres and to keep up all the necessary tools for farming purposes and the said William Phillips is to furnish one good hand besides himself and to board himself and hand and his family—and to furnish the additional labor of his children and he, William Phillips to board the same. For and in consideration of which the said William Phillips is to receive one third of the crops made by him and the said William Phillips doth further agree to keep the fences and cut and haul his proportion of the fire wood to the wood mill and cut a like proportion for the house and the said Phillips further agrees to work under the direction and with the consent of the said Ro Lewis and if the said Ro Lewis should furnish any provisions to said William Phillips the same shall be a lien on the portion of the crop going to said William Phillips."*

Other labor contracts give us an idea of the pay that freedmen received for contracted work. In the entry for Lewis Tilly, a freedman "contracted with Danl. L. Rupert for the year 1867." With the contract, Lewis is hired, "*To drive carriage and work at anything called on to do for \$125 per year and 2 pr. shoes.*"

### U.S. Colored Troops Military Service Records, 1861-1865

This database contains cards from the Compiled Military Service Records from the Civil War. The cards can be searched by name, or browsed by artillery, cavalry, or infantry; then unit, and finally alphabetically. The cards typically include:

- Name
- Military unit
- Age
- Physical description (e.g., height, complexion, eye and hair color)
- Place of birth
- Occupation
- Enlistment date, term, and location
- Remarks

The remarks field sometimes includes more detailed enlistment and discharge information, transfers, cause of death, injuries, furloughs, and bounty owed. You'll find multiple cards with varying degrees of information for some individuals, so be sure to check all possible matches.

## African American Photo Collection

Drawn from photo collections from the Library of Congress and National Archives, the images in these collections allow us to see African American living and working conditions, neighborhoods, schools, churches, and African Americans in military service.

While names are included in many of the photographs and a search by surname could turn up a relative, your chances are better of finding a photo of interest by searching for a place name. Searches will turn up more results if you use the keyword rather than title search. This allows you to pick up hits in the title or in descriptive text, whereas the title search only picks up terms included in the title.

The search box also allows you to specify a date range. (See today's Tip from the Pros for more on date ranges.) So if you wanted to see African American neighborhoods in Atlanta in the 1930s, you could put Atlanta in as a keyword and specify 1935 as a date and add within five years. This search turns up twelve photographs. Below are some other photographs that I ran across that I found striking.

Street Vendors, Charleston, S.C., 1879

Veasey School for colored children. Greene County, Georgia, 1941

View in Negro Quarter Atlanta, Georgia, 1936

Ike Sims of Atlanta, Georgia, 87 years old, has eleven sons in the service, 1917—ca. 1919

## Not Just for Genealogy

While African American researchers will benefit greatly from the records in these collections, the records and images can also help students working on projects for Black History Month. Whether it be background information on famous African Americans, or a report on black history, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and other related topics. Teaching children to search original records helps to hone their investigative skills, and the images of these records and photos found in the collection can really spruce up a report, just as they add depth to family histories.

*Juliana Smith has been the editor of Ancestry.com newsletters for more than eight years and is author of "The Ancestry Family Historian's Address Book." For products related to African American History and Genealogy, visit the Ancestry Store.*

## Common Mistakes When Researching

- ✓ Spelling of name
- ✓ Failure to document sources correctly: (book/film #, call #, date found, place found)
- ✓ Not understanding laws which governed documents
- ✓ Not considering printed county & family history books as clues only
- ✓ Failure to consult original records
- ✓ Not having a research plan
- ✓ Not consulting all the records
- ✓ Asking the wrong person for help
- ✓ Reading document with 20th Century eyes, and...
- ✓ Impatience!

## A Pilgrimage to a Hospital for Black American Ancestry Information

The Ganges brothers, Tendaji, Larry and Kelly, traveled to Tinicum Township, Pennsylvania in August in what history buffs hope was the first of many pilgrimages to an early American quarantine station there. The red-brick lazaretto, as it was called, was built in 1800 as a way to screen ships on the Delaware River for infectious diseases. As such, it gave immigrants their first contact with the new world. In the case of the Ganges family, the lazaretto was the final act of a close call.

Two slave ships docked at the Delaware County station in 1800 after the U.S. Navy captured them off Cuba. The 134 Africans aboard went ashore "without the least clothing," as the Pennsylvania Gazette described them. They were indentured to area residents to learn trades, and given the name of the Navy warship that escorted them to freedom: the USS Ganges. For the complete story go to [www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/local/states/pennsylvania/16314251.htm](http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/local/states/pennsylvania/16314251.htm)

*Taken from Eastman on Line Genealogy, December 25, 2006*

**CAAGS sends our condolences to Ruth O'Dell on the death of her sister.**



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**April 2007      Volume 19      Number 4**

Ten Issues Published Annually  
ISSN 1083-8937

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

### **General Membership Meetings**

Third Saturday monthly at 10am (except July and August)  
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6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
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Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
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Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Roots Conference was held on February 24<sup>th</sup> at the Los Angeles Stake of the LDS church. The keynote speaker Dr. Eric Lee gave a dynamic presentation on family history. Dr. Lee was presented with the binder containing his family's history prepared by LeAnne Hull of the Public Affairs office. His lineage was traced back to a young man from Canton, China. He was also genuinely surprised by the presence of his 98 year old grandmother from Louisiana.

I would like to thank all of those who prepared displays for the conference. In particular Richard Procello and Marilyn White from CAAGS along with Margaret Lewis and others from the San Diego African American Genealogical Group. I hope all who attended were able to take something from it.

We celebrated our 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary in March and there was a nice turnout for the meeting and for our Show and Tell. Mark Greenfield, a past president was our special guest who told his family research story. Numerous members commented on how enlightening his Show and Tell was.

This month our guest speaker will be Carl Montague from the South Los Angeles Mortuary.

If you missed the Roots V conference and would like to purchase a syllabus, you may purchase one for \$10 at the Family History Center or at the Public affairs office, 1591 East Temple Way, Los Angeles 90024 or call 310-475-7018

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## 2007 Calendar of Events

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CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Carl Montague, South Los Angeles Mortuary, guest speaker

### April 28

**Orange Family History Fair, Orange, CA** (8am – 5pm) Free classes - sign up for syllabus & sack lunch. For more info go to <http://zroots.com/OFHC.htm>

### May 4

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

### May 12

Dick Eastman, author and editor of “Eastman’s Online Genealogy newsletter” is making a rare visit to San Diego for an all day seminar. For more information and registration visit [www.egssd.org](http://www.egssd.org)

### May 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm

### June 8-10

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree and Resource Expo**; Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, Burbank, CA. For more info visit [www.scgsgenealogy.com](http://www.scgsgenealogy.com)

### June 16

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

- 6) Full pension file more than 75 years old (non-Civil War) NATF Form 85 \$60.00
- 7) Pension documents packet (selected records) NATF Form 85 \$25.00
- 8) Bounty land warrant application files NATF Form 85 \$25.00
- 9) Military service files more than 75 years old NATF Form 86 \$25.00  
[http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/aces/fr-cont.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/fr-cont.html) if this link doesn't work go to <http://calibre.mworld.com/m/m.w?lp=GetStory&id=243232971> for the complete article.

Each person will have to respond individually. When the announcement was made to change the hours a petition was sent to NARA containing over 10,000 signatures. It was treated as one comment.

The archivist did agree to open one long weekend a month, based on the petition. So NARA is open the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday night, 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday night and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month. The dates are on the NARA website for 2007.

## Websites of Interest

The Federation of Genealogical Societies conference registration is now online at:  
<http://www.fgsconference.org/>

Take the opportunity to visit the newly remodeled Allen County library and attend a national conference at the same time!

Want a little extra help using the library? CGS is planning a research trip in conjunction with the conference. You can find more information on their website  
<http://www.calgensoc.org/web/cgs/cgshp.nsf?Open>

### Proposed Changes at NARA

The Proposed Rules lists the following new proposed costs of mail order and in-house copies.

- 1) Passenger arrival lists NATF Form 81 \$25.00
- 2) Federal Census requests NATF Form 82 \$25.00
- 3) Eastern Cherokee applications to the Court of Claims NATF Form 83 \$25.00
- 4) Land entry records NATF Form 84 \$40.00
- 5) Full pension file more than 75 years old (Civil War period) NATF Form 85 \$125.00

## CAAGS Surname Search

To aid our members with their research, each month we will list CAAGS members and the surnames they are researching. Each member's name will be in bold print followed by their email address. If we do not have an email address you will need to refer to your roster for a phone number or address to follow up with the individual.

**Evelyn Williams** – email [dearevie@yahoo.com](mailto:dearevie@yahoo.com);  
Researching: Mixon, Ford - Hinds Co. & Sunflower Co MS; Cryer, Bickham- Washington, Tangipahoa, and St. Helena Parishes, LA

**Fred & Gertrude Williams** - email [trude11@pacbell.net](mailto:trude11@pacbell.net); Researching: Batiste, Lavalais, Sampson, Brooks, Williams - LA, AR

**Linda Williams** – email [n10chn@earthlink.net](mailto:n10chn@earthlink.net)  
Researching: Norman - NY; Fisher- TX; Andrews - LA, TX, WA

**Emma Willie** – email [ewillie255@aol.com](mailto:ewillie255@aol.com);  
Researching: Catchings - MS, IN, MI, CA; Jones - SD, AR, MS; Hamilton - MS; Dixon, Martin - MS, MI; DeShazer- MS, AR, LA

**Bobbie Wright** - email [wrightit@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wrightit@sbcglobal.net);  
Researching: Taylor- AL; Rich- PA; Palmer, Hyche, Gay - OK

**Jean Wright-Calhoun** - email [wcalh54746@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wcalh54746@sbcglobal.net); Researching: Wright,

Holman, Rainey, Beavers-AR; Calhoun, Pamilton - LA  
**Odessa Yocum** - email Researching - Curry, Johnson - AR

**Cartellia Bryant** – email cartellia\_b@hotmail.com;  
Researching: Bryant, Cummings, Grayson, Smith - TX;  
Hunter - TX, TN; Holleman - TX, LA

**Cecelia Kerr** – Researching: Kerr, White, Mock

**Darelene Rothwell** – email DR21845@aol.com  
Researching: Warren, Knight, Horsley, Smith, Jones,  
Cole, Simington, Rodgers, Owens

**Sandra Oten-Jackson** - Researching: White; Oten  
**Carole Watts** - email easyskier@aol.com Researching:  
Watts- SC, GA; Latham, Moreland- GA; Grigsby- MS,  
TX; Johnson- Canada; Turner- MO, MI; Ball; Austin

**Kathryn Dunn** - email dunnk@netzero.net  
Researching: Winfield, Tinsion, Dun, Birdmisson

**Tony Burroughs** – email T-Burroughs@csu.edu SMTP  
Tony Burroughs (T-Burroughs@csu.edu); Researching:  
Burroughs- SC; Brooks- PA, SC; Truman- PA, MD;  
Williams- Tn, VA; Smothers- PA, VA; Simpson- PA;  
Terrell- Pa, VA

## SCGS 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree

Visitors to the SCGS website at [www.scsgenealogy.com](http://www.scsgenealogy.com) will see that they have added a new, extensive section. All of the details for the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Genealogy Jamboree and Resource Expo (June 8-10, 2007, at the Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel and Convention Center) are now available online. Click on the Jamboree box in the middle of the page when you go to the site and you will find:

- day-by-day schedule <http://tinyurl.com/2hg7m8>
- speakers <http://tinyurl.com/29hkw>
- exhibitors <http://tinyurl.com/2erny5>
- hotel information <http://tinyurl.com/2ckorj>
- registration online and by mail
- Family History Writers Conference
- Louisiana-California Creole Connections tract

The exhibitors this year include many of the most popular and important organizations serving today's genealogists, including

- Ancestry.com
- Salt Lake City Family History Library / FamilySearch.org
- Everton Publishers
- The Genealogy Shelf
- Godfrey Memorial Library
- Genealogy websites RootsTelevision and USGenweb
- Numerous area genealogical and heritage societies

If anyone has an unpublished article or short genealogical report about an African American family in **Washington Territory or State** the Washington State Genealogical Society would be happy to publish it in their next journal, due out in July. You can contact Bob Witherspoon for the details. His email is [RGWSPOON@aol.com](mailto:RGWSPOON@aol.com) and his phone number is 360-734-9835

## Throwing More Light on False Copyright Claims

By James F. Ramaley, Ph.D

In "Examining False Copyright Claims" (RootsWeb Review 30 Nov 2005), I urged the genealogical community to avoid the practice of placing copyright notices on works that are not eligible for copyright. See: <http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/review/2005/1130.txt>

Reader comments and questions to that article fell into three categories:

1. Exactly what is copyrightable in genealogy?
2. How can a person protect against further copying of his or her work (copyrightable or not)? and
3. What is the harm in inserting a copyright notice even if the work is not copyrightable?

