



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**January 2008    Volume 20    Number 1**

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)

### **2008 Board of Directors**

Ronald Higgins - President  
Ron Batiste – First Vice President  
Ruth Palmer – Second Vice President /Membership  
Gwen Foster – Corresponding Secretary  
Jean Wright-Calhoun – Recording Secretary  
Anjail M Bakeer – Treasurer  
Open – 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

Hello Everyone and Happy New Year! I am looking forward to serving you again as your president for the next two years. We have a team of officers who are excited and enthusiastic to serve you also.

Congratulations to Gwen Foster, corresponding secretary and Ruth Palmer, Second Vice President/Membership Chair. "Thank you" to Jamesetta (Jamie) Glosston Hammons who did a wonderful job at installing these new officers.

The transformation process can be a challenge to the new officers, however with your patience we will eventually achieve success. Are you ready to invest in CAAGS, it's time to get in step.

I am hoping you will take the trip into genealogy land and discover your roots and your family. Many thanks to Barbara Reed Thomas and Melrose Bell for their awesome work in the offices that they each held for the past two years.

Our Christmas pot luck was a big success. Thanks to all of you who brought dishes and to those who helped set up. This year I would like to compile a book of sayings or statements that you, your parents, grandparents aunts and uncles have used throughout the years. I will include a sample in the February newsletter along with the deadline for submissions. If you would be interested in working on this book, please let me know.

*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).*

## 2008 Calendar of Events

### January 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Class “At The Very Beginning”....How to develop, use and create the forms needed; documentation; computer programs; Speaker CAAGS member Jessie McClennan – a family case study

### February 1

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

### February 16

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Class – The Census; Presentation - Show & Tell

### March 1

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

### March 15

No CAAGS general meeting

### March 15

Discover Your Roots VI; [www.discoveryourroots.org/](http://www.discoveryourroots.org/) pre-registration \$20 and \$30 at the door. Register before March 1 and save \$10 contact Doug or Kathy Hallen, Public Affairs at 310-470-0213

### April 5

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

### April 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Vital Statistics: What, Where, When, Why, How...and Sometimes Who; Speaker - Nancy Carlberg on Plantations

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

## Websites of Interest

<http://www.getgrandpasfbifile.com/>

Get Grandpa's FBI File - Trying to figure out some “trouble maker” (actual or otherwise) in your family who might have generated an FBI file, try this new site.

DorothyLou Sands would like to thank everyone who helped with the holiday pot luck in December. A special thanks to Asilah El-Amin, Ruth Odell, June Coggins, Mary Alequin-Sosa, Marilyn White and Sussie Bowdon. Also thanks to Marjorie Sholes and Gena Weaver for handling the boxes from the store room.

## National Archives and GSU to Digitize Some Civil War Records

The following announcement was written by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration:

National Archives and the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) Announce Digitizing Partnership

Washington, D.C. Archivist of the United States

Allen Weinstein and Wayne Metcalfe, vice president of the Genealogical Society of Utah, today announced a five-year partnership agreement to digitize case files of approved pension applications of widows of Civil War Union soldiers from the National Archives. GSU has many years of experience microfilming historical records at the National Archives and throughout the world and in recent years has moved to providing digital capture and publishing services. Digitization makes possible unprecedented access to the unique historic documents in the custody of the National Archives.

This partnership will begin with a pilot project to digitize, index, and make available the first 3,150 of the pension files. Upon successful completion of the pilot, GSU, doing business as FamilySearch, in conjunction with Footnote.com, intends to digitize and index all 1,280,000 Civil War and later widows' files in the series. These records, of great interest to genealogists and others, are currently available only at the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. The widows' pension application files, a rich source of information about ordinary American citizens of the time, include supporting documents such as affidavits, depositions of witnesses, marriage certificates, birth records, death certificates, and pages from family bibles.

FamilySearch will make the digitized materials available for free through [www.FamilySearch.org](http://www.FamilySearch.org) and in 4500 family history centers worldwide, or on a subscription-based website operated by a third party, subject to National Archives approval. They will also be available at no charge in National Archives' research rooms in Washington, DC, and regional facilities across the country. In addition, FamilySearch will donate to the National Archives a copy of all the digital images and the associated indexes and other metadata that they create.

This agreement is one of a series of agreements that the National Archives has reached or will reach with partners to digitize portions of its holdings.

## Standards For Sound Genealogical Research

*Recommended by the National Genealogical Society*

Remembering always that they are engaged in a quest for truth, family history researchers consistently—

- record the source for each item of information they collect.
- test every hypothesis or theory against credible

evidence, and reject those that are not supported by the evidence.

- seek original records, or reproduced images of them when there is reasonable assurance they have not been altered, as the basis for their research conclusions.
- use compilations, communications and published works, whether paper or electronic, primarily for their value as guides to locating the original records, or as contributions to the critical analysis of the evidence discussed in them.
- state something as a fact only when it is supported by convincing evidence, and identify the evidence when communicating the fact to others.
- limit with words like “probable” or “possible” any statement that is based on less than convincing evidence, and state the reasons for concluding that it is probable or possible.
- avoid misleading other researchers by either intentionally or carelessly distributing or publishing inaccurate information.
- state carefully and honestly the results of their own research, and acknowledge all use of other researchers’ work.
- recognize the collegial nature of genealogical research by making their work available to others through publication, or by placing copies in appropriate libraries or repositories, and by welcoming critical comment.
- consider with open minds new evidence or the comments of others on their work and the conclusions they have reached.

© 1997, 2002 by National Genealogical Society. Permission is granted to copy or publish this material provided it is reproduced in its entirety, including this notice.

### **Fairfax Genealogical Society Call for Papers 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Genealogy Fair**

Deadline 31 January 2008

The Fairfax Genealogical Society is accepting proposals for their 2008 Fall Fair. The Fair will be held on Saturday, 25 October 2008 in Dunn Loring, VA (metro DC area) from approximately 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. and features a single speaker. Typically it consists of three, one hour topics with two breaks (one for shopping at the vendor tables and one for lunch and shopping at vendor tables). Proposals requiring a different but similar break-up will be considered.

Although topics may cover any genealogical area, the total presentation should appeal to a general audience comprised of new and experienced genealogists with varied regional backgrounds and interests. Speakers are also welcome to include a proposal for the preceding Thursday’s General

Meeting (23 October 2008). The topic does not have to be related to the Fair topic(s). Length of that presentation should be one hour including question and answer time, requirements for the proposal are the same as below. Speaker will receive an honorarium. Travel, per diem, board, and other expenses can NOT be provided and are the responsibility of the speaker.

Exact requirements and submission guidelines are available on [www.fxgs.org](http://www.fxgs.org)

### **Family Reunion Planner Survival Tips**

For those of you planning a family reunion this year.

**Identify a reunion theme that connects all family members.** Shared experiences and memories are a powerful source of unity for any group. Organize your reunion around a theme that everyone in your family can relate to. Family ancestry, a milestone such as a golden anniversary, or even a sports or cultural event can serve as common thread. Be creative.

**Plan activities that focus on the commonalities that family members share.** Activities that reinvigorate cherished family moments strengthen bonds. A table displaying old family photographs, a night of swapping stories about colorful deceased relatives, photo albums or videos of key family events, or games that require deep knowledge of the family’s past are only a few ways to blend the family together.

**Elicit input from everyone who is going to attend about time, place, and activities.** This gives all the family members a sense of ownership for the reunion rather than simply being an attendee. It makes the planning process an integral part of the reunion, extending it, and getting everyone to interact, well beyond the time that everyone spends together.

**Consider enlisting the help of a professional reunion planner.** While every family member’s reunion suggestions should be heard, a non-family member such as a travel agent or cruise planner, can offer non-biased expertise about the range of experiences suitable to a family’s particular interests. It makes the planning more fair and avoids the possibility of plans made in anyone’s self interest at the expense of others.

**Recognize that there may be some pre-reunion jitters and take steps to help curtail them.** For some, uncertainty about what to expect at the reunion, about how they are remembered, about how people have changed, or about how they might fit in can create some anxiety. Plan activities that allow everyone to feel like an important part of the family and let people know beforehand about these plans.