Before commenting on these points, let me call attention to one of the most readable books that covers general U.S. copyright: It's "101 Questions about Copyright Law," by Andrew Alpern, (Dover Publishing, 1999). His book should be required reading for anyone who wishes to, or needs to understand copyright.

Now to point Number 1 point - It is important to restate the primary reason for copyright -- to spread knowledge. Copyright does this by protecting for an author the financial benefits that might be gained by copying his or her creative works for a limited period. The absolutely key criteria for any work to be copyrightable is that it must be ORIGINAL and CREATIVE.

Original means original with the author – don't expect to copyright something that you have discovered and copied or heard from another party. Also, facts -- such as birth, marriage, or death dates -- are never original and are usually given as prime examples of non copyrightable material.

Creative is more than a flowery description of facts. We recognize creativity in a new play or a new song but when we try to make our family histories more interesting by simply changing paragraph structure or by using various phrasing for "he died in 1839" we are not being creative -- in the legal sense.

In genealogy, most citations are to works that are in the public domain such as the factual material in an obituary or in a church registry. Such data is not subject to copyright and so only the CREATIVE text that is original with the author is copyrightable.

Point Number 2 - Many who contacted me did so because they had had an unpleasant experience in which large sections of some genealogical work of theirs had been copied off their website, etc. and incorporated into someone else's genealogy -- without even the courtesy of an acknowledgement. They felt that the hard work they had done in assembling their history was unfairly taken and used by an uncaring cousin.

This is all too common. We amateur genealogists are driven neither by a profit motive nor did we start our hobby with a goal of becoming famous as a family historian. Generally we began our study to learn more about our ancestors' lives and to share this knowledge with others. But we are only human and become upset when our work and efforts are slighted. This upset is probably magnified in genealogy because our study of ancestors leads us to appreciate the legacy we have been given. We are quite willing to share with a newly found cousin, but if that person re-copies the facts we worked so hard to discover and fails to mention our help, we become irritated.

Ironically, a cause of the copier's failure to cite sources may stem from an implied threat of suing for "copyright infringement." Perhaps we would get better results if we replace the (usually false) copyright notice with something like: "You may use all data on this website but remember that genealogical work is always subject to revision. If you copy some of my material, your readers will appreciate a citation to my site so that they may see if my data has been updated." (And, of course, the "golden rule" of source citation requires that you cite your sources as you would have others cite you.)

Assembling the facts that go into a family history is not usually a creative act in the view of copyright law. It does represent many hours of hard work and expense in visiting courthouses, copying census records, or analyzing conflicting "facts." This effort should be appreciated and acknowledged, but hard work and money spent do not necessarily result in something that becomes protectable intellectual property. If you rely on copyright to correct bad manners (or ignorance about citations) you are certain to be disappointed.

It is possible that you could try to prevent further copying of your genealogy by inserting a "terms of use" notice for your work where you prohibit any user from

redistributing the material to others. But this seems counter to the spirit of amateur genealogy. If you really don't want others to share in your discoveries, perhaps you should reconsider why you are even publishing anything.

The bottom line is that if you have published or deposited in a public library some family history (or shared that information or GEDCOMs with anyone), it will certainly be copied and you will not be able to prevent that by a copyright claim. Since most genealogists are interested in having their family notes found and used by others, depositing and sharing genealogical work is good. But don't expect to be able to control further use or misuse of your work.

Point Number 3 - Question 111 (p. 56) of Alpern's book discusses the "intersection of copyright law and criminal law." I quote from his answer (with his permission):

"At the lesser level of a violation, the copyright law provides that falsely representing a material fact in a copyright application or other written statement filed in connection with an application carries a fine of up to \$2,500. A maximum fine in the same amount may be imposed on one who fraudulently removes or alters a copyright notice on a copyrighted work, or who fraudulently places a copyright notice on an item, or who fraudulently distributes -- or imports with intent to distribute -- an item with a copyright notice on it that the person knows to be false." In other words, falsely asserting a copyright is also a violation of the law.

I want to stress the value of registering material that you believe to be copyrightable. Since registration with the copyright office is no longer required in order to obtain some of the benefits of copyright, many people just put a copyright symbol on their work and forget about it. However the law specifically requires that a copyright must be registered before an infringement suit can even be initiated. Moreover, attorney fees and other damages can be recovered in an infringement suit only if the alleged infringement occurred AFTER the work has been registered -- a very valuable incentive for registration.

Registration costs only \$30 and instructions are available at <http://www.copyright.gov/>

The complete article is published in the *RootsWeb Review* 29 March 2006, Vol. 9, No. 13

***CAAGS needs volunteers***  
***Please see any board member if you are interested***





# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**May 2007      Volume 19      Number 5**

Ten Issues Published Annually  
ISSN 1083-8937

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

### General Membership Meetings

Third Saturday monthly at 10am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

### 2007 Board of Directors

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
Melrose Bell – Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Anjail Bakeer – Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes – Parliamentarian/Former President  
Gena Weaver – Webmaster (visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org))

### Committee Chairs

Tressia Bennett – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

On April 13<sup>th</sup> the CAAGS board met at the Mayme A. Clayton Library and Museum. Many thanks to her son Avery Clayton for the invitation, the tour and future outlook on the new home of the collection.

At the CAAGS general meeting on April 21<sup>st</sup> Carl Montague from the South Los Angeles Mortuary and his wife gave an overview of the various burial options they offer, records kept at their facility and a list of mortuaries in the greater Los Angeles area. Our members had many question for them. If you missed the meeting you can visit them at [southlamortuary@la.twcbe.com](mailto:southlamortuary@la.twcbe.com).

Christine Watkins submitted her resignation as treasurer and a self nomination from the floor was accepted at the general meeting. Anjail Bakeer stepped up to the plate and was voted to be our new treasurer effective immediately. CAAGS continually needs volunteers to make our society the best that it can be. If you are interested in volunteering please see any board member.

Mary Alequin-Sosa and Gena Weaver will give presentations at our May meeting on cemeteries and funeral homes.

**Reminder** – CAAGS has changed the format of our general meeting effective with the April meeting. We will no longer be providing our potluck at each meeting. We will provide light refreshments on a volunteer basis. You are encouraged to bring a bag lunch if you wish to eat during our meetings.

*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) or submit them on computer disk to the editor. Visit our new website at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org).*

## 2007 Calendar of Events

### May 12

Dick Eastman, author and editor of "Eastman's Online Genealogy newsletter" San Diego all day seminar. For more info visit [www.egssd.org](http://www.egssd.org)

### May 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Ron Bastiste beginners class, Probate and Land Records; Gena Weaver & Marie Alequin-Sosa cemeteries and funeral homes

### June 1

CAAGS board meeting, 6:30pm

### June 8-10

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree and Resource Expo**; For more info visit [www.scsgsgenealogy.com](http://www.scsgsgenealogy.com)

### June 16

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Ron Bastiste beginners class; Guest Speaker Charlotte Bocage – In The Beginning A Musical Legacy.

### July 21

No CAAGS general meeting

### August 14-18

The Federation of Genealogical Societies invites you to join them in Ft. Wayne, IN, at the annual National Conference. Local Host Allen County Public Library. For more info go to [www.fgs.org](http://www.fgs.org)

### August 18

No CAAGS general meeting

### September 15

West Coast Summit, Phoenix, AZ; More info to come  
*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

In Southern California there are four prime genealogical research facilities. Charlotte Bocage will be conducting a field trip to one of them on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to the downtown Los Angeles Public Library. If you've hit a stumbling block and need to "hit the books" this is your opportunity. Please meet me at 1:30pm at the library located at 630 W. Fifth St, (corner of Flower), on lower level 4, the History and Genealogy Department at the information desk just as you enter the door after getting off the escalator. Call 213-228-7000 for directions and parking information. You must bring your pedigree charts so I can assist you after the tour. This tour will be provided one time only so please be prompt. Contact Charlotte at 323-669-1982 for questions.

## Websites of Interest

### California Gold Rush

While looking at the science news on the internet, I found an interesting article that is sure to interest many genealogists. Some of you may have ancestors who originally came to California during the gold rush. Well, Sutter's Mill has some secrets that are just now being unearthed - literally! The article is entitled: Gold Rush Era Human Remains Unearthed - here is a link:  
<http://www.localnewswatch.com/benton/stories/index.php?>

[action=fullnews&id=60893](#)

### What is Questions and Ancestors?

A weekly series that focuses on genealogy questions submitted by the broadcast audience. Co-hosts Emily Wilbur (professional genealogical researcher) and Darius Gray (journalist and co-director of Freedman's Records Project), along with other family history experts field your e-mail questions.

The pre-recorded audio broadcasts are available to be downloaded (free). They can be accessed at <http://www.byub.org/questionsandancestors/> click the link "episodes information"

The TV series is offered on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. check your local listings for availability.

### Finding Books That Are Catalogued Online

There is an easy way to find books that are in libraries that have their catalogues linked online. This is most public libraries, many college libraries and some genealogical/historical society libraries.

The site is WorldCat [OCLC] <http://www.worldcat.org/>

Use the search engine to search for a specific title or author or subject. A search for William D. Bennett gave a list of books he had written. Click on the desired book title and it will give a list of libraries that hold that book. If you enter your zip code, it will even sort the libraries by distance from your home.

### How Many of You Are There?

Well, there's only one Genealogue -- and 1,556,837 Christophers and 26,997 Dunhams in the United States. You can play around with your own name at How Many of Me -- but with one caveat. You're out of luck if you have an unusual name because it only works for the 88,799 most popular surnames.

## SCGS 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree

Visitors to the SCGS website at [www.scsgsgenealogy.com](http://www.scsgsgenealogy.com) will see that they have added a new, extensive section. All of the details for the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Genealogy Jamboree and Resource Expo (June 8-10, 2007, at the Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel and Convention Center) are now available online. Click on the Jamboree box in the middle of the page when you go to the site and you will find:

- day-by-day schedule <http://tinyurl.com/2hg7m8>
- speakers <http://tinyurl.com/29hkow>
- exhibitors <http://tinyurl.com/2erny5>
- hotel information <http://tinyurl.com/2ckorj>
- registration online and by mail
- Family History Writers Conference
- Louisiana-California Creole Connections tract

## Freedman's Savings and Trust Company

The Company was incorporated by an act of Congress approved March 3, 1865, as a banking institution established in the city of Washington, District of Columbia, for the benefit of freed slaves. The military savings banks at Norfolk, Va., and Beaufort, S.C., were transferred to the Company soon after it was founded. From 1865 through 1870 a total of 33 branches were established, including an office that was opened in New York, N.Y. in 1866.

In 1874 the Company failed. The information contained in many of the registers is as follows: account number, name of depositor, date of entry, place born, place brought up, residence, age, complexion, name of employer or occupation, wife or husband, children, father, mother, brothers and sisters, remarks, and signature. The early books sometimes also contain the name of the former master or mistress and the name of the plantation. In many entries not all the requested data are given. Copies of death certificates have been pinned to some of the entries. In each case the certificate has been filmed immediately after the page that shows the registration of the person's signature.

The registers are arranged alphabetically by name of state. The entries are arranged alphabetically by name of city where the bank was located, there-under chronologically by date when the account was established, and there-under numerically by account number. Many numbers are missing, a few are out of numerical order, and in some cases blocks of numbers were not used. Many registers seem to be missing. The volume for Philadelphia, Pa., dated January 7, 1870, to June 26, 1874, contains signatures of officers of societies.

Freedman's Savings and Trust Company \* Registers of signatures of depositors 1865-1874: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New York City, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington D.C. - Microfilm of original records at the National Archives and Records Service in Washington, D.C.; \*Also on microfilm at the LDS Family History Library.

### **Oral Recordings From Black Families To Be Archived By Planned Smithsonian Black History Museum**

*By Brett Zongker Associated Press Writer*

**Washington (AP)** - The Corporation for Public Broadcasting announced a new project Wednesday that hopes to record at least 1,500 oral histories from black families over the next year to be placed in the archives of the Smithsonian's future National Museum of African American History and Culture.

"One of the greatest treasures of African America is the stories, the words, the family memories," said Lonnie Bunch, director of the museum, which is planned for the National Mall.

"In essence, this is really one of the ways we will help America to remember by preserving those words," he said. The audio CD recordings will be produced by the New York-based nonprofit group Sound Portraits Productions, which produces the StoryCorps interview series on National Public Radio.

The first recording sessions were planned for February 15 in Atlanta through a mobile recording studios that will stop in nine cities over the next year.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is funding the \$1.4 million StoryCorps Griot project. Part of the project's name, "griot," is derived from the West African tradition of storytelling where a respected tribe member, a "griot," is a living repository of the community's history.

The mobile recording units also will travel to Chicago; Clarksdale, Miss.; Detroit; Memphis, Tenn.; Montgomery, Ala.; Newark, N.J.; Oakland, Calif.; and Selma, Ala.

StoryCorps Griot: <http://www.storycorpsgriot.net>

### **Encyclopedia of Jim Crow**

The editors and advisory board of the Encyclopedia of Jim Crow, to be published by Greenwood Press in 2008, announce its call for contributors for its three-volume set. The chronological range of the Encyclopedia of Jim Crow is 1880 to 1965.

The number of proposed entries for the Encyclopedia of Jim Crow currently totals 370. A-level entries are 3000 to 5000 words in length, B-level entries are 1500 to 3000 words in length, and C-level entries are 500 to 1500 words in length. Contributors are encouraged to write multiple entries, but no more than five entries per contributor will be accepted. Deadline for submissions will be four months after the date of assignment. Please do not respond to this call unless you are confident that you can complete your contribution(s) by that date.

Preference will be given to college professors, advanced graduate students, and published writers who have a demonstrated background in examining Jim Crow, its history, its cultural and political implications, and its legacy. However, independent scholars who have a demonstrated background in publication and Jim Crow will also be considered. Please send an abbreviated c.v. (no more than 2 pages) and your professional affiliation to either of this address: [editorsjimcrow@gmail.com](mailto:editorsjimcrow@gmail.com), or

contact Nikki Brown or Barry Stentiford, Department of History, Grambling State University, at 318-274-2256.

Compensation available for contributors who write substantial entries or multiple entries. Prospective contributors will receive an assignment, contributors' guidelines, and sample entries by e-mail followed by a release form mailed from the publisher to be signed and returned. Completed entries are subject to the normal editing process required for quality publications and are accepted for publication at the discretion of the editor, advisory board, and publisher.

Nikki Brown, Chair, Department of History and Geography, Grambling State University, P.O. Drawer 4247, Grambling, LA 71245; Phone: 318-274-2256 Fax: 318-274-3260

### **ANCESTRY.COM Breaks Barriers In Black Family History Research With Launch Of Largest Online Collection Of African-American Historical Records**

*Newly Expanded Collection Traces Back to Thousands of African-Americans Living Before the Civil War*

Ancestry.com, the world's largest online resource for family history, has announced the launch of the largest collection of African-American family history records available and searchable online.

The collection, which represents the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, features more than 55 million black family history records that collectively dispel the common misconception that very few historical records were kept for African-Americans and that tracing African-American ancestry is virtually impossible.

Ancestry.com's newly expanded African-American Historical Records Collection contains U.S. Colored Troops service records of those who served in the Civil War and Freedmen's Bureau records as well as a myriad of other African-American specific resources such as photos, slave narratives from 3,500 former slaves, and the soon-to-be-added Southern Claims Commission records.

The collection also includes 53 million African-American records in the complete U.S. Federal Census Collection (1790 - 1930), which is now searchable with a new, special filter that identifies African-American entries, regardless of their description in the census such as "colored" "Negro" "black" "mulatto" or other variations. The 1870 census is a major milestone in black family history as the first census enumeration to list formerly enslaved African-Americans by name.

A cross-section of the collection also reveals several black icons such as Rosa Parks, Langston Hughes and Louis

Armstrong, as well as the ancestral legacies of James Earl Jones and Denzel Washington. Other celebrity highlights include:

- **Jada Pinkett-Smith:** Actress Jada Pinkett-Smith, wife of actor Will Smith, descends from a line of African-Americans free before the Civil War. Her great-great-grandfather Daniel Pinkett was just a young boy when he was recorded in the 1860 census. At that time, free blacks were the only African-Americans noted in the census. After the Civil War, in 1870, the 13-year-old could not read or write and had not attended school during the previous year. Ten years later in 1880, not only could 23-year-old Daniel read and write, he was a school teacher.
- **Maya Angelou:** According to the 1930 census, the poet's 18-year-old mother, Vivian Johnson, was a widow with two young children, two-year-old Maya (who is listed by her birth name, Marguerite Johnson) and three-year-old son Bailey. The young family is living in St. Louis, Mo., with Vivian's parents; Vivian's mother's name is Marguerite.
- **Frederick Douglass:** In January 1871, the famed abolitionist's Freedman's Savings Bank account at the Washington, D.C. branch, received a \$1,500 deposit. Douglass' bank record was signed by his son Lewis, suggesting that Douglass was not present at the time of the deposit. Douglass served as President of the Freedman's Saving Bank during Post-Civil War Reconstruction.
- **Duke Ellington:** A 19-year-old Duke Ellington listed his occupation as messenger for the U.S. government on the World War I draft registration card he filled out in 1918. His place of employment was Chief of Staff, War Department, Washington, D.C.

Thirty years ago, Alex Haley's *Roots* ignited fervor for black family history that swept the entire nation, and yet tracing African-American ancestry remains a challenging adventure, said Tony Burroughs, African-American family historian and author of *Black Roots: A Beginners Guide to Tracing the African American Family Tree* (Simon & Schuster, 2001). Ancestry.com's expansive collection is a major breakthrough that opens the gateway for African-Americans everywhere to dig deeper into the lives of their ancestors via the Internet. Though black family history still presents a unique set of challenges, this collection is major stepping stone that makes African-American genealogy resources more accessible and illuminates the legacies of past generations for us to celebrate today.

To commemorate the launch of the collection, Ancestry.com is offering users three-day free access to its entire African-American Historical Records Collection. To explore the African-American Historical Records Collection, visit [www.ancestry.com/aahistory](http://www.ancestry.com/aahistory).

*For complete article go to Ancestry.com PROVO, UTAH February*





# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**June/July 2007 Volume 19 Number 6**

Ten Issues Published Annually  
ISSN 1083-8937

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

### **General Membership Meetings**

Third Saturday monthly at 10am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

### **2007 Board of Directors**

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
Melrose Bell – Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Anjail Bakeer – Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes – Parliamentarian/Former President  
Gena Weaver – Webmaster (visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org))

### **Committee Chairs**

Tressia Bennett – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

Discover your family scrolls by looking on the internet. Many family history's are there for the taking. Don't forget in your travels to meet with as many family members as possible. Ask questions, listen to and document as much from them as possible of what they tell you. In other words reach out and touch them for information on your family. Enjoy your family reunions and vacations.

For you members that were not at our May meeting you missed out on some beneficial and valuable information from Gena Weaver about funeral programs, newspapers, funeral homes and cemeteries. She also discussed some tips and challenges that we may face using these resources for our research. The second part of the presentation will be given by Maria Alequin-Sosa during our June meeting. Maria will discuss researching at cemeteries, reading headstones and other family history that can be found in a cemetery.

Thanks to James Thornton for his show and tell about his Louisiana connections. Also thanks to Marilyn White for instructing our beginners class.

CAAGS will have a booth at the Jamboree in June, held in Burbank, CA. We'll also be looking for CAAGS members at the West Coast Summit, September 14-16, held in Phoenix, AZ.

To all CAAGS members have a safe and wonderful summer. We'll see you in September.

*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) or submit them on computer disk to the editor. Visit our new website at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org).*

## 2007 Calendar of Events

**June 8-10**

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree and Resource Expo**; For more info visit [www.scsgsgenealogy.com](http://www.scsgsgenealogy.com)

**June 16**

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm - Ron Bastiste beginners class; Guest speaker Maria Alequin Sosa – Part II, Cemetery research.

**July 21**

No CAAGS general meeting

**August 14-18**

The Federation of Genealogical Societies invites you to join them in Ft. Wayne, IN, at the annual National Conference. Local Host Allen County Public Library. For more info go to [www.fgs.org](http://www.fgs.org)

**August 18**

No CAAGS general meeting

**September 14-16**

West Coast Summit, Phoenix, AZ; [www.bfghs.net](http://www.bfghs.net)

No CAAGS general meeting. Keynote speaker, Dr.

Matthew C. Whitaker

**September 22**

Jurupa FHC Seminar, 5950 Serendipity Road

Riverside, CA Keynote Speaker: Barbara Renick, for info

[http://roz.heapsclan.com/html/jurupa\\_fhc.html](http://roz.heapsclan.com/html/jurupa_fhc.html)

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

## Websites of Interest

### Underground Railroad

Want to learn more about the experience of trying to make your way to freedom via the Underground Railroad? Check out this gently interactive offering from National Geographic:

The Journey - You are a slave. Your body, your time, your very breath belong to a farmer in 1850s Maryland. Six long days a week you tend his fields and make him rich. You have never tasted freedom. You never expect to. And yet . . . your soul lights up when you hear whispers of attempted escape. Freedom means a hard, dangerous trek. Do you try it?

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad/>

### A Special Thank You

On behalf of CAAGS we would like to thank **Rita Flowers** for the generous donation of recyclable items that were given to Gena Weaver after the April meeting. Gena split Rita's donation and added it to her own using the proceeds to buy a table top microphone stand to go with our new PA equipment.

## Bunch Island Preservation Project Gets 25 Grand Donation From Isiah Washington

Great news for Sierra Leone, Priscilla's Posse and the Homecoming Projects in Charleston, Newport and The Low Country. Give the brother some respect for his insight and generous contribution and hope it spreads. Not only will this help towards the funding to fully excavate and map the fortress and slave houses but it will bring more tourists and their dollars to Sierra Leone. Joe Opala has made this his life's work and his efforts are paying off in wonderful ways to Salone. Priscilla's story and Bunch Island history have been included into the curriculum and the three Homecomings have made the people very aware of there *Gullah cousins* on this side of the Atlantic. With the museum exhibits and newspaper articles on the east coast more and more positive attention is put on Sierra Leone and West Africa in general. It ain't all blood diamonds and coups.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Annual West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy

To be held in Phoenix, AZ

September 14-16

Double Tree Guest Suites

320 North 44<sup>th</sup> Street

Hosted by Black Family Genealogy and History Society

3842 North Lomond Circle

Meza AZ 85215-1032

[www.bfghs.net](http://www.bfghs.net)

Early registration postmarked by August 24<sup>th</sup> - \$65

After August 24<sup>th</sup> \$80

No registration at the conference

Luncheon and syllabus not guaranteed with late registration

Make check or money order payable to BFGHS and mail to

BFGHS Attn: Registration

PO Box 90683

Phoenix, AZ 85066-0683

### Magnolia Plantation Foundation Sponsors Digital Archive of Plantation, Slave Records

The Magnolia Plantation Foundation, the not-for-profit affiliate of Magnolia Plantation and Gardens near Charleston, S.C., has agreed to sponsor an online archive of plantation records that documents the family lineages of enslaved Africans and free African-Americans who worked at Magnolia before and after emancipation.