**Develop some activities that require that family members work together and to depend upon each other to complete the task.** Besides shared experiences, another way to build unity is through interdependence. Regardless of peoples' differences, completing a task together, such as planning a meal, playing on the same team during a game, making a family skit, or working together on any project creates a sense of accomplishment and togetherness.

**Don't underestimate the importance of planning, organization, and structure.** The research clearly indicates that successful family reunions don't just happen. A survey of readers of Reunions Magazine found that the highest levels of satisfaction at the end of a reunion were reported by people who said that their reunions were the most planned, structured, and organized. Painstaking planning is proven to pay off!

**With input from everyone, make important decisions, rules and boundaries prior to the reunion.** All of us have lifestyles and daily living patterns that make sense in our own adult lives and families, but these might be different from other adults in the reuniting family. It's essential that rules for daily living be discussed and compromises be reached prior to the reunion rather than during the reunion.

*Dr. Laurence A. Basirico, professor of sociology at Elon University, researches and teaches about family reunion relationships. He is one of seven siblings, married, has three children, and participates regularly in his family's reunions. He is the author of The Family Reunion Survival Guide: How To Avoid Problems With Your Family Without Avoiding Your Family (<http://www.identitypublishing.com>).*

### **ANCESTRY.COM Celebrates Stories Of America's Everyday War Heroes As "The War" Remembers WWII Veterans**

*Largest Online Family History Web Site Enables Families to Record Oral Histories and Create Personal Biographies of Military Ancestors for Free*

PROVO, UTAH – As the highly anticipated Ken Burns documentary "The War" premieres, Ancestry.com, the world's largest online resource for family history, encourages Americans to honor the legacies of their family members or loved ones who served in WWII by preserving their unique stories online. For the 81 percent of Americans who say they have had a family member or loved one serve in the military\*, Ancestry.com provides a wide range of services to archive and explore their family's military history, such as recording oral histories with its new audio storytelling service.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, America loses approximately 1,000 WWII veterans every day. Their vanishing legacies have sparked a growing consciousness to capture their stories, even as Ken Burns and PBS showcase the "everyday WWII American heroes"

in the upcoming 14-hour long documentary "The War." Ancestry.com is the perfect venue for honoring these everyday heroes and preserving their extraordinary stories. On Ancestry.com, individuals can create family trees with biographical profiles dedicated to remembering the personal experiences of their ancestors, including those who served in the military. As part of these profiles, users can upload photos, create a timeline of life events, write stories and add scanned images such as letters written from the battlefield, service awards and other precious documents. Now, users can initiate audio recording directly from their family tree, recording conversations over the telephone or through a computer microphone. The new audio tool provides a free, easy method to create and preserve family oral histories. With a webcam, an individual can also record and archive video.

"World War II impacted more lives than any previous conflict. It's time to honor the generation of Americans who took up this cause," said Tim Sullivan, president and CEO of The Generations Network, parent company of Ancestry.com. "We urge people to talk to their families, gather information about their WWII loved ones and archive their experiences before it's too late."

For those interested in delving deeper into their military roots, Ancestry.com hosts the largest collection of U.S. military records available and searchable online, featuring more than 90 million names that span the 1600s through Vietnam. This week, Ancestry.com added two new collections pertaining specifically to WWII, including:

- **WWII Military Personnel (MIA/Lost at Sea)** – More than 90,000 records of WWII service men who were missing in action or lost at sea from 1941 to 1946.
- **WWII "Stars and Stripes" Newspaper** – More than 145,000 digitized pages from this military newspaper published during WWII in the European theater. This week, Ancestry.com added 50,000 images to this collection.

Other WWII databases found on Ancestry.com include:

- **U.S. World War II Army Enlistment Records** – Records for more than 8 million individuals who enlisted in the army between 1938 and 1946.
- **U.S. World War II Draft Registration Cards** – "Old man's draft" records include more than 6 million records filled out by men between the ages of 42 and 64 in 1942.
- **United Newsreel Motion Pictures (1942–1945)** – Only complete online collection of rare WWII counter-propaganda newsreels.
- **Young American Patriots Military Yearbooks** – A series of commemorative yearbooks featuring photos and short bios of approximately 60,000 soldiers who served in WWII.

*\* Based on an August 2007 MarketTools, Zsample survey.*



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

**February 2008    Volume 20    Number 2**

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)

#### **2008 Board of Directors**

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

#### **Committee Chairs**

Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – 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

Who are you? Are you a budding genealogist or are you one who recently made a great find? Genealogy is addictive when you find something that makes you feel great. Sometimes it may come from the help of others. We all have years of memories, so keep on researching, trusting your instincts sometimes it pays off. Sometimes you have to be a detective by following the various clues you come across while doing your research.

Our January speaker was Jessie L. McClelland, a CAAGS member, who did a power point presentation which was titled "A Family Case Study – The Benton Family." She had a number of relatives who attended her presentation. The information was very well presented. Thanks for the insight into a branch of your family.

For those of you who were not aware, the LARFHC now has ancestry.com back and available to patrons.

On a final note, the book that I mentioned last month that would include a compilation of sayings or statements that you, your parents, grandparents aunts and uncles have used throughout the years, I was not able to get a sample completed in time for this newsletter along with the deadline for submissions. Please look for this in the next newsletter. If you would be interested in working on this book, please let me know as well.

#### **Tips from the Pros: Treasured Assignments**

*by Jana Sloan Broglin, CG*

All too often when digging through the attic or basement for items of genealogical value, we overlook the papers,

*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).*

composition notebooks, and drawings our parents and grandparents kept for themselves and their children. A composition book used by my mother, Joanne Beard Sloan, was found in an attic along with clippings from the Swanton (Ohio) high school newspaper. The notebooks contained many assignments done in various English classes from 1940-46. The writings made for great reading including a poem with her thoughts about Adolph Hitler and one entitled "Crossroad" about what she wanted to do with her life.

### 2008 Calendar of Events

#### February 16

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm; Class – The Census; Presentation - Show & Tell

#### March 1

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

#### March 1

FGS request for lecture proposals deadline. For info contact Marjorie Sholes, fgsprogramchair@fgs.org or call 323-733-4815

#### March 15

No CAAGS general meeting

#### March 15

Discover Your Roots VI; [www.discoveryourroots.org/](http://www.discoveryourroots.org/) pre-registration \$20 and \$30 at the door. Register before March 1 and save \$10 contact Doug or Kathy Hallen, Public Affairs at 310-470-0213

#### March 31

Deadline for NGS early registration, for more info or to register on line go to [www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)

#### April 5

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

#### April 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Vital Statistics: What, Where, When, Why, How...and Sometimes Who; Speaker - Nancy Carlberg on Plantations

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Websites of Interest

#### [www.larfhc.com](http://www.larfhc.com)

The Los Angeles Regional Family History Center will be offering various classes this month on how to do your family history and research. Online registration available.

#### KeepYouSafe

#### [www.KeepYouSafe.com](http://www.KeepYouSafe.com)

As Certified Information Systems Security Professionals (CISSP) and members of the United States Secret Service Electronic Crime Task Force, their founders have decades of experience in protecting critical information.

In their dedication to safety and security, they have strived to make their technology available to everyone. Members do not need any special hardware or software, technical

knowledge, or understanding of encryption to take advantage of KeepYouSafe.com's services.

KeepYouSafe.com only requires a standard web browser and basic Internet skills.

KeepYouSafe.com is designed to protect members' private information and digital records. Unlike other Internet-based businesses that simply add security features to their existing services or Internet sites, KeepYouSafe services is designed from the ground up with strong security in mind.