Low Country Africana will be a precedent-setting website dedicated entirely to records that document the family genealogy, history and daily lives of free and enslaved people at Magnolia. The workers are Gullah people who

have retained more of their African way of life than any other black community in the United States.

Toni Carrier, the website's creator, said with the plantation records "we will reconstruct the lineages of enslaved Africans and African Americans on Drayton family plantations, so that descendants might connect with ancestors and learn more about their lives. When you delve into the plantation records, stories begin to emerge of the courage, struggles, resilience, and life experiences of those who lived through slavery."

Low Country Africana is expected to be launched in March 2008 at the same time that Magnolia is scheduled to debut its "From Slavery to Freedom" project, an archaeological study and restoration of the plantation's original slave street that will tell the story of the enslaved and free workers at Magnolia. The workers lived in four 1850s cabins and one turn-of-the-century dwelling that still stand today.

The Annenberg Foundation has awarded a \$100,000 grant to the Magnolia Plantation Foundation to support From Slavery to Freedom: The Magnolia Plantation Slave Cabin Project.

Taylor Drayton Nelson, director of Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, said the Magnolia Plantation Foundation's sponsorship of the Low country Africana website is a unique and fresh way of looking at the subject of slavery, genealogy and African-American history.

The Low Country Africana website is affiliated with the Africana Heritage Project, based at the University of South Florida, which offers a free online archive of more than 4,000 documents, transcriptions and pictures. The USF Africana Heritage Project is an all-volunteer research project of the Africana Studies department at the University of South Florida, dedicated to rediscovering records that document the names and lives of enslaved people, freed persons and their descendants, and sharing those records on the free Internet site [www.africanaheritage.com](http://www.africanaheritage.com).

The Magnolia Foundation is taking an unflinching look at its African-American history, she said. They not only are opening their family records for our research but in fact funding an entire website that will serve as an enduring digital archive for plantation records of the Low Country.

There are many, many legacies of slavery in our country that will take a long time to reverse and to heal. Not being able to trace enslaved ancestors does not have to be one of those legacies, she said. The foundation is taking significant steps to fill the information gap of the role that Africans and African Americans have played in shaping American history.

Charleston was a major point of entry for enslaved Africans

who were brought to America, Carrier said. Scholars have estimated that some 60 percent of African Americans alive today had at least one ancestor who came from or through Charleston. These records are therefore important pieces of the puzzle for African Americans tracing their family's heritage.

Magnolia was owned by the Drayton family. The family owned as many as half a dozen plantations. At Magnolia, there were about 40 enslaved individuals at the time of the Civil War.

Low Country Africana will contain more than the Magnolia plantation records. It will include:

- A searchable database of primary historical documents of the Low Country that would be of interest to genealogists, historians and other scholars.
- A place where archives with major holdings on Low Country plantations can share birth, death and other records of enslaved people and communities.
- A place where key Low Country researchers can share content of their choosing with readers.
- Teachers resources and lesson plans for using the primary documents on Low Country Africana in the classroom.
- Family tree files containing information on family lineages constructed from plantation records with associated documents, photographs and multimedia. Readers will be able to download family files and print custom reports to build books on their family's history.

Nelson said the Africana Heritage Project is rediscovering these forgotten documents and heretofore neglected history. They are able through modern techniques of research to bring the pieces of the puzzle together so any individual interested in his or her own history or African American history in general will be able to benefit from the project's expert research.

For more information about Magnolia Plantation and Gardens and From Slavery to Freedom: The Magnolia Plantation Slave Cabin Project, please contact Jane Taylor Knight at (843)-571-1266.

For more information about the USF Africana Heritage Project, please visit [www.africanaheritage.com](http://www.africanaheritage.com) or contact Toni Carrier at (813) 246-2201

### **Commemorating the Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade 2007 – 2008 Charleston, SC Call for Papers**

To mark the Bicentennial of the abolition of the Atlantic Slave trade in the United States and the British Empire, the Program in the Carolina Low Country and Atlantic World (CLAW) at the College of Charleston will hold a



conference from March 26-29, 2008 focusing on the trade, and its effects on the Low Country and the American South as a whole. Topics to be covered include: African culture in the Low Country; Low Country Caribbean trade connections; impact on the southern economy; the growth of the internal slave trade; Charleston as a slave trading center; influence on pro- and anti-slavery ideology; the growth of “scientific” racism; attempts to reopen the trade; and the illegal importation of slaves.

As one of the key nodes for the importation of slaves into continental North America, Charleston is a prime location for a conference such as this. It was a major entrepot for African and Caribbean slaves and, as Walter Johnson has highlighted in *Slave by Slave*, also a major transit point for slaves being transferred from the upper South to the deep South. In addition, Charleston politicians such as Robert Barnwell Rhett were major supporters of attempts to reopen the trade. This conference will be the academic culmination of a city-wide series of events marking the bicentenary and beginning to address Charleston's role in the international slave trade (and its legacy) more directly and thoroughly than ever before. It is therefore in line with a number of local initiatives that will address the “acknowledgment gap” between white and black contributions to local culture and history--most prominent among these efforts are the federally supported Gullah-Geechee and the city’s commitment to its proposed International African American Museum. Because of the density of slave trade-related sites people attending the conference will have an unparalleled opportunity to tour historically pertinent sites, including local archives as well as buildings, plantations, and the like.

Abstracts of between 250 and 400 words, accompanied by a 2-page c.v., should be sent to conference convener Simon Lewis at [lewiss@cofc.edu](mailto:lewiss@cofc.edu) before Friday, July 20th, 2007. Notification of acceptance will be sent out by the end of August, and completed papers will then need to be submitted electronically before January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008, so that all accepted papers can be posted in full on a password-protected website prior to the conference. At the conference itself, presenters will have ten minutes each to extrapolate from their written papers and engage in seminar-style discussions with their colleagues. In our previous conferences on such topics as the Haitian Revolution, Manumission in the Atlantic World, and Low Country and Caribbean foodways, we have found this process to be highly productive and intellectually invigorating because of the ample time available for discussion and the opportunities junior scholars have to interact with the major players in their field.

Among the scholars who have already committed to the conference as speakers, panel chairs, commentators, or presenters are: Paul Lovejoy, Joseph Inikori, Kenneth Morgan, Jerome Handler, James Walvin, David Eltis, and

Vincent Carretta. For further information on the Carolina Low Country & Atlantic World program, please visit our website at [www.cofc.edu/atlanticworld](http://www.cofc.edu/atlanticworld) or <http://www.cofc.edu/atlanticworld> or call Simon Lewis at 843-953-1920.

**Ordering from Ancestry is now easier than ever!** They have created a new store dedicated to wholesalers, resellers, and libraries. Some of the great benefits you will enjoy are:

Be invoiced or pay online as you check out. Browse and search through all our current products. View new products from Ancestry Publishing by simply going to our “New Products” tab. View your invoice before you check out so you always know the exact amount each order will be. Access to your own order history and invoices online under your “my account” page. Update your new account information anytime. Many different specials and discounts

All you need to get started and order from this new store is a username and password. To receive your username and password just e-mail our team at [wholesale@ancestry.com](mailto:wholesale@ancestry.com). We will then reply to your e-mail with your username, password, and a link to the store.

### **New York Historical Society**

The New-York Historical Society (N-YHS) opened “New York Divided: Slavery and the Civil War,” the final exhibition in its groundbreaking series on slavery and its impact on the people, landscape, institutions and economy of New York. The exhibition runs through September 3, 2007.

“New York Divided” provides a bold look at one of the most challenging periods in our City’s history, when it was torn by the violence of the 1863 draft riots, produced some of the most significant figures in the Abolitionist movement, and became the economic engine of the country,” says Louise Mirrer, president and CEO of the New-York Historical Society.

The exhibition explores the dual role New York played as a key commercial and political bulwark of slavery in the South-following emancipation in the State-and as a major center of the nation’s abolitionist movement. Through a range of original historic documents, objects and interactive displays, the show examines one of the most important periods in American history, enhancing the visitor’s understanding of the great struggles of the time, and the crucial efforts of New Yorkers-black and white-in the fight for freedom and equality that bore fruit at the close of the Civil War and in the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments.

For more information about “New York Divided” please visit [www.nydivided.org](http://www.nydivided.org)



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**August/September 2007 Volume 19 Number 7**

Ten Issues Published Annually  
ISSN 1083-8937

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

### General Membership Meetings

Third Saturday monthly at 10am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

### 2007 Board of Directors

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
Melrose Bell – Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Anjail Bakeer – Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes – Parliamentarian/Former President  
Gena Weaver – Webmaster (visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org))

### Committee Chairs

Tressia Bennett – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bodge – NGS Delegate

It has been a strange summer so far, with some Northern as well as Southern states receiving so much rain and flooding this year. I hope the weather didn't stop your travel and family reunion plans. Remember that we'll be looking forward to your stories and research findings from the summer. You will have an opportunity to 'Show & Tell' at our October meeting.

A great big "thanks" to all of you that have been keeping me in your prayers. I'm on the mend.

It's time for our stand-by members to take the plunge into leadership roles, for the greater good of CAAGS. We have been one of the most outstanding genealogical societies in the Western part of the country. Some of you are professors, highly skilled office workers, administrators, teachers, and librarians. Do a reality check and become more connected to our genealogical society as volunteers and officers, doing for us whatever you do on a professional level. We need many, many volunteers to remain one of the top societies for years to come. We need to leave something meaningful to our children, our grandchildren, and to the African American culture. All we need is your willingness.

Discover your purpose. Many believe that before we come into this life we choose a purpose, a mission. Do you know what yours is? Listen to your heart, the voice of your light. Declare it. Then do it.

*Only a genealogist regards  
a step backwards as progress*

*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) or submit them on computer disk to the editor. Visit our new website at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org).*

## 2007 Calendar of Events

### August 3

No CAAGS board meeting

### August 14-18

The Federation of Genealogical Societies invites you to join them in Ft. Wayne, IN, at the annual National Conference. Local Host Allen County Public Library. For more info go to [www.fgs.org](http://www.fgs.org)

### August 18

No CAAGS general meeting

### September 7

CAAGS board meeting

### September 14-16

West Coast Summit, Phoenix, AZ; [www.bfghs.net](http://www.bfghs.net)  
Keynote speaker, Dr. Matthew C. Whitaker

### September 15

No CAAGS general meeting. See you at the Summit

### September 22

Jurupa FHC Seminar, 5950 Serendipity Road  
Riverside, CA Keynote Speaker: Barbara Renick, for info  
[http://roz.heapsclan.com/html/jurupa\\_fhc.html](http://roz.heapsclan.com/html/jurupa_fhc.html)

### October 5

CAAGS board meeting, 6:30pm

### October 20

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm – Show and Tell

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

## Websites of Interest

### Free African Americans of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland and Delaware

The history of the free African American community as told through the family history of most African Americans who were free in the Southeast during the colonial period.

About 2,000 pages of family histories based on all colonial court order and minute books on microfilm at the state archives of Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina and Delaware (over 1000 volumes), 1790-1810 census records, tax lists, wills, deeds, free Negro registers, marriage bonds, parish registers, Revolutionary War pension files, etc. There are also another 2,000 pages or so of abstracted tax lists, census records, etc., under "Colonial Tax Lists..."  
<http://www.freeafricanamericans.com/>

### The Library of Virginia

The LVA Catalogs combine the "Book, Journals, etc." catalog, the Archives and Manuscripts catalog and the Digital Library Program databases. You can search these catalogs simultaneously by using the "LVA Catalogs" page. You may also search each catalog separately by clicking on the catalog name or clicking on Images, Index,

etc. in the orange menu bar. A list of all available catalogs in the system is accessible from the Images, Index, etc. page.  
[www.lva.lib.va.us/index.htm](http://www.lva.lib.va.us/index.htm)

### Ancestry.com and the FHC

We are happy to announce that Ancestry.com has found a solution to enable patrons at the Family History Library and Family History Centers to login to Ancestry using their personal accounts. We have been coordinating this deployment closely with representatives from the Family and Church History Department, the Family History Library, and administrative representatives of the Family History Centers.

They have created a new domain called [www.ancestryinstitution.com](http://www.ancestryinstitution.com) for the Family History Library and the Family History Centers to use to get access to the collections available to them by contract. With this new domain name, patrons at the FHL and local FHCs can login to their own personal accounts using [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) just like they would from home.

### Haley Family Part of StoryCorps Griot Initiative

This year is the 30th anniversary of the release of Roots, Alex Haley's masterpiece that pulled so many of us into our own roots quests. So it seems especially appropriate that his family would participate in the StoryCorps Griot Initiative, an effort to record the stories of at least 1,750 African Americans this year. You can read more about the Haley family's experience here.

Haley family contributes to trove of archived legacy (note: you may have to register to read the article)  
[http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/books/article/0,2850,MCA\\_484\\_5555780,00.html](http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/books/article/0,2850,MCA_484_5555780,00.html) or see StoryCorps' Griot Initiative at [storycorps.net/griot/](http://storycorps.net/griot/)

### Steps to a Successful Family Reunion

Now is the time to start planning for next year if you are thinking about hosting a family reunion. Following are a few tips you might find helpful.

**1) Which family?** It may seem obvious, but the first step for any family reunion is to decide who is family. Which side of the family are you inviting? Do you want to include only close relatives or all descendants of Great Grandpa Jones (or other common ancestor)? Are you inviting only direct-line relatives (parents, grandparents, grandkids) or do you plan to include cousins, second cousins, or third cousins, twice removed? Just remember, every step back on

the ancestral tree adds a ton of new potential attendees. Know your limits.

**2) Create a guest list.** Start by assembling a list of family members, including spouses, partners and children. Get in touch with at least one person from each branch of the family to help you track down contact information for each person on your list. Make sure to collect email addresses for those that have them - it really helps with updates and last-minute correspondence.

**3) Survey attendees.** If you're planning to include a lot of people in your family reunion, consider sending out a survey (by postal mail and/or email) to let people know that a reunion is in the works. This will help you gauge interest and preferences, and ask for help with the planning. Include possible dates, proposed reunion type, and a general location (discussing possible costs early on can discourage a positive response), and politely ask for a timely response to your questions. Add the names of interested relatives who return the survey to your reunion list for future mailings, and/or keep them up-to-date on reunion plans via a family reunion Web site.

**4) Form a reunion committee.** Unless this is a get-together of five sisters at Aunt Maggie's house, a reunion committee is almost essential to planning a smooth, successful family reunion. Put someone in charge of each major aspect of the reunion - location, social events, budget, mailings, record-keeping, etc. Why do all the work yourself if you don't have to?

**5) Select the date(s).** It's not much of a reunion if no one can attend. Whether you plan your family reunion to coincide with a family milestone or special day, summer vacation, or a holiday, it helps to poll family members (see step 3) to avoid time and date conflicts. Since family reunions can encompass everything from an afternoon barbecue to a large affair lasting three or more days, you'll also need to determine how long you plan to get together. A good rule of thumb - the farther people have to travel to reach the reunion location, the longer the reunion should last. Most importantly, remember that you won't be able to accommodate everyone. Choose your final date(s) based on what's best for the majority of attendees.

**6) Pick a location.** Aim for a family reunion location that is most accessible and affordable to the majority of people you want to attend. If family members are clustered in one area, then select a reunion location that's nearby. If everyone's scattered, then choose a central location to help cut down on travel expenses for far-flung relatives.

**7) Develop a budget.** This will determine the scale of the food, decorations, accommodations and activities for your family reunion. You can choose to have families pay for their own overnight accommodations, bring a covered dish,

etc., but unless you have another source of income, you'll also need to set a per-family registration fee to help with decoration, activity and location costs.

**8) Reserve a reunion site.** Once you've chosen a location and set a date, it's time to select a site for the reunion. "Going home" is a big draw for family reunions, so you may want to consider the old family homestead or other historic site connected to your family's past. Depending on the size of the reunion, you may be able to find a family member who will volunteer to have it at their home. For larger reunions, parks, hotels, restaurants and community halls are a good place to start. If you're planning a multi-day reunion, then consider a resort location where people can combine reunion activities with a family vacation.

**9) What about a theme?** Creating a theme for a family reunion is a great way to interest people and make them more likely to attend. It also makes things more fun when it comes to being imaginative with food, games, activities, invitations and just about every other aspect of the reunion. Family history themes are especially popular, as are reunions which celebrate a very special family member's birthday or anniversary, or the family's cultural heritage (i.e. Hawaiian luau). Show Time - Setting the Stage for a Memorable Family Reunion.

**10) Determine the menu.** Feeding a large group of people with different tastes is perhaps one of the trickiest parts of planning a reunion. Make it easy on yourself by selecting a menu that relates to your theme, or perhaps one that celebrates your family's heritage. Organize a group of family members to prepare the food for the family reunion or, if you have a large group and your budget allows, find a caterer or restaurant to do at least part of the work for you. A tasty menu makes for an unforgettable family reunion.

**11) Plan social activities.** You don't need to occupy everyone all the time, but planned activities and ice-breakers at your family reunion will provide an easy way for people who do not know each other well to comfortably spend time together. Include activities that will appeal to all ages and further family knowledge of shared heritage. You may also want to award prizes for special distinctions such as oldest family member or longest distance traveled to attend.

**12) Set the stage.** You've got a bunch of people, now what do you plan to do with them? It's time now to make arrangements for tents (if an outside reunion), chairs, parking decorations, programs, signs, t-shirts, goodie bags and other reunion-day requirements. This is the time to consult a family reunion checklist!

**13) Say cheese!** While many family members will no doubt bring their own cameras, it helps to also make plans to record the overall event. Whether you designate a specific

relative as the official reunion photographer, or hire a professional photographer to take photos or videos, you should prepare a list of the people and events that you want recorded. For spontaneous “moments,” purchase a dozen disposable cameras and hand them out to volunteer guests. Don’t forget to collect them at the end of the day!

**14) Invite the guests.** Once you have most of your plans in place, it’s time to invite the guests by mail, email and/or phone. You’ll want to do this way in advance to make sure and give everyone time to get it on their calendar. If you’re charging admission fees, mention this in the invitation and set an advance deadline by which at least a percentage of the ticket price is required (unless you’re wealthy enough to cover all of the costs yourself and can wait until the actual reunion for reimbursement). Tickets purchased in advance also means people will be less likely to cancel at the last moment! This is also a good opportunity to ask people, even if they can’t attend the reunion, to provide family trees, photos, collectibles and stories to share with other family members.

**15) Fund the extras.** If you don’t want to charge admission fees for your reunion, then you’ll need to plan for a little fund raising. Even if you do collect admissions, fund raising can provide money for some fancy “extras.” Creative ways for raising money include holding an auction or raffle at the reunion or making and selling family hats, t-shirts, books or reunion videos.

**16) Print up a program.** Create a program that outlines the lineup of scheduled reunion events to provide to family members as they arrive for the reunion. You may also want to send this out via email or your reunion Web site in advance of the reunion as well. This will help serve as a reminder to people of activities which may require they bring something with them, such as a photo wall or family tree chart.

**17) Decorate for the big day.** The big day is almost here and now it’s time to make sure it goes smoothly. Create catchy, easy-to-ready signs to point arriving guests to registration, parking, and important locations such as bathrooms. Purchase or make a guest book to collect signatures, addresses, and other important information, as well as serve as a permanent record of the reunion. Purchase pre-made name badges, or print your own, to facilitate mixing and mingling between unacquainted family members. Family tree wall charts are always a big hit as reunion attendees always want to know where they fit in to the family. Framed photos or printed posters of common ancestors or past family reunions are also popular. And, if you want to know what everyone thought of all your reunion planning, print up some evaluation forms for people to fill out as they leave.

**18) Keep the fun going.** Designate a volunteer or

volunteers to create and send out a post-reunion newsletter with stories, photos and news items from the reunion. If you collected family information, send along an updated genealogy chart as well. This is a great way to get people excited about the next reunion, as well as include less fortunate family members who were not able to attend.

## Finding Barack Obama’s Irish Roots

Well, it took a couple of months and lots of sleuthing, but we finally found out where Barack Obama’s Irish roots are from in the old country: Moneygall.

It was a combination of U.S. census records and tombstones that led me to zero in on Moneygall in then-Kings County, now County Offaly. I conducted the research in my capacity as Chief Family Historian for Ancestry.com, and enlisted the help of Irish expert Kyle Betit of ProGenealogists.com once I had a location. Then it was a matter of finding out exactly where the records we needed to solve the mystery resided today. That’s where Canon Neill came in, as the records turned out to be in the possession of one of his parishioners.

- Taken from *Finding Our Ancestors*, June 2007

## ‘O’ Magazine

The August 2007 issue has a write up about Mayme Clayton Library and Museum’s Hollywood to Harlem Exhibition that opened on June 2, 2007 and runs through August 25, 2007 at Casa Frela Gallery, 47 West 119th Street, New York City. The exhibition features a festival of classic films from the Clayton Film Archives and new original paintings by Avery Clayton. Opening night featured an exhibition of rare pre-Emancipation artifacts from the Mayme A. Clayton Collection.

### Share Your Family History Leads

Do you wait until you have concrete proof of a relationship to share a find with another family member? While you definitely don’t want to pass off an unproven theory as fact, it’s a good idea to share some of your hunches with other family members. Let them know that you’re still trying to prove a relationship, but share the interesting stories. They may be able to help you prove or disprove your theory, and getting them involved in the hunt may spur their interest and inspire them to join you in your family history quest!

*The past is a source of knowledge,  
and the future is a source of hope.  
Love of the past implies faith in the future.*  
- Stephen Ambrose, 1936-2002



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**October 2007    Volume 19    Number 8**

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ISSN 1083-8937

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

### **General Membership Meetings**

Third Saturday monthly at 10am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

### **2007 Board of Directors**

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
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Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Anjail Bakeer – Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes – Parliamentarian/Former President  
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### **Committee Chairs**

Tressia Bennett – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

Our October meeting is our Show and Tell, come prepared to share. This is also the time to think about your new officers for the 2008 election. Open positions include President, Second Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, Parliamentarian and FGS delegate. Let the CAAGS community know who you are by becoming an officer. How would you guide the society, make a difference today, bring your new ideas and words of wisdom to CAAGS. You can contact any of the current officers if you are interested or we may be contacting you to be an officer. Join the team.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy was held in September in Phoenix, AZ. This was one of the best ones yet. CAAGS had a large contingency present that included Charlotte Bocage, Ronald Batiste, Melrose Carson Bell, June Coggins and spouse, Ronald Fairley, Harold Jackson, Jr., Daisy Jenkins-Saffold, Ruth Odell, Ruth Palmer, June Rhinehart, Ophella Sanders, Marjorie Sholes, Barbara Reed-Thomas, James Thornton, Roxanne Davis Turner, Gena Weaver, Maria "Mary" Alequin Sosa, Cartellia Marie Bryant, Lulla Denson, Marietta Sue Welch, Odessa Yocum, Shirley Andrews, and your president Ron Higgins. If I missed anyone my apologies, I may not have noticed you while at the summit.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Matthew C. Whitaker, a professor of history at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ. He is an award winning scholar and author. His presentation was very enlightening and informative. He is making a difference. Those of you that did not attend the summit missed a treat. Start planning now for

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the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual West Coast Summit to be held on October 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in Seattle, WA.

Your president and Gena Weaver have been attending meetings with the Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter Day Saints to plan for the 2008 Discover Your Roots VI, to be held on March 15<sup>th</sup>. I was a co founder of the Roots Conference. Please read your newsletter as we update you on this event.

Welcome Back To All!

### 2007 Calendar of Events

#### October

Celebrating Family History Month

#### October 20

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm – Show and Tell

#### November 2

CAAGS board meeting; 6:30pm

#### November 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Request for nominations

#### December 8

CAAGS board meeting

#### December 18

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Holiday Party, Elections.

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Websites of Interest

#### Genealogical Cruises

Check out the links included in the article too.