### The Genealogy Guys Podcast #114

<http://genealogyguys.com/>

This show was recorded live at the Texas State Genealogical Society Conference held on 9-10 November 2007 in Tyler, Texas, and hosted by the East Texas Genealogical Society. This was a great conference for The Guys and they were greeted, welcomed, and treated like kings! The Guys present a definition and description of what a podcast really is. They then take questions from the audience and respond on topics relating to: French ancestors; locating information for a woman living in a New York state hospital (tuberculosis); obtaining transcripts from universities and records of teachers, professors, and fellowships; the possibility of a genealogical societies that lists records they are holding or projects they are working to complete; a description of Gmail; how do The Guys manage their collections of Web links? The Guys' favorite Web sites other than Ancestry.com and Footnote.com

### Family History Library and Major Regional Family History Center Patrons To Receive Free ANCESTRY.COM Access

An agreement was reached between FamilySearch and The Generations Network (Parent company of Ancestry.com) to provide free access of Ancestry.com to patrons of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and the 13 largest Regional family history centers one of which is the Los Angeles Regional FHC. Full access - 24,000 Ancestry.com databases and titles and 5 billion names in family history records was provided in late December.

### National Genealogical Society 2007

By Charlotte Bocage, NGS delegate

This past year the NGS Conference was held May 16-19<sup>th</sup> in Richmond VA. The Conference coincided with the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Jamestown.

NGS has a home study course that goes in-depth for all aspects of genealogy. The courses are on three CD's and start at \$85 for 5 or 6 lessons per CD. There are several

bundling options available. They also rolled out several new State Research Guides. You can get a booklet or you can print it from your computer. Check their website [www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org) for the variety of guides they sell.

The classes were many and on a wide variety of subjects. "Understanding the Vocabulary of Your Ancestors" discussed how differently our ancestors spoke compared to current day. One of the luncheon topics discussed "Fabulous Fakes in the Archives," and how you have to be diligent about getting ancestry information from others. The NGS banquet showcased Dick Cheatham. He is a Jamestown re-creator. He made us feel as though we were back in Jamestown.

This year the conference will be in Kansas City, MO, May 14-17<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Registration deadline is March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008 and you are guaranteed the choice between a printed syllabus or a CD of the syllabus. After the Early Bird deadline, you will only get the CD. In 2009, it will be in Raleigh, NC May 15-18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Robert (Sonny) Shirley Ferrell**

By Michelle Le Doux (CAAGS member)

Robert Shirley Ferrell (Sonny) was listed as a Korean POW in 1952. His remains were recovered by the United States Government and through DNA a match was made.

Robert Shirley Ferrell was born to the Rev. Robert Lee Ferrell and Esther Fannella Ferrell on June 13, 1933 in Dallas, Texas. Robert was the second of eight siblings.

In 1950, Robert enlisted at the age of 17 to serve his country in the United States Army. In 1951, he was sent to fight in the Korean Conflict. He was assigned to Battery A, 503rd Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division. Because of his religious beliefs, he requested not to carry a weapon. The 503rd was providing artillery support for friendly units coming under heavy attack by Chinese Communist forces. In danger of being overrun, the 503rd was forced to withdraw to the south.

The Ferrell family was notified by the government that he was missing in action (MIA) in 1953. His status was changed to prisoner of war (POW) in 1954. He was captured near Hoengsong, South Korea and later died in captivity about 34 months later at Suan Mining POW camp located about 40 miles southeast of Pyongyang, North Korea. He remained POW status until 2000.

In 2000, the government contacted the Ferrell family and requested blood samples from the remaining living siblings so that DNA could be matched to the remains believed to be Robert's. The blood samples were sent to the government forensic lab in Hawaii. The process was

completed in 2002.

Between 2002 and 2005 there was sporadic communication from the government regarding Robert. In early 2007, the eldest sister, Mrs. Betty Howze was notified that all DNA from the remaining siblings matched the remains that were now positively identified as Robert's.

A meeting was held with the family and the government in November 2007. During this meeting, personal items such as pieces of his uniform were turned over to the family.

After 56 years, Corporal Robert Shirley Ferrell was laid to rest on Friday, January 4<sup>th</sup> at 11am at the National Cemetery in Los Angeles (Westwood). This cemetery has been closed to burials since the Viet Nam war but was reopened for his burial.

Robert has been awarded posthumously, the Purple Heart, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit citation and the Republic of Korea War Service Medal.

### **More on DNA research**

To those that are contemplating using DNA science for family research, I strongly recommend you read "The Genetic Strand" by Edward Ball. The LA Library system has many copies. It's the story of DNA research done by a southern born white journalist. He points out what you can and what you cannot do with DNA. He identifies good labs to use and uncovers some interesting black history.

*- Submitted by D Caldwell*

### **Ethnicity vs. Nationality**

Don't confuse ethnicity with nationality. Virtually all nations, even the seemingly most homogeneous, are made up of more than one ethnicity. Ethnicity implies a certain cultural heritage. That may or may not change with movement to a different country.

Case in point, the Scots-Irish. Ethnic Scots, for various reasons, were induced to move to Ireland. The English government evicted the ethnic Irish to lease the land to the incoming Scots. After going on about 200 years in Ireland, groups of these ethnic Scots immigrated to the New World to escape economic and religious discrimination by the English authorities in Ireland. In the United States, we usually call them the Scots (or Scotch)-Irish. The ones left in the Old World are known as the Ulster Irish. While in Ireland, these ethnic Scots had few dealings with the ethnic Irish. They had different religions, different customs, and a huge difference of opinion about who should be occupying that land. In close to 200 years, the ethnic Scots became

Irish in nationality, but not in ethnicity.

During World War I, inductees into the Army were interviewed on their racial, national, lingual, religious, and family backgrounds. The interviewers were instructed that if an inductee said his parents were from Ireland and his religion was Catholic, to list the inductee's national background as "Irish." If the inductee's parents were from Ireland and his family was Protestant, the inductee was "Scottish." (And if you were a Jew, no matter what country your parents came from, your national background was "Jewish.")

So, just because your Glasgow ancestors came from Ireland, that doesn't necessarily mean they were "Irish."

*By Jacqueline Buzbee Davis - "Busby" being a town on the outskirts of Glasgow but also an English last name.*

### **BBC Launches Family History Magazine**

By Mark Sweney

The BBC is to launch a magazine and web spin-off of its genealogy series *Who Do You Think You Are?* The 100-page full-color magazine, which first hit newsstands back on September 25, will be published 13 times a year with an initial print run of 50,000. An accompanying website will launch on September 6 to coincide with the start of the new series.

Each issue of the magazine will have a cover mount of a DVD or CD-Rom with outtakes from the TV series and family history archives. The website will host new celebrity TV content each week along with a forum, blog, podcast and social history archive. UK family history website Ancestry.co.uk will act as the data provider for the BBC website.

The BBC has secured the rights to launch the spin-off magazine and website from Wall to Wall Media, the independent producer of *Who Do You Think You Are?*

To contact the MediaGuardian newsdesk email [editor@mediaguardian.co.uk](mailto:editor@mediaguardian.co.uk) or phone 020 7239 9857. For all other inquiries please call the main Guardian switchboard on 020 7278 2332. If you are writing a comment for publication, please mark clearly "for publication."

For more info on the MediaGuardian.co.uk site, go to <http://www.mediaguardian.co.uk>

- Copyright Guardian News and Media Limited

### **PBS Celebrates Black History Month With An Extensive Lineup Of Special Programming**

Arlington, VA PBS broadcasts programming created by

and about African Americans year-round, from public affairs to history to independent film to kids programming. In celebration of Black History Month, February 2008, PBS will broadcast a lineup of new and encore presentations honoring and exploring African-American history.

Henry Louis Gates Jr. is joined by Maya Angelou, Morgan Freeman, Tina Turner and other prominent African Americans in *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2*, a sequel to the series *The New York Times* called the most exciting and stirring documentary on any subject to appear on television in a long time. Other program highlights include *PRINCE AMONG SLAVES*, a documentary about an African prince who was enslaved in Mississippi for 40 years before finally achieving freedom; and *INDEPENDENT LENS Banished* the story of three counties that forcefully banished African-American families from their towns 100 years ago.

Also new in February: an examination of the Tuskegee Airmen in *RED TAIL REBORN*; *LEGACY: BEING BLACK IN AMERICA*, which features an intriguing discussion of race consciousness, integration and equity in the U.S. today; and *AN EVENING WITH QUINCY JONES*, a rare look into the life of the music mogul.

The groundbreaking second season of *EYES ON THE PRIZE* also airs during Black History Month on PBS. *EYES ON THE PRIZE II* returns to TV for the first time since the mid-1990s. Other encore presentations include the first season of *EYES ON THE PRIZE*; *SLAVERY AND THE MAKING OF AMERICA*; season one of *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES*; and *INDEPENDENT LENS Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*.

PBS KIDS GO!<sup>sm</sup> will feature GO! Figure facts on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, as well as throughout the month of February. These fun and educational facts will pop up during favorite PBS KIDS GO! programs *CYBERCHASE*, *ARTHUR*, *MAYA & MIGUEL* and *FETCH! WITH RUFF RUFFMAN*. Online, [pbskidsgo.org](http://pbskidsgo.org) will feature games and e-cards related to African-American history and the contributions of famous African Americans.

#### **Broadcast Premiers**

##### **PRINCE AMONG SLAVES**

*Monday, February 4, 2008, 10:00-11:00 p.m. ET*

##### **AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2**

*Wednesdays, February 6-13, 2008, 9:00-11:00 p.m. ET*

##### **INDEPENDENT LENS Banished**

*Tuesday, February 19, 2008, 10:00-11:30 p.m. ET*

##### **AN EVENING WITH QUINCY JONES**

*February 2008 (check local listings)*

##### **LEGACY: BEING BLACK IN AMERICA**

*February 2008 (check local listings)*

##### **RED TAIL REBORN**

*February 2008 (check local listings)*





# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society  
Celebrating our 22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**March 2008    Volume 20    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)

### **2008 Board of Directors**

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

### **Committee Chairs**

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

At CAAGS February 1, 2008 board meeting, we had a special guest, Avery Clayton from the Mayme A. Clayton Library and Museum. He gave us an update on the progress of the museum and library. He is very eager for the society to hold its meetings at the facility. The tentative opening date for the facility is mid 2009. He is in need of donations for purchasing compact shelving for the collection. If you would like to make a donation, please send your check to CAAGS and put a note on it indicting Mayme L. Clayton M&L. CAAGS is planning to have our first general meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at this facility, however, this is still tentative. The address is 4130 Overland Ave., Culver City, CA 90230-3734.

The City of Lynwood, CA Recreation and Community Services Department saluted Black History Month with a Sunday afternoon Soul Affair, February 10<sup>th</sup> at Bateman Hall. CAAGS had a booth which was manned by Ophelia Sanders and Marie Bryant. They met and spoke with those in attendance about genealogy.

I was asked to visit Whittier Elementary School in Hemet, CA for Black History Month, by Carmen Johnson an educator in the school district. On February 12<sup>th</sup>, we spoke to a fifth grade class about black inventors. It was nice to be back in school again.

Thanks to those who shared their Show & Tell with us during the February meeting. The month of March is our 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary. Congratulations to all CAAGS members.

*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).*

The Pan African Film Festival was also held during Black History Month. CAAGS members Dorothylou Sands, Earnestine McNeil, Marjorie Sholes and Ronald Higgins picture was featured in a poster in the mall.

Remember, no general membership meeting in March. We'll be looking forward to seeing you at the Discover Your Roots Conference on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March.

### 2008 Calendar of Events

#### March 15

No CAAGS general meeting

#### March 15

Discover Your Roots VI; [www.discoveryourroots.org/](http://www.discoveryourroots.org/) pre-registration \$20 and \$30 at the door. Contact Doug or Kathy Hallen, Public Affairs at 310-470-0213

#### March 22

Deadline to purchase tickets for **CAAGS fundraising day at the theatre on March 30<sup>th</sup>**. Mail checks to CAAGS, PO Box 8442, Los Angeles, CA 90008-0442

#### March 31

Deadline for NGS early registration, for more info or to register on line go to [www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)

#### April 5

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

#### April 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Vital Statistics: What, Where, When, Why, How...and Sometimes Who; Speaker - Nancy Carlberg on Plantations

#### May 2

CAAGS board meeting at 6:30pm;

#### May 10

Thousand Oaks, CA: Conejo Valley Genealogical Society Seminar will feature speaker, Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak. For info <http://rootsweb.com/~cacvgs/cvgs2008seminar@aol.com>.

#### May 14-17

2008 NGS Conference and Family History Fair, Kansas City, MO, for more info [www.eshow2000.com/ngs/2008](http://www.eshow2000.com/ngs/2008)

#### May 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Twenty Other Sources; Speaker- Marjorie Sholes, how to prepare applications and materials for genealogical conferences

#### June 6

CAAGS board meeting

#### June 21

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Newspapers, Books and Other Sources of Information About Our Ancestors

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Websites of Interest

✓ **Arphax Publishing Co.**

Home of the Family Maps Land Patent Books  
[www.arphax.com/](http://www.arphax.com/)

✓ **Full Description of Land Patent Search:**

### Databases & E-Resources

[www.loc.gov/rr/ElectronicResources/full\\_description.hp?MainID=667](http://www.loc.gov/rr/ElectronicResources/full_description.hp?MainID=667)

✓ **Indian Land Tenure**

[www.indianlandtenure.org/](http://www.indianlandtenure.org/)

CAAGS sends our condolences to Mary Alequin Sosa whose mother passed on Friday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

### Standards For Sharing Information With Others

*Recommended by the National Genealogical Society*

Conscious of the fact that sharing information or data with others, whether through speech, documents or electronic media, is essential to family history research and that it needs continuing support and encouragement, responsible family historians consistently—

- respect the restrictions on sharing information that arise from the rights of another as an author, originator or compiler; as a living private person; or as a party to a mutual agreement.
- observe meticulously the legal rights of copyright owners, copying or distributing any part of their works only with their permission, or to the limited extent specifically allowed under the law's "fair use" exceptions.
- identify the sources for all ideas, information and data from others, and the form in which they were received, recognizing that the unattributed use of another's intellectual work is plagiarism.
- respect the authorship rights of senders of letters, electronic mail and data files, forwarding or disseminating them further only with the sender's permission.
- inform people who provide information about their families as to the ways it may be used, observing any conditions they impose and respecting any reservations they may express regarding the use of particular items.
- require some evidence of consent before assuming that living people are agreeable to further sharing of information about themselves.
- convey personal identifying information about living people—like age, home address, occupation or activities—only in ways that those concerned have expressly agreed to.
- recognize that legal rights of privacy may limit the extent to which information from publicly available sources may be further used, disseminated or published.
- communicate no information to others that is known to be false, or without making reasonable efforts to determine its truth, particularly information that may be derogatory.
- are sensitive to the hurt that revelations of criminal, immoral, bizarre or irresponsible behavior

may bring to family members.

©2000 by National Genealogical Society. Permission is granted to copy or publish this material provided it is reproduced in its entirety, including this notice.

### **Renew Your Member With CAAGS**

Dues for 2008 are due - \$25 for individual or \$30 for family membership. To receive your copy of the membership roster, continue receiving The Heritage newsletters and notices of upcoming genealogy events, dues must be received on or before March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

### **CAAGS Fundraising Day At The Theatre**

CAAGS will be having a fundraising day at the theatre on March 30<sup>th</sup> at 3pm at the Playhouse Theatre Players, 600 Moulton Ave., Los Angeles. The show is House on the Hill - Mammy Pleasant's story. Show price is \$35. Checks should be made out to CAAGS and mailed to us at PO Box 8442, Los Angeles, CA 92008-0442. Seating is limited. Deadline to purchase tickets is March 22<sup>nd</sup>. For more info contact Marjorie Sholes (323) 733-4815 or Colette DeVerge, (323) 933-8381.

### **Our Ancestors' Health**

by Juliana Smith Taken from Ancestry.com

A couple weeks ago, I mentioned my Grandpa Pyburn in the article about the U.S. Passport Collection. As I followed up on researching that neglected family line, I found a passenger arrival record for him as he returned from Trinidad, which lies off the coast of Venezuela. When I shared it with my mom, she remarked that the record was from the time he spent working in South America--a trip on which he contracted malaria. I hadn't heard this fact. She told me a story then that my Aunt Madelon had told her about visiting him at his father's house when he was ill; she could hear the bed rattle upstairs with the violent tremors that are symptomatic of the disease.