[http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans\\_online\\_genealogy/2007/09/genealogy-cruis.html](http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2007/09/genealogy-cruis.html)

#### FGS annual conference on Rootstelevision.com

There's some interesting things to be seen here

[http://www.rootstelevision.com/players/player\\_conferences.php?bctid=1137849532](http://www.rootstelevision.com/players/player_conferences.php?bctid=1137849532)

#### Indian Census Schedules

Ancestry.com. U.S. Indian Census Schedules, 1885-1940 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2007. Original data: Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M595, 692 rolls); Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75; National Archives, Washington, D.C. About U.S. Indian Census Schedules, 1885-1940

This database contains an index to the Indian census rolls from 1885-1940. Information contained in this database includes: name (Indian and/or English), gender, age, birth date, relationship to head of family, marital status, tribe name, agency name, and reservation name.

This database contains an index to the Indian census rolls from 1885-1940. Information contained in this database includes:

- Name (Indian and/or English)
- Gender
- Age
- Birth date
- Relationship to head of family
- Marital status
- Tribe name
- Agency and reservation name

Other information about an individual, such as degree of Indian blood, as recorded in the later census years, may be available on the original record. Be sure to view the corresponding image in order to obtain all possible information about an individual.

#### Ethnic Tool Kits

We've gathered Web sites, books, organizations and other resources plus essential tips to get you started exploring your ethnic heritage. Select your heritage from the list. Check this page often, as we're adding new ethnic toolkits all the time.

[http://www.familytreemagazine.com/ethnic\\_intro.asp](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/ethnic_intro.asp)

#### Danny Glover to Direct Film On Slave Revolt

[http://www.mg.co.za/articlepage.aspx?area=/breaking\\_news/breaking\\_news\\_international\\_news/&articleid=308970](http://www.mg.co.za/articlepage.aspx?area=/breaking_news/breaking_news_international_news/&articleid=308970)

#### NARA Fees

On August 17, we published in the Federal Register a final rule amending our fee regulations for providing copies of records. Changes from the proposed rule include revising the proposed fees for some fixed-fee reproductions, especially reductions in fees for full Civil War pension files and Revolutionary War pension files.

Type of record	Order form	Fee
Passenger arrival lists	NATF Form 81	\$25.00
Federal Census requests	NATF Form 82	\$25.00
Eastern Cherokee applications to the Court of Claims	NATF Form 83.	\$25.00
Land entry records	NATF Form 84	\$40.00
Full pension file more than 75 years old	NATF Form 85	\$75.00
(Civil War and after), up to and including 100 pages.		
Full pension file (pre-Civil War)	NATF Form 85	\$50.00
Pension documents packet (selected records)	NATF Form 85	\$25.00
Bounty land warrant application files	NATF Form 85	\$25.00
Military service files more than 75 years old	NATF Form 86	\$25.00
Self-service electrostatic copies will be		\$0.25 per page in the Washington, DC, area, and \$0.20 per page at regional

archives and Presidential libraries. NARA-made electrostatic copies will be \$0.75 per page.

The final rule will affect individuals and Federal agencies; see the complete final rule at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/e.docket.access.gpo.gov/2007/pdf/E7-16233.pdf> (<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/e.docket.access.gpo.gov/2007/pdf/E7-16233.pdf>) ; An update to NARA 1653, NARA Reproduction Fee Schedule, will be distributed soon to include the new fees for reproductions no longer listed in the Code of Federal Regulations

## **October Is Family History Month Celebrate with Ten Easy Projects** by Juliana Smith

It's time to start thinking about indoor projects, and I have a long list! Along with some painting and sewing projects I have planned for the house, I am hoping to finish an afghan that I'm crocheting. We're into year two on this one, and so far I have either the start of an afghan, a long scarf, or since one end seems to be wider than the other maybe a big hoop skirt? (I never said I was good at it!) Since October is Family History Month, it's also a great time to work some family history projects into our to-do list. For those of you who may be looking for some ideas, here are ten to get you started:

**1. Write a Biographical Sketch and Share it with Your Family.** What better way to introduce your family to a favorite ancestor than to share his or her life story? Who knows—you may inspire another family member to help in your search for more information!

**2. Share a Story from Your Childhood with a Child.** My daughter loves hearing stories about when I was little. I've decided that this month we're going to take some time and document some of these stories together. She loves making little "books," so I'm going to ask for her help in creating a storybook for one of my childhood stories. Besides helping with her composing, handwriting, and drawing skills, it will show how fun it can be to preserve memories. Hopefully she'll begin preserving some of her own in this way as well, now and in the future.

**3. Record the History of Your Heirlooms.** As I was dusting some of the figurines I have in my china cabinet, I was once again reminded of where I got these treasures. It's always a time of reflection on the people who gave me many of these items as gifts, the trips where I bought some of them, or on the original owners of those that are heirlooms. If something happened to me, or if my memory failed (which it so often does these days!), many of these stories could be lost. Another goal for the month is to

record the origins of these things, so when it comes time for my daughter to inherit them, she'll also inherit the stories behind them. This could be done fairly easily now with a notebook and a pen, or on my laptop. I can take photographs of them or describe them, and then include the story.

**4. Create an Heirloom.** Among the treasures I have that are not included in my china cabinet are the crocheted blankets from my grandmother, a framed cross-stitch from my sister, some pieces of embroidery from my Aunt Chula, a crib made by my Uncle Paul, paintings by my mother, and a pottery jewelry box painted by my daughter. Use a special talent that you have to create an heirloom for your family. If you're an artist, paint an ancestor, a living family member, a family home or ancestral town, a pet...anything or anyone that appeals to you. It's your handiwork and that's what will matter most to the recipient. If you have a knack for photography, take photographs and have them framed. Or how about a scrapbook of a family reunion, vacation, or some other special event? Anything you create yourself has a piece of you in it, and it's something your family will always treasure.

**5. Cook up Some Family Recipes.** I was thrilled the first fall day we had around here. I called my husband and told him, "It's chili season!" In the summer I try everything to avoid heating up the house with the stove. We exist primarily on foods that can be grilled, crock-pot dinners that I can put on the back porch to cook, and foods that can be made quickly indoors. Now that it's cool, I love being able to use my oven again. I have a number of family recipes that are favorites and it's time to start cooking them. While I'm at it, it would be a good idea to commit some of these recipes, which are primarily stored in my head, to paper. Recipes can be recorded on word processing documents (with any family stories that might go with them), and then bound in project folders to create simple family cookbooks. These could make great Christmas gifts—and you are taking steps to preserve an important part of your family's heritage while you're at it.

**6. Make Copies of Family Photos.** As the family historian, you have probably collected a number of ancestral photos. Why not get some copies made to share with other family members. (Stick them in a frame and you got yourself another great gift idea!)

**7. Pass out Family Trees.** With today's genealogical software and your family data, it is fairly easy to print out a family tree that is suitable for framing. Family Tree Maker 11 has a number of templates that you can use in creating a keepsake family tree for your family. If your file is too large, there are also services, such as Ancestry's Heirloom Family Tree, that will print it for you.



**8. Write a Letter and Spread Some Goodwill.** Have you had a good experience with your local librarian, archivist, or county clerk? Why not write a letter to that person's supervisor, letting them know you appreciate the service you've received? They'll probably remember it the next time you ask them for help. It will also serve as a pleasant reminder to that institution that family historians are a part of their clientele and their needs should be considered when it comes time for assessing collection needs.

**9. Volunteer.** There's no better way to build "family history karma points" than to volunteer to help others. There are a number of online transcription projects that are always looking for help. Rootsweb.com ([www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com)) is a great place to start your search for them. Also, genealogical societies are leaders when it comes to records preservation. They are always in need of volunteers to help with projects. Plus, it's a great way to connect with other researchers in your area. If your schedule won't allow you to get involved with a large project, try "Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness" ([www.raogk.com/](http://www.raogk.com/)), or simply share some of your expertise by answering someone's question on a mailing list.

10. Create Some Memories to Preserve for Your Family History. Don't forget that the root of Family History Month is family. Spend some time with your family and friends and create some memories that will last long after Family History Month is over!

*Copyright 2003, MyFamily.com.*

### **National Genealogical Society Revises the Rubincam Youth Award**

Do you know a student who is interested in family history?

Well, this is what you need to do: Tell them about the NGS Rubincam Youth Award. It was established in 1986 to honor Milton Rubincam, CG, FASG, FNGS for his many years of service to the National Genealogical Society and to the field of genealogy. These awards encourage and recognize our youth as the next generation of family historians.

The student need not be an NGS member and may live anywhere in the world but the submission must be in English. The deadline for submission is 31 January 2008.

This and other competitions please check the NGS web page for age requirements and complete details at [www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)

### **Other NGS Competitions and Awards**

Do not delay! There are new deadlines! Send your nomination or submission in today.

<b>Name of Award</b>	<b>Deadline for Submission</b>
NGS Newsletter Competition	December 31, 2007
Family History Writing Contest	January 31, 2008
Genealogical Writing Contest	January 31, 2008
NGS Quarterly Writing Contest	January 31, 2008
Milton Rubincam Youth Award	January 31, 2008
Filby Prize	January 31, 2008
NGS Home Study Course Award	January 31, 2008

### **Organize Electronic Files**

Are you tired of wading through a myriad of the folders on your computer in search of a long lost transcription, document, record, image or photograph?

Are you tired of wading through a myriad of file folders on your computer in search of a long lost transcription, document, record image, or photograph? Maybe it's time to do a little computer housekeeping. Just as it's important to keep our papers filed and organized, we also need to keep our electronic files organized. Keeping all of your family history in one folder is a good start, but that folder can quickly grow to an unmanageable size. Break that file into sub-folders for each surname or location, and possibly further by individuals. An organized electronic filing system will allow you to spend more time searching for ancestors rather than searching for your documents and images!

### **Genealogy On-Line Classes at the Los Angeles Regional Family History Center**

- Genealogy Research In The Los Angeles Area
- Cyndi's List Of Genealogy Sites On The Internet
- FamilySearch Internet Genealogy Service (Salt Lake Web Site)
- Twenty Ways To Avoid Genealogical Grief
- Find Living Persons
- Using A Digital Camera For Genealogy Images
- How to Add Sources Efficiently To A Genealogy Program
- Free Downloading Of PAF Genealogy Products

Go to <http://www.larfhc.org/> for more information

### **Research Retreat in SLC, Utah with One On One Professional Assistance**

Five full days of research assistance for only \$299  
November 26<sup>th</sup> -December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007

Classes to be held at the Plaza Hotel with daily research in the adjacent Family History Library (FHL) in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Visit [www.myancestorsfound.com](http://www.myancestorsfound.com) for more information or call 801.829.3295



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

**November 2007    Volume 19    Number 9**

Ten Issues Published Annually  
ISSN 1083-8937

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

#### **General Membership Meetings**

Third Saturday monthly at 10am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

#### **2007 Board of Directors**

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
Melrose Bell – Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Anjail M Bakeer – Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes – Parliamentarian/Former President  
Gena Weaver – Webmaster (visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org))

#### **Committee Chairs**

Ruth Palmer – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bodge – NGS Delegate

## **President's Message**

Ronald Higgins

Our October meeting was our Show & Tell. We had ten of our members to show and tell. This proved to be very interesting. A lot of questions were asked to our presenters. This bi annual event is normally held in September, since we had no meeting due to the Summit in Phoenix, AZ. we moved show and tell to October.

November 17<sup>th</sup> CAAGS will celebrate Thanksgiving with a pot luck, bring your favorite dish to share with us. I wish each of you and your families a wonderful Thanksgiving Day.

Your October newsletter contained a request for nominations form. Offices open are President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, Parliamentarian and FGS Delegate. Please make your nominations and return the form by November 14<sup>th</sup>. Feel free to nominate yourself if you are interested in holding an office with CAAGS. We need you and your new ideas.

Thanks to Marjorie Sholes who will be setting up the Summit for 2009. It will be in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. The conference will be called the International Black Genealogy Summit. The Allen County Public Library will be the site for the conference scheduled for October 2009. The theme is Reconnecting Lost Links.

Come into the LARFHC to use a computer to gain FREE access to everything on Ancestry.com and obtain help from the many knowledgeable genealogy consultants. Learn more by attending the FREE classes offered every month.

*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) or submit them on computer disk to the editor. Visit our new website at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org).*

### 2007 Calendar of Events

**November 17**

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Request for nominations

**November 18**

Field trip to Los Angeles Central Library, 1:30-3:30pm

**November 22**

Happy Thanksgiving

**December 8**

CAAGS board meeting

**December 18**

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Holiday Party, Elections.

**December 25**

Merry Christmas to All

**January 1 2008 – Happy New Year****January 11**

CAAGS Board Meeting

**January 19**

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Websites of Interest

A site that has copies of death certificates for \$1 from 1910 to 1956.

[www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates](http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates)

<http://www.oldnewsbios.co.nz> - birth, marriage and death notices from newspapers with over 13,000 names

<http://www.honeastindiaco.com> - Hon East India Company - includes some birth, marriage and death notices

For Georgia research go to [www.GeorgiaArchives.org](http://www.GeorgiaArchives.org)  
They have death certificates from 1917-1924 that you can view and print. More will be added. Also, try this site <http://search.Labs.familysearch.org/recordsearch/start.html>

### Educational Conference Scholarship Designed to Encourage and Support Newcomers

The Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) has announced a scholarship to its annual Professional Management Conference (PMC). The scholarship includes conference registration and a \$500 award toward travel and accommodations. The first recipient, who will be selected next Spring will attend the September 2008 conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The PMC is held in conjunction with the Federation of Genealogical Societies annual conference.

Candidates for the 2008 award must be between the ages of

18 and 25 years as of 1 May 2008, be enrolled as a high school senior, undergraduate, post graduate or recent graduate of an accredited university or college, and have at least a 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent in another averaging system).

The application requirements include

- Listing of extracurricular activities, organizations, and volunteer activities;
- A letter of recommendation from a dean, principal, or faculty advisor that also indicates the applicant's current or graduating grade point average;
- A letter of recommendation from an individual who has witnessed the applicant's interest in genealogy.

Applicants also must submit 500-750 word answers to two questions relative to genealogical records and the applicants' anticipated career.

Complete scholarship requirements and an application form are on the APG website at [www.apgen.org](http://www.apgen.org). Applications must be returned to the APG office no later than February 28, 2008. The recipient will be announced by April 30, 2008.

It's been a while since our last field trip hosted by CAAGS member Charlotte Bocage. Many have found success where in the past they were overwhelmed by the information available to them. If you would like to join us in the future here is the next date we will meet. Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-3:30 p.m., Downtown Los Angeles Central Library, LL 4, Reference Desk., The library is located at 630 W. 5<sup>th</sup> St., 213-228-7000 (parking \$1 with validation). You can contact me for more information Charlotte 323-669-1982, or email [rbymoon4@pacbell.net](mailto:rbymoon4@pacbell.net). I hope to see some of you newbies so I can help jump-start your research. Please bring your pedigree charts. Also, I volunteer at SCGS library most Wednesdays call me or the library to verify if I'll be there.

### More Brick Walls from A to Z

by Michael John Neill

Last year we looked at Brick Walls from A to Z. Unfortunately most of us still have brick walls. In recognition of the many attempts we make to break them down, I've included an additional list.

### A is for Assumptions

While it is necessary to make assumptions in order to begin work on some problems, there often comes a time when the assumption must be put aside. The search for a marriage record may begin in the location where the first child was born, but if records are available and no marriage can be located, then it may be time to let go of that assumption.

Always state assumptions as such. Once an assumption becomes confused with fact, it is difficult for it to return to the land of assumptions.

### **B is for Boundaries**

An incorrect knowledge of the county boundary, the state boundary, or the national boundary can cause a researcher to search in the wrong location. Political boundaries may be precise, but they may also be in constant flux. Linguistic boundaries are much more fluid and rarely clearly defined.

### **C is for Culture**

What do you know of your ancestor's culture? Is your ancestor's ethnic heritage impacting his actions and the kinds of records she leaves? Don't assume you act like your ancestor or vice versa.

### **D is for Descendants**

Your great-great-grandparents may have many descendants outside of your immediate family. Any of these descendants may have family information or memorabilia that could be crucial to your research. Seek them out.

### **E is for Estrangements**

Is the reason you cannot find your ancestor's parents because the family had a falling out at some point in time and there was no reconciliation? It could easily have happened.

### **F is for Friends**

Are your ancestor's friends what caused him to emigrate from point A to point B? And because these friends have no blood ties to your ancestor, you have overlooked them or perhaps even had difficulty determining who they are?

### **G is for Geography**

Is your lack of geographical knowledge impacting your research? Was it easier for your ancestor to travel to the next county to get married? If your ancestor left home looking for work, what was the route to take? Where was the largest nearby city?

### **H is for History**

If your knowledge of history is weak, you may be making incorrect interpretations or about your ancestor's actions and records. The genealogist needs to have an understanding of national, regional, and local history applicable to the time period being researched. One level of history is no more important than any of the others.

### **I is for Ignorance**

Is it our ancestor's ignorance that is causing the problem? Did your ancestor make bad mistakes that sent their lives into a tailspin? Maybe the reason our ancestor's decisions do not make any sense is that our ancestor was not making good decisions to begin with.

### **J is for Job**

Do not forget that your ancestor's job was crucial to his existence and the lack of one might have been the reason for his sudden migration from one point to another. Your unawareness of that job might be causing your brick wall.

### **K is for Knocking**

Are you knocking when you should be ringing the doorbell? Perhaps there is a different tool you should be using to solve your research problem. Are there other records you are not even aware of? Make certain you are using the right tool and that you have all the available tools at your disposal.

### **L is for Language**

Do you understand how your ancestor pronounced the name of his place of birth? If your Swedish-born ancestor indicated he was born in "Cheesa" on a marriage record, he actually might have been referring to Kisa. The way it sounded to an American clerk might not have been the way it was spelled on a Swedish map.

### **M is for Maternal**

Are you too focused on the paternal line? Just because that was the last name that got passed down from one generation to another does not mean it necessarily exerted any more influence on your ancestor than his maternal relatives. It might have been maternal uncles that brought your relative to Nebraska instead of his father's family.

### **N is for Nicknames**

Is a nickname causing you to overlook your ancestor in a record? Lizzy, Beth, Betsy are all diminutives for Elizabeth, Sally is one for Sarah. Keep these in mind when researching. Your ancestor who was married to Lucinda in one census and Cindy in the next might have only had one wife.

### **O is for Out-of-Date**

Are you using an out-of-date finding aid or resource? Make certain you are using a corrected or updated versions if necessary. Keep in mind that in some cases, there may be multiple indexes to the same set of records. Use all indexes in case the desired entry is rendered differently in each index.

### **P is for Patronymics**

If patronymics are being used in an area where you are researching, keep in mind that no one will have the same last name as their mother or father and that some families may choose non-patronymic surnames for their children. This is done solely to confuse the researcher.

### **Q is for Quirky**

Maybe the reasons your ancestor and his records do not make sense is simply that your ancestor was just "a little different." Sometimes we have an ancestor who was

slightly flaky.

### **R is for Recorded**

Have you considered looking at the miscellaneous items that are recorded in many county recorders' offices? There are more than just deeds and vital records. I have found out-of-state divorce decrees, military discharges, medical licenses, etc., recorded in the books of miscellaneous records. Give them a try. You never know what your relative thought he should have recorded.

### **S is for Step-Parent**

Is the reason you cannot find your ancestor in the 1860 census because the mother remarried and you do not know the new husband's name? If the child is enumerated with the last name of the step-father and that name is unknown to you, locating the family may be difficult and determining the name of the second husband should be high on your priority list.

### **T is for Transcription**

Are you using an incorrect transcription which you have never compared to the original document from which the transcription was made? A slip of the keyboard may have created your brick wall.

### **U is for Unrelated**

Are you assuming two individuals with the same last name have to be related? It may be that those two with the same surname are completely unrelated and moved near each other just to confuse their descendants.

### **V is for Vital Records**

Have you made your own brick wall by not obtaining vital records on all your ancestor's children--not just the direct line? Answers to your problem may be resting in records of aunts and uncles instead of those on your ancestor.

### **W is for Why?**

The good genealogist should be like a toddler, constantly asking "why?" If you are not asking yourself why a record was created when it was, why a name was spelled the way it was, why your ancestor lived where he did, why your ancestor waited until he was forty to get married the first time, you may be missing out on important clues.

### **X is for EXtraneous Information**

Official records rarely include extraneous details just to alleviate the boredom of the clerk. There is usually a reason for the apparently "extra" information. An 1850s-era marriage license indicates the bride had "no lawful husband living." In this case, reference was not to the bride's deceased husband, but rather to a subsequent "husband" with whom the bride had a relationship, but not one with whom she had a "valid" marriage.

### **Y is for Yo-Yo**

Was your ancestor a "yo-yo?" Did he immigrate to the United States more than once? Two of my wife's ancestors did. My own ancestors were not that indecisive, but it does happen. Sometimes people went back to the homeland and never did re-emigrate.

### **Z is for There Is No Z**

Are you looking for a record that was never created? Are you looking for a reason that really is not there? Remember that not every question has an answer and not every action has a reason. And remember that there are genealogical questions that will never be answered.

*Michael John Neill is the Course I Coordinator at the Genealogical Institute of Mid America (GIMA), and is also on the faculty of Carl Sandburg College in Galesburg, IL. He is currently a member of the board of the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and conducts seminars and lectures nationally on a wide variety of genealogical and computer topics and contributes to several genealogical publications, including Ancestry Magazine Taken from Ancestry.com*

### **Five Question Challenge: Family**

Feel free to share your memories in the comments sections of the blog. Your memories may help spark the memories of other readers who had similar experiences.

- ❖ How has a member of your family influenced you?
- ❖ How often do you see extended family (e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins), and what was it like when you all got together?
- ❖ What kind of traditions did/does your family observe? Were there special ways you celebrated birthdays? holidays?
- ❖ Did your family have pets?
- ❖ What foods did your family enjoy? Was there a special dish that was always on the table at family

For more questions, see [TheRememberingSite.org](http://TheRememberingSite.org).

### **Too Many Slides?**

Like many families, mine took a lot of slides. To have prints made of these, even at home, would prove costly. Using a multi-function scanner is no prize either. What I have done is set up a slide projector and a screen (if no screen is available a white wall or a white sheet will do) and a digital camera on a tripod. When all equipment is in place I show a slide, then zoom in to capture the picture. I then click through the carousel taking a picture of the slides I want. Of course I later download them to the computer. It works wonderfully.

*Tom Hennessy, Desoto, Texas  
Taken from Acestry.com*



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

*Wishing You A Happy and Safe Holiday Season*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

Our ancestors lived, worked, cried, laughed, did a lot of praying and they fought for what they believed in. We owe it to them to not be forgotten. That's the reason we are doing genealogy so we can pass on their life story and ours to the future generations.

Obviously, they were born, possibly married and had children, then died. In some of our researching we have found they had various jobs, such as laundry workers, railroad workers, blacksmiths, soldiers, cowboys and furniture makes. We find that they may have owned property and were church members. As you know most of us came from others states to California, therefore, our research will take us back to these states.

Are you taking steps to write down your family history? Life is too short not to have at least started your genealogy. The holiday's are upon us, think about giving your family a copy of your family tree.

For the year 2008 as your president and program chair I am looking to have our society members be our speakers and presenters at the general meetings. Each of us has a story to tell. Please let me know if you or someone you know would like to make a presentation to our group. Another aspect of change I would like to bring to your attention is our future. I have seen the membership in our society slowly decline. The internet has also taken a toll on our membership. I would like help from you all in the new year to help build up our membership. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please let me know.

Thank you to all who participated in the pot luck for Thanksgiving. Dorthylou Sands will be in charge of the

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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 10am (except July and August)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

### **2007 Board of Directors**

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Barbara Thomas – Second Vice President /Membership  
Melrose Bell – Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Anjail M Bakeer – Treasurer  
Marjorie Sholes – Parliamentarian/Former President  
Gena Weaver – Webmaster (visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org))

### **Committee Chairs**

Ruth Palmer – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Ruth Palmer – Publications Editor  
Ruth Odell – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

*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) or submit them on computer disk to the editor. Visit our new website at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org).*

Christmas pot luck. Please contact her and let her know what you plan to bring.