We don't often think of this type of disease when it comes to our family history. When we hear about disease in the context of family history, it's often in relation to our own health and of conditions that are hereditary. This is of course important and a great reason to investigate your family health history. In fact, it is so important that the Surgeon General here in the U.S. has a "Family History Initiative" online with tools to help you record a family health history that can be shared with your physician. But although our family health history is perhaps the best reason to look into the health of our ancestors, it is not the only reason. Just as our own health impacts our lives and many of the decisions we make, the same held true for our ancestors.

### **Multiple Deaths**

When family historians run across records that show family members dying in rapid succession, one of the first things to consider is a disease or an epidemic of some kind. When you're dealing with contagious diseases, it's not uncommon to see families decimated. Several members of my Kelly family died of tuberculosis (consumption), including my third great-grandmother at the age of twenty-six. This isn't surprising given the contagious nature of TB. Since families often worked, traveled, and lived in close quarters with one another, situations like this are not uncommon.

### **Learning More**

I picked up a book called Foreign and Female: Immigrant Women in America, 1840-1930, by Doris Weatherford, at the FGS Conference back in August. When I cleaned my office last week it surfaced and landed in my "books-to-read" basket. The third chapter is titled, "In Sickness and in Health." In it I found an interesting statistic in relation to my Kellys. The book cites the fact that Irish-born residents had a higher than normal death rate from tuberculosis (340 per 100,000) than native-born individuals (113 per 100,000).

Furthermore, the chapter mentions that with some diseases, there was a sentiment among immigrants that catching certain diseases was inevitable and in some cases, when one child got sick, other children were deliberately exposed in the hope that they would get a mild case and thus gain immunity to the disease.

When you learn of a disease that affected your family history, take a little time to learn more about it. What was the incubation period? How long did it last and what were the symptoms? Think about it in the context of how it would have impacted the entire family.

You may see the implications of illness in other records as well. The 1880 U.S. Federal Census asked, "Is the person (on the day of the enumerator's visit) sick, or temporarily disabled, so as to be unable to attend to ordinary business or duties? If so, what is the sickness or disability?" It also asked how many months of the year a person was out of work during the census year. A sick bread-winner would have meant loss of income, perhaps forcing other family members and even children into the workforce.

Census mortality schedules are another record source that gives cause of death. It's interesting to go through and see what people in your ancestor's neighborhood were dying from. Ancestry has some of these records available online. Unfortunately another point brought up in "Foreign and Female" was that families often didn't want it known when there was illness in the house. There was a common fear of hospitals and quarantine, so it's possible that there was illness in the home, even if that column happens to be blank in the census records.

## Treatment

Because some immigrants distrusted hospitals, and even doctors to some extent, many turned to folk healers and superstition in times of illness. The methods employed were often ineffective. In the UCLA Online Archive of Folk Medicine one entry from Slovakia says it was believed that hanging an onion above the door would keep cholera out. Since we now know that cholera is a food- or water-borne illness, the hanging onion's effect would only have been of a decorative or odoriferous nature.

Some home remedies were actually poisonous. Another entry cites the ingestion of mercury to treat syphilis. Patent medicines were also a problem. Ads in newspapers touted remedies to cure long lists of ailments--from the common cold to liver ailments to rheumatism. Many of these so-called "cures" were loaded with alcohol and narcotics. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters for example was 44.3 percent alcohol--or 88-proof! An ad in an 1863 issue of Harper's Weekly touts Hostetter's and "its marvelous effect upon the diseased liver." I'm guessing the effects were less than "marvelous."

## Fleeing Disease

When an epidemic struck, you'll often find residents fleeing the area until the pestilence passed. A New York Times article from 1907 describes how hundreds of people were fleeing an epidemic of unknown origins in Ridgway, Pennsylvania.

## Research Tips

Here are some tips for researching the ailments you uncover in your family history:

- Learn the terminology. Websites like *Archaic Medical Terms* can be helpful in determining the meaning of old disease names.
- Be aware of epidemics that struck in areas in which your ancestors lived. You can find timelines like this one online.
- Once you've identified an epidemic that may have affected your family, check historical newspapers and read any local coverage.
- Learn more about the symptoms and duration of an illness. Modern health sites abound on the Web. Search for the name of the ailment and you'll have a better understanding of what an ailing ancestor went through.
- Check out Cyndi's List for more websites with medical information.

Seek out local histories. In *A History of the City of Brooklyn*, by Henry R. Stiles, I found the following reference to a cholera epidemic:

The principal event of this year was the visitation of that dreadful scourge of the human race, the epidemic cholera. It appeared in Brooklyn on the 29th of May, 1849, from which time it prevailed here until the 22d of September.

During this period there were 642 deaths, \*being in a ratio to the population (100,000), of one in every 155 persons\* Of these deaths 495 were adults, and 147 children; the larger relative mortality among the latter (being one to every three of the former), forming a distinctive characteristic of the epidemic in this city.

## New UGA Indexing Project

UGA is now indexing burial cards for veterans with federal service who were buried in Utah from the time Utah was a territory until 1966. The cards are mostly typed and are easy to read. The cards give the name, war, date and place of enlistment, date and place of discharge, date and place of birth, date and place of death, place of burial, etc. Email Judi Hansen at [jwhsearch@aol.com](mailto:jwhsearch@aol.com) to register and info.

### Do you want to be the best genealogist you can be?

Success in your genealogical research and finding those elusive ancestors depends on your knowledge of where to find records, how to expand your research techniques, and how to evaluate and analyze the records you find. An important part of NGS' mission is providing genealogists with the tools needed to do accurate, quality research. At the forefront of educational offerings is the NGS

### Conference in the States and Family History Fair, 14-17

**May, 2008 in Kansas City, Missouri.** The program will include more than 150 lectures and workshops and more than 100 exhibitors. No matter what your skill level in family history research – beginner, intermediate or professional, NGS has something on the conference program for you.

Go to: [www.eshow2000.com/ngs/](http://www.eshow2000.com/ngs/) for a full list of conference lectures. To download a PDF brochure go to: [www.ngsgenealogy.org/2008NGSRegistrationbrochure.pdf](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/2008NGSRegistrationbrochure.pdf) Questions? – Jeanne Lund at [lund@ngsgenealogy.org](mailto:lund@ngsgenealogy.org)

## Tips from The Pros: Don't Skip

by Michael John Neill

Skipping around can get you into trouble. And yet it is so tempting to jump a few generations and get to the "fun stuff." Recently I thought I had found my Ira Sargent. A "new" Ira was located in a state census and a little Web sleuthing combined with some census work had a potential name for the "new" Ira's father. My half hour of research had reached a tenuous conclusion at best. At worst, I was dead wrong.

A website connected this "new" Ira's father to several "Mayflower" passengers and numerous early immigrants to Massachusetts. I could easily spend hours working on these new pilgrim ancestors. However, there are two problems.

First, I haven't come close to reasonably proving "my" Ira is the same guy as the "new" Ira. And second, the connection between the "new" Ira and his father is weak as

well. Before I research the distant ancestry of the “new” Ira’s father, I need to make the connections in these more recent generations more concrete.

I should not totally ignore the past of Ira’s father. There could be a clue there that could connect the families for which I am looking.



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

**April 2008    Volume 20    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)  
Martin Luther King United Methodist Church  
6625 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA  
(East of Crenshaw; between Gage and Florence)

#### **2008 Board of Directors**

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

#### **Committee Chairs**

Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Publications Editor  
Lillian Glover – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate/Fundraising Chairman  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

## **President's Message**

Ronald Higgins

It was a very special day at the Discover Your Roots Conference. The theme was "Stitching Together Your Ancestors." Our keynote speaker Darius Gray gave a pictorial presentation of his family tree. He is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. CAAGS members that helped make the Cultural Hall light up with joy and happiness with their displays of pictures, posters and quilts were Daisy Jenkins-Saffold, Gwen Foster, Renee Cochée, Dorothylou Sands, Anjail Bakeer and Marilyn White. My special guests Ann Batiste and Rhee Adams showcased quilts from their quilters clubs.

Our keynote speaker received a quilt that was made by members of the LDS church. Also, there was a drawing for six quilted handbags with African American patterns on them. They were beautiful bags. Lillian Glover, the LDS church, members of the committee along with the church youth volunteers helped everyone have an amazing day.

Thanks to all the CAAGS members and friends that attended the conference. We had 325 people attend the Roots VI conference. A special thanks to all the presenters. Do you have something to offer? Let me know, we need more CAAGS members on the Roots committee. If you attended don't forget to complete the evaluation form and return it to the committee.

On behalf of CAAGS and those of us who attended Roots VI, we want to thank our President Ronald Higgins for his unflinching dedication in helping make the conference a great success.

*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).*

## 2008 Calendar of Events

### April 4

CAAGS board meeting 6:30pm

### April 19

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Vital Statistics: What, Where, When, Why, How...and Sometimes Who; Speaker - Nancy Carlberg on Plantations

### May 2

CAAGS board meeting at 6:30pm;

### May 10

Thousand Oaks, CA: Conejo Valley Genealogical Society Seminar will feature speaker, Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak. For info <http://rootsweb.com/~cacvgs/>; [cvgs2008seminar@aol.com](mailto:cvgs2008seminar@aol.com).

### May 14-17

2008 NGS Conference and Family History Fair, Kansas City, MO, for more info [www.eshow2000.com/ngs/2008](http://www.eshow2000.com/ngs/2008)

### May 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class – Software Systems; Speaker- Marjorie Sholes, how to prepare applications and materials for genealogical conferences

### June 6

CAAGS board meeting

### June 21

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Newspapers, Books and Other Sources of Information About Our Ancestors

### June 27 -29

Jamboree - Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel and Convention Center. For more info visit [scgsgenealogy.com](http://scgsgenealogy.com) or to register on line and/or print registration form

### July 11

CAAGS Board Meeting 6:30pm

### July/August

Summer break – no CAAGS general meetings

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

## Websites of Interest

A scientist uses high tech to recover low-tech data - a small scanner and digital cameras to retrieve tombstone info erased by 243 years of harsh weather. For full article: [www.post-gazette.com/pg/08011/848345-115.stm#](http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08011/848345-115.stm#)

### Saving Graves has a new website

[www.savinggraves.com](http://www.savinggraves.com)

Not only does it have a new look, but also has changed its focus to be more proactive in cemetery preservation.

### Missouri Digital Heritage

[www.sos.mo.gov/mdh/](http://www.sos.mo.gov/mdh/)

### Baseball Player Obituaries and Death by Month Chart

[www.baseball-almanac.com/deaths/chart/baseball\\_player\\_obituaries.shtml](http://www.baseball-almanac.com/deaths/chart/baseball_player_obituaries.shtml)

## The dates are set for Jamboree!

**Be there - June 27-29, 2008.**

[www.scgsgenealogy.com](http://www.scgsgenealogy.com)

Early Bird Registration on or before May 1, 2008 includes free copy of printed syllabus. CD copies of syllabus are available for \$5 each while quantities last. Registration for Non members is \$80

Preregistration May 2 to June 15, 2008 or at the door includes a free copy of syllabus on CD. Printed syllabus copies available for \$10 while quantities last. Registration for Non members is \$90

Early Bird Registration discounts close on May 1. Pre-registration closes on June 15. Jamboree walk-in registration will be available at the door, but registrations for special meal events will not be available after June 15. Refunds requested in writing on or before June 15 will be assessed a \$25 administrative fee. No refunds after June 15.

## Self-Identify Is Complex: Or Whose Child Are You? by Tricia Alkmia Cochée

In grade school some of the kids would say to me, “you got ‘good’ hair, you must have some Indian in you.” My ex-boyfriend used to affectionately call me “geeche girl” no matter how many times I told him that wasn’t my tribe. But that old saying “you can’t always judge a book by its cover” never rang so true as when you talk about defining ethnic identity.

All this murmuring swirling around in the air about is so-and-so “Black enough,” why doesn’t so-and-so call themselves “Black,” does so-and-so have a White Mama or is she just “Creole?” And what’s with this observation that seems to re-surface every African American History Month that only the ‘light-skinn-ed’ folks were/are radical? Ok let’s do the roll call: Malcolm X, Huey Newton, Angela Davis, George Jackson. But what about Robert Williams, Peter Tosh, Paul Robeson, Marcus Garvey or my own ancestor who provided the ammunition for John Brown, Gunsmith Jones? To borrow from Bill Cosby, come on people!

Whether we want to admit it or not, whether it was consensual or not, “we Americans be a mixed people”, and that goes for ‘white folks too!’ What African American family doesn’t have some relative back in the day, (maybe even now) that passed for white or have some American Indian ancestry? I can trace a portion of my heritage to Africa (Guinea Bissau, Senegal, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia), South Asia (India), Europe (English), North America (Cherokee). As an African in the Americas, that’s not special or unique but it is uniquely American. (Understanding too that the borders of the ancient world of our

ancestors is no longer the borders of today). Some genealogists and historians say that up to 80% of the African American population is “mixed.” My friends in Europe of African descent, most of whom are only second generation immigrants removed from their birth country, marvel at the family history and personal stories of us Black Americans who not withstanding those who claim the Moorish lineage, have been here in the Americas usually for seven to nine generations after Brazil abolished slavery in 1888, the same year my great grandmother was born in Texas. In Brazil, the “one drop rule” is reversed and so how one identifies oneself can be complicated. At one time, there were over 150 ways you could self-identify by your skin tone in Brazil other than calling yourself an Afro-Brazilian or an African. In the Caribbean there was much mixing between the Africans, native “Indians,” Asians and Europeans.

This question of how one self-identifies is complex. It’s personal and political. It’s historical. Truth be told, the majority of founding families of Los Angeles where of mixed ancestry of African, American Indian and European. We have all driven Pico Blvd. Well that boulevard was named after Pio Pico, a “mixed” brotha and the last Governor of California when it was still owned by Mexico. And did you know that North Africans are classified as “white or Caucasian” on the US census? It’s about knowing and re-claiming your history, your birthright, and your very humanity. As long as we frame the conversation of ethnic and historical identity, power and privilege in the context of plantation politics we will never move beyond a plantation mentality. I understand it, but my history didn’t start on the plantation nor did yours. To paraphrase that revolutionary singer and songwriter, Peter Tosh, “where ever you are in the world, if you Black, you an African.”

Ms. Cochée is a Los Angeles based freelance writer and dancer and can be reached at sambistadancer@hotmail.com

## **Saving Your Family Treasures:**

### **Four Destructive Habits**

#### **Poor Storage Areas**

*by Maureen Taylor*

Some of the worst damage to our family photographs and documents occurs in the name of preservation. There are a lot more than four destructive habits that cause our family history treasures to deteriorate, but the ones listed here are commonly done by the most well-meaning genealogists.

#### **Mis-Handling**

There is no debate on what you should do before looking at photographs and documents. Wash your hands with soap and water then dry them completely. This removes the dirt and oils you could leave behind during handling. In some archives they make you wear cotton gloves and in others clean dry hands are enough. I prefer wearing gloves,

because not only will you protect your pictures from the naturally occurring oils present on your hands, but you won’t transfer surface grime from one photo or document to another. Try the white glove test with your pictures. You won’t believe how dirty documents and pictures get from hanging around for a hundred years! I always wash my gloves after wearing them.

If you don’t know where to buy some inexpensive supplies search “white cotton gloves” in an online search engine to locate vendors. I recently ordered a dozen for around \$8. That’s enough so that you can give a pair to all the photographers and genealogists in your family.

#### **Poor Storage Areas**

Probably the most common question I’m asked is where to store photographs and documents. The best place is often the hardest to find—a windowless closet away from exterior walls and water pipes. I don’t have one of those in my house, so I create a better environment by nesting one box of photographs in a larger box. The buffer created by the outside box helps prevent fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Many folks have written to me about their storage dilemmas. It’s difficult to locate just the right spot in your house that protects valuable family items from damaging heat, light, and humidity. Trust me. Basements, attics and garages make convenient storage places, but in the long-term you’ll end up destroying the material you’re trying to save.

Here’s a perfect present for the keeper of family materials. Buy them a selection of reinforced boxes made from acid- and lignin-free board from a company such as Hollinger Corporation.