Congratulations to the newly elected officers and lastly, wishing all of you a Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa and Happy New Year!

### 2007 – 2008 Calendar of Events

#### December 8

CAAGS board meeting

#### December 15

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Holiday Party, Installation of officers.

#### December 25

Merry Christmas to All

#### January 1 2008 – Happy New Year

#### January 11

CAAGS Board Meeting

#### January 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am – Speaker CAAGS member Jessie McClennan on her family research and history

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

meeting: President - Ronald Higgins; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President - Ruth Palmer; Correspondence Secretary - Gwendolyn Foster; and FGS Delegate - Colette DeVerge. The Board is still seeking nominations to fill the position of Parliamentarian. The elected officers will be installed during the December 15<sup>th</sup> general meeting.

### Query

Looking for the date of death of Chapman CARTER, b abt 1843 in VA, m Eliza LEE abt 1860 in AR, d between 1920 and 1930 in OK, was a slave in AR, Last owner was either Ferdinand or Ira LEE, migrated to OK after 1880, ch Martha, Ellis, Eleanor, Sarah, Celia, Emma, William, Estella; willing to xch info on the desc of ch..  
Contact Alice Steele 15900 Rinaldi St. Granada Hills, CA 91344; or email: alstee3@aol.com

### LDS Name Extraction/Indexing Project

The LDS Church is looking for volunteers to help with a major Name Extraction/Indexing Project. The leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have committed to digitize and index the entire Vital Record holdings of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City over the next 7 - 10 years. The result of this project will be made available to the general public, free of charge, over [www.Familysearch.org](http://www.Familysearch.org) and selected partner websites. Major releases of completed projects will begin later this year.

To accomplish this massive undertaking, we need 250,000 volunteers to help enter data. This major project will benefit all genealogists and family history researchers.

To volunteer simply send an email to Milt Rhynard. In a few days you will receive a User ID and password to access the Family Search Indexing website.

All work is done from your own computer over the Internet. No paper files or floppy disks to exchange. Any level of commitment is welcome. If you can spend one hour a week or even one hour a month you can make a significant contribution.

The Church has developed new software (available without charge) to facilitate this effort. Computer based tutorials are designed to train new Indexers. Indexing is not cumbersome. It involves no paperwork. There are no significant coordination and review requirements by the extractor. A single record batch can be completed in about 45 minutes (with basic keyboard skills)

For more information please contact Milt Rhynard, Extraction/Indexing Director; e-mail: [mrhynard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mrhynard@sbcglobal.net); phone: 937-435-2292  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

### Websites of Interest

- Halifax City Deaths, 1890-1908  
[www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/vitalstats/death/halifax/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/vitalstats/death/halifax/)
- Saskatchewan Homestead Index  
<http://www.saskhomesteads.com/search.asp>
- Civil War Research Database  
[www.civilwardata.com](http://www.civilwardata.com)
- Alabama Voters Registration 1867  
[www.archives.state.al.us/voterreg/index.cfm](http://www.archives.state.al.us/voterreg/index.cfm)
- Evansville, Indiana area obituary  
<http://browning.evpl.org/>
- Kentucky Land Patents  
<http://apps.sos.ky.gov/land/nonmilitary/patentseries/cocourtorders/>
- Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy  
[www.ibiblio.org/laslave/](http://www.ibiblio.org/laslave/)
- Michigan 1870 Census  
[www.hal.state.mi.us/1870census/Serch.aspx](http://www.hal.state.mi.us/1870census/Serch.aspx)
- Western Michigan Genealogy Society  
<http://data.wmgs.org/>
- Missouri Death Certificates 1910-1956  
[www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/](http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/)
- South Carolina Archives  
[www.archivesindex.sc.gov/Archives/search/default.asp](http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/Archives/search/default.asp)
- Find a grave  
[www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

### 2008 Election Results

The following were elected by acclamation during elections of officers held during the CAAGS November general

## Where Are The Records?

By Julian Smith

Now we can sit at home in our jammies and fuzzy slippers in front of our computers and with the click of a mouse, locate and view images of census records, military records, passenger arrival records, and so much more. With this convenience though, there is sometimes a cost. We may be so focused on what's available online, that we may be overlooking a treasure-trove of resources that reside in the physical world—in libraries, archives, courthouses, and with historical and genealogical organizations.

### Where to Check?

The good news is, when it comes to rooting out these offline resources, we can start our search online. Here are some places to get you started.

- **Database Descriptions.** If you're looking for an original record that corresponds with an entry you found in an online index, check out the database description. At Ancestry, in many cases (particularly with vital records), you'll find the necessary contact information where you can write to request the original record. To view the description, click on the database title at the top of the search results page, or locate it through the Ancestry Card Catalog.
- **USGenWeb or WorldGenWeb.** These volunteer-driven websites typically give links and information on ordering vital records, naturalizations, and other locally relevant records. In some cases, you'll also find free indexes and transcriptions.
- **Local Government.** Municipalities have figured out that a good online presence can greatly diminish the inquiries that eat up personnel time, so it often pays to go directly to the source of the records. For example, the Cook County, Illinois, website even has a genealogical page with detailed instructions and downloadable forms for requesting records.
- **County Courthouses.** Courthouses typically hold a number of records of value to family historians. The National Association of Counties (NACo) website gives addresses and links to county websites for the U.S. I checked out the Jefferson County, Ohio, website and they include a list of records they hold, years available, and contact information for requesting records. In addition, they list several other research repositories in the area that "have excellent records."
- **Archives.** In Michael John Neill's 11 June article, he talked a little about religious denominational archives and how to locate them, and civil archives are a must as well. The National Archives has a very helpful website with a genealogy guide, and regional branches also include information on holdings and research requests. The Great Lakes Region website, for example, has an overview of records available. The link to naturalization records lists what states' records

are held at that branch, and there is also a link to order the records online.

- **State archives** shouldn't be overlooked either. The Pennsylvania State Archives has an excellent reference section detailing holdings with guides to census records, coal miners and mining, county records, land records, military records, naturalization records, prison records, railroad records, ships' lists, and vital records. The website also features several military databases for various conflicts in U.S. history.
- **Family History Library Catalog** (<http://www.familysearch.org>). I keep a print-out of vital records available at the Family History Library for my areas of interest. The catalog is also a great way to see what else is available for a particular area. Since my mother and I have to travel to Salt Lake City periodically for work, as we run into records we need, I consult the catalog and grab film numbers so that when a trip comes up, we are ready with our to-do list.
- **Other places to check** would include libraries (particularly those with large genealogical collections like the one in Fort Wayne, Indiana—which I'll happily be able to visit during the FGS Conference in August and genealogical and historical societies. The Oregon State Genealogical Society website lists among its holdings, "Many Oregon county records, including land claims, large accumulation of Oregon cemetery records, Oregon death indexes, Eugene/Springfield city directories, [and] Metzger's Lane County maps."

### Organizing What You Find

So you've checked around and now have amassed a ton of information. Print off inventories and make your own cheat sheets on record availability, listing repositories, years available, fees and restrictions, and addresses—both street and online. It's a good idea to keep a list of online databases that you have access to from home. You don't want to waste precious time searching records you could access anytime from home when you're on the road.

Create a "locality file" and put it someplace near your desk for easy reference. I put mine in a binder so I can easily page through and get what I need. I used information and the outline from *Red Book* as my guide and I add pages from various repositories. (For more information on the records covered, see the description in today's product specials or in the Ancestry Store.)

### Already Have a Locality File?

If you already have a locality file, don't forget to check back on the websites periodically though to see if there have been website updates with more information and/or additions to the collections. It's also a good idea to review it periodically for new possibilities that open up as a result of recent progress in your research.



These are just some of the places whose holdings you should familiarize yourself with. As mentioned, many won't even require a visit in person, but if at all possible, it would be well worth the trip. Many of these repositories may have hidden gems that don't make it many to the website and can only be accessed in person.

*Taken from Acestry.com - Juliana Smith has been an editor of Ancestry.com newsletters for more than eight years and is author of The Ancestry Family Historian's Address Book.*

## **Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Joins Forces with Family Tree DAN to Launch AfricanDNA.com**

Boston--(Business Wire)--AfricanDNA.com, the first company dedicated to offering both genetic testing and genealogical tracing services for African Americans, is being launched this month by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research at Harvard University, in partnership with the Inkwell Foundation and Family Tree DNA, the world's leader in genetic genealogy. The precedent-setting site is the only company in the field of genetic genealogy that will provide African Americans with family tree research in addition to DNA testing.

AfricanDNA.com is the only company that offers the service of scholars interpreting multiple matches when compared to the database. A board of historical consultants will include Dr. Fatimah Jackson, Professor, Applied Biological Anthropology, University of Maryland; Dr. Linda Heywood and Dr. John Thornton, both African historians at Boston University; Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Professor of History and of African and African American Studies (Chair) at Harvard University; and Dr. David Eltis, director of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database at Emory University.

AfricanDNA.com offers two premium tests. The Maternal Test (Female-mtDNA) is a high-resolution mtDNA test that looks at the mitochondria received by both men and women from their mothers. The Paternal Test, exclusively for males, is a Y-DNA test that details the inherited Y-chromosome. Both tests' results will include placement in the ancestral tree of humankind. Tests will be processed at the Genomic Analysis and Technology Core laboratory at the University of Arizona, headed by Dr. Michael Hammer. The renowned geneticist has been associated with Family Tree DNA since the company's inception. Both Family Tree DNA and the University of Arizona lab are respected for their commitment to stringent scientific standards and privacy guidelines.

Singular in the world of genealogy and genetics is AfricanDNA.com's Genealogy Package. This unique

product offers documented genealogical tracing of lineage as far back as records permit. Although former slaves, freed at the time of the Civil War, first appeared in the Federal census in 1870, many other records of African Americans under slavery still exist. Genealogists even discovered that Gates' 4<sup>th</sup> great-grandfather—a Free Negro named John Redman—fought in the American Revolution, leading to Gates' induction into the SAR (Sons of the American Revolution). DNA test takers who opt for the Genealogy Package will receive a customized family tree prepared by the AfricanDNA.com genealogy services group.

Genetic results of AfricanDNA customers will be compared with the database of Family Tree DNA, the most extensive comparative database of DNA test results in the world, including African results provided by leading anthropologists worldwide. These comparisons will point many AfricanDNA clients toward their African origins. A percentage of all profits will be donated to the Inkwell Foundation, dedicated to reforming the teaching of science and history in inner city schools using genetic and genealogical ancestry tracing.

Long interested in genealogical research and DNA testing, Gates is the author of *Finding Oprah's Roots, Finding Your Own* (Crown, 2007) and the forthcoming *In Search of Our Roots: How 19 Extraordinary African Americans Reclaimed Their Past*, to be published next spring (Crown, 2008). He is also the host and executive producer of the critically acclaimed 2006 PBS series "African American Lives" and its follow-up, "Oprah's Roots." "African American Lives 2" will be broadcast on PBS in February, 2008 in conjunction with Black History Month. Professor Gates is Editor-in-Chief of the Oxford African American Studies Center, the first comprehensive scholarly online resource in the field of African American and African Studies. Gates, an influential cultural critic, has written for *Time Magazine*, *The New Yorker* and the *New York Times*. The recipient of 48 honorary degrees and a 1981 MacArthur Foundation "Genius Award," Henry Louis Gates, Jr. received a National Humanities Medal in 1998, and in 1999 was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Family Tree DNA, founded in April 2000, was the first company to develop the commercial application of DNA testing for genealogical purposes, which, until then, had only been available for academic and scientific research. Today, Family Tree DNA's database exceeds 165,000 individual test records (roughly 110,000 Y-DNA and 55,000 mtDNA tests), making it the prime source for researching recent and distant family ties. Additionally, Family Tree DNA administers over 4400 surname projects, comprising some 65,000 unique surnames.

*Source: AfricanDNA.com*