#### **Lamination**

Several times a year I receive a question about laminating photographs and important papers. This technique falls into the NEVER category of how to save family treasures.

Lamination consists of poor quality plastics, adhesive and heat. This trio is toxic to anything you laminate, and it can’t be reversed. Anything laminated slowly deteriorates due to the glue, the chemicals in the plastic, and the ingredients of the item you’re trying to save.

Instead try encapsulation. This process uses two sheets of non-PVC plastic or mylar, a safe adhesive strip and no heat. You can order a kit with all the necessary supplies from Carr McLean or buy items separately through companies like Light Impressions.

#### **Labeling**

Unless you want your pictures and documents to end up in an estate sale you should take time to label them. Before you reach for a gel pen or other writing tool think about whether that utensil is light-fast, waterproof, and permanent. If you want to write on a heritage photo all you



need is a soft lead pencil available in any art, craft, or office supply store. If however, you're trying to caption a picture with a plastic coating then you'll need something like a Zig marker also readily available at any of those outlets. Along with the cotton gloves, give the genealogist on your list one of each. Then offer to help them label all those family photos and documents. Just write on the back in the upper, left-hand corner.

For photographs, include the name of the person in the portrait, their life dates, and when the photo was taken. Don't worry that you don't have all the answers, put down what you know. On documents, include the name of the person who wrote it and when. Scrapbook hobbyists might want to compose an extended caption that actually tells the story of the item.

Think about the wonderful family history kit you can put together— gloves, boxes, and writing utensils for that special person on your list. You can find additional information on preserving family history treasures on Sally Jacob's blog.

### **Virtual Surname Wall Database**

We are very pleased to announce the roll-out of the searchable Virtual Surname Wall database, sponsored by the Southern California Genealogical Society.

Although it took a little longer than we anticipated or wished, entries from over a thousand genealogists from around the world are now searchable by family name, by geographic region, and by each participant's Submitter ID.

Access the Virtual Surname Wall at [www.SCGSGenealogy.com](http://www.SCGSGenealogy.com).

To see if any of your surnames are listed:

1. Click on the link to "Search the Virtual Surname Wall."
2. Search by surname, location, or Submitter ID or any combination of the three. It is a "begins with" search. For example, if you search for the last name Mill, it will return the names beginning with the letters Mill. (i.e. Millan, Millard, Miller).
3. Be sure to read the search tips that are listed on the search page.

If you haven't yet added your names to the database, or if you want to add more:

1. Have your family information available for reference.
2. Click on the link to "Add Your Surnames"
3. Enter the following information for each surname you are reporting:

Surnames (including spelling variations).

Geographic area in which they lived, or the migration path.

List your geographic information in order by city,

county, state and country. To avoid confusion, please do not use two-letter state abbreviations. Time Frame. Use abbreviations (approx., or abt., or ca.) to indicate approximate time frames.

4. Submit as many names as you want. Each entry screen will accept up to 10 surnames but you can enter multiple screens. If you get a message that the survey has already been completed, just click "Take the survey again" and continue adding names. You do not need to limit your entries to California.

As entries are added to the database, the Virtual Surname Wall will become an even more valuable resource for family historians and genealogy researchers. Check back often to see if you find a match.

Your participation in the Virtual Surname Wall project is completely voluntary. Your contact information is not displayed online. You have the option of asking SCGS to serve as intermediary, or authorizing SCGS to release your contact information in the event that we receive an inquiry regarding a possible family connection.

Please feel free to forward this email to your cousins, friends, fellow genealogists or others who would be interested in the Virtual Surname Wall project. Genealogy and historical societies are welcome to post this announcement in newsletters or journals. Reprint permission is granted but please include contact information ([phinkel@scsgenealogy.com](mailto:phinkel@scsgenealogy.com)).

We thank you for your contributions to the Virtual Surname Wall. Here's to making lots of connections!

*- Paula Hinkel - Southern California Genealogical Society*

### **Slave Manifest Unveiled**

The slave manifests were unveiled at the annual Atlanta Black Family History Symposium in March. A free symposium was held at the National Archives Southeast Region, 5780 Jonesboro Road, Morrow. For more info see the article at the following website [www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/clayton/stories/2008/02/21/slavearchives\\_0222.html](http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/clayton/stories/2008/02/21/slavearchives_0222.html) or e-mail [morrow.resources@nara.gov](mailto:morrow.resources@nara.gov).

NARA will restore the evening and weekend hours in the archival research rooms in the National Archives Building and the National Archives at College Park. Effective the week of April 14, the extended hours will be 9am-9pm. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and 9am-5pm. Saturday, Hours on Monday and Tuesday will continue to be 9am-5pm. As was prior to October 2006, there will be no records pulled on Saturday.



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

**May 2008    Volume 20    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)

#### **2008 Board of Directors**

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

#### **Committee Chairs**

Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Publications Editor  
Lillian Glover – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate/Fundraising Chairman  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

## **President's Message**

Ronald Higgins

To celebrate CAAGS 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary a fund raiser was held at a small African American playhouse in the shadows of Los Angeles called the Playhouse Theatre Players. Twenty seven CAAGS members and friends watched Mammy Pleasant's Story "House on the Hill." Thank you for your support and a special thanks to Marjorie Sholes and Colette DeVerge for being our hosts.

Also, I would like to thank Ron Baptiste our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President for conducting our general meeting in March. It was very informative for all who attended and everyone there took an active part in the session that day.

National Victims Rights Week - Mothers on the March Rally was held on April 20<sup>th</sup> at Ervin "Magic" Johnson Park in Los Angeles County. The park is located between El Segundo, 120<sup>th</sup> St., Avalon and Central Ave., CAAGS had a booth and was represented by Ron Higgins and his granddaughter Rachel Crosswell. He spoke with numerous parents whose children had been killed in violent acts. Many parents who had never been interested in genealogy before expressed an interest in getting started in the near future.

#### **House Photos**

Some County Auditors have pictures of homes posted. The "real" purpose of the information is tax evaluation but the pictures are invaluable. Just type in the search engine something like Franklin Co. Ohio Auditor and look to see if they have a choice such as Property Search listed. You do get the most current picture of the house so you may even have a then and now view if you are fortunate enough to have an old picture. Also, if the house has been torn down, you now know what replaced it.  
- By Helen A. Read, [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com)

*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).*

## 2008 Calendar of Event

### May 10

Thousand Oaks, CA: Conejo Valley Genealogical Society Seminar will feature speaker, Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak. For info <http://rootsweb.com/~cacvgs/>; [cvg2008seminar@aol.com](mailto:cvg2008seminar@aol.com).

### May 14-17

2008 NGS Conference and Family History Fair, Kansas City, MO, for more info [www.eshow2000.com/ngs/2008](http://www.eshow2000.com/ngs/2008)

### May 17

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class – Software Systems

### June 6

CAAGS board meeting

### June 21

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Newspapers, Books and Other Sources of Information About Our Ancestors

### June 27 -29

Jamboree - Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel and Convention Center. For more info visit [scgsgenealogy.com](http://scgsgenealogy.com) or to register on line and/or print registration form

### July 11

CAAGS Board Meeting 6:30pm

### July/August

Summer break – no CAAGS general meetings

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

## Jamboree Offers Classes Helpful to Descendants of Slaves

By Charlotte Bocage

When I officially started researching my family's roots in 1977, all I knew was that both sides of my family was from Louisiana and my mothers' grandmother lived on a plantation. I thought it was possible there were slaves in my family, so I went on the search to find them.

Throughout the years, I have attended genealogy conferences and seminars. I have learned much along the way because I also took classes about land records, Church records, and courthouse records. These records have led me to some slave records. After many years of searching, I have found slaves in my family and I will continue to search all records for more information about everyone in my family. A recent DNA test confirmed we were from Africa.

Over the years, people have told me there is nothing for them at Jamboree or any national conference, feeling that there are no black classes or lectures. By only looking for "Black" or "African American" in the titles, they may be missing workshops, which may be very beneficial to researchers of people of color. Since 1870 there have been many records created that are helpful to documenting the lives of African Americans. In addition to birth, marriage and death records there are a variety of useful records, such as census, land, probate and wills, courthouse, church, and cemetery records. In many of these records, there is information that may be helpful to black Americans.

At this year's 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree, presented by the Southern California Genealogical Society, there is a wide variety of lectures available to assist people in their search for family. On Saturday, John Humphrey will lecture on "Developing the Skills to Become a Genealogist." If you do not know which genealogical, software program is best for you, well, they have introductions to Roots Magic and Legacy Family Tree on Friday with repeats on Saturday. In addition, they will have noted genealogist and librarian Drew Smith lecturing on "Kicking the Tires of Popular Genealogy Software: Which to Get." If you do not know what a GEDCOM is then, they have Cheri Mello discussing "How to Create and Use a GEDCOM."

On Friday afternoon George Morgan will present "How to Get the Most Out of Attending a Genealogy Conference," which would be a great lecture to attend in order to better understand what the Jamboree has to offer you. Arlene Eakle will discuss church records on Friday afternoon. For those needing courthouse records, on Saturday Jana Broglin and Wendy Elliott will be presenting those classes. For DNA information we have Steve Morse on Friday, with Bennett Greenspan, Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak on Saturday and on Sunday Colleen Fitzpatrick, each

## Websites of Interest

Ancestry.com has launched a collection titled Former Colonial Dependencies Slave Register Collection, 1812-1834, which will allow Caribbean Americans descended from British Empire slaves to delve into their history online.

The registers now on Ancestry.com include details for more than 2.7 million slaves and 280,000 slave owners from a total of 17 former colonial dependencies, including Jamaica, Barbados, Bahamas, Honduras and more.

Beginning in the mid-1600s, many hundreds of thousands of African slaves worked mainly on sugar, tea and tobacco plantations in far flung corners of the British Empire such as the Caribbean and the countries today known as Sri Lanka and as South Africa. The British slave trade became illegal in 1807, but the actual ownership of slaves wasn't abolished until 1834.

The British Government, in order to monitor ownership and stamp out illegal trading, required British slave owners to complete a slave register every three years, beginning in 1812. The registers list each slave by name and include gender, approximate age and, in some instances, birthplace, as well as parish of residence.

presenting a different spin on the whole topic of genetic genealogy (DNA).

Jamboree will have information concerning some of the major databases, such as the Family History Catalog, Google, Ancestry.com, and one of the newer databases, Footnote.

They will have various other lectures available over the three day event including, a talk about getting youth involved in family history, another about using an Excel spreadsheet to assist with your search, one on tracing Southern pedigree, and another to finding women before 1850. Jamboree offers classes on analyzing pictures for clues, gadgets to assist the genealogists and cemetery research.

On Saturday between 6-7pm there will be an informal brickwall session called "It's a Small, Small World," where they encourage attendees to bring their research problems to the group and they will try to help you find a solution.

Many of the topics at this year's Jamboree will be useful to researchers of any ethnic group. If your ancestors were slaves or free persons of color, I am sure that there are literally dozens of workshops that you will find helpful. See you at the Southern California Genealogical Society's 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Jamboree.

## **Genealogy from A to Z**

*by Michael John Neill*

**Accuracy.** Are your records as accurate as possible? Have transcriptions been made correctly and in an honest effort to copy the original precisely?

**Bibliographies.** Have you looked at bibliographies and finding aids frequently shown on state archives websites and genealogical research libraries? Materials listed in these guides may assist you in your research. Bibliographies in historical or genealogical journal articles may also reference materials of which you were not aware.

**Cited.** Are you sources cited in such a way that you or someone else could easily find the record again if necessary? If not, consider expanding your source detail.

**Documented.** Do you have at least one source for each event or name in your database? Although one source does not imply accuracy and multiple independent sources are preferable, one is a start.

**Errors.** Remember that any record can contain errors. Never assume that one record is 100 % accurate. Gather as many records as possible before drawing conclusions.

**Faith.** Have you searched for records of your ancestor's

faith? Records of church membership may provide insights into your ancestor's life and family.

**Google.** Have you Googled all your relatives? I searched for a relative that died twenty years ago, entering in his name and last county of residence in the search box. I got several hits, including a post made by a granddaughter.

**Home.** Did your ancestor go back "home" to marry, have a child, die, or to be buried? Do not assume your ancestor never made any trips back home. In some cases significant events might have taken place "at home" after the ancestor had left that required his return.

**Ignorance.** We're all ignorant in some area or another. Being ignorant simply means you do not know something, and not knowing something can lead to misinterpretation. Remedy your ignorance. Attend a conference, read a journal article, read a book, ask questions, but do not let ignorance create additional research "blocks."

**Journals.** Have you searched genealogical society journals and quarterlies for information on your ancestors? Some have been published in online form, some are indexed in PERSI (Periodical Source Index), and some are unindexed, but these print materials may contain just the clue you are looking for.

**Kith and kin.** Have you researched all the kith and kin of your ancestor? Unless he was a Hoover, your ancestor did not travel in a vacuum and there's a good chance his neighbors and associates are people he knew back "home" or are related in some fashion.

**Lifetime.** Have you researched your ancestor for her entire lifetime? The gaps that result from an incomplete picture may be hindering your research.

**Memorization.** Are you using "facts" or concepts in your research that you have "memorized?" Are you certain you have remembered them correctly? Trusting your own memory should be done sparingly.

**New.** Have you kept up with new indexes and databases? Many times "new" databases or websites provide easier access to records that previously have been difficult to utilize.

**Organization.** Have you organized all your information in a way that makes sense and that others can understand? For some of us this may occupy the rest of our "genealogical lives."

**Preface.** Do you read the preface to published and online materials you use? Prefatory material should indicate if there were records gaps, omissions, or difficulties, or other issues encountered when compiling the book or database.

Not reading the preface could create problems where none exist.

**Quiet time.** Do you give yourself “quiet time?” The ability to solve some problems or to be inspired can be enhanced when there are no distractions. If your research is done with constant interruptions you may be missing important clues.

**Robotic.** Has your research become robotic? If you are approaching each ancestral problem with the same process and the same set of assumptions, you may be making a mistake. Determine how this ancestor is different from others you have researched and change your approach accordingly.

**Soundex.** Do you know what alternate names are searched when a Soundex search option is chosen for your last name? If not, you may not be searching for all the names you think you are.

**Terminology.** Do you know what those “legal” words mean in a deed or a will? An incorrect interpretation could lead to wasted research time or inaccurate conclusions.

**URL.** When you print or save genealogical information from a website are you also printing or saving the URL (Uniform Resource Locator--the website address)? If you don't, you may waste valuable time re-locating the information online should that be necessary.

**Variants.** Have you considered variant spellings for first and last names? Variants can easily result from handwriting issues and how your ancestor pronounced his name.

**Why?** Are you asking “why?” The reason your ancestor moved, the reason he sold his farm when he did, the reason a child is left out of a will--all may have genealogical significance. There are times when you may really never know “why” but just asking the question may get you to thinking.

**X-ray.** Have you x-rayed your genealogical documents? Not literally, but rather have you looked beyond the surface of each record to see what less-than-obvious clues are included?

**You.** Have you written your life story? Don't leave behind piles of information on long dead ancestors and precious little on yourself.

**Z.** There is no Z entry on this list. It is done to make the point that not only does not every letter get a word, but not every question can be answered. Sometimes we all need to remember that.

*Michael John Neill is a genealogical writer and speaker who has been researching his or his children's genealogy for more than twenty years. He maintains a personal website at [www.rootdig.com](http://www.rootdig.com)*

## The Year Was 1790

The year was 1790 and the young American nation was already feeling the pull of North versus South. Northern states were still facing debt from the Revolutionary War, while southern states had paid off most of their debt. So when Alexander Hamilton proposed that the federal government assume Revolutionary War debts, the South was definitely not on-board. In order to gain support for the legislation, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison worked out a compromise. The agreement would put the capital of the young nation on the banks of the Potomac, surrounded by slave states, in exchange for support of the funding of Revolutionary debt. In the meantime, Philadelphia would be the capital.

The first U.S. census taken that same year counted a total population of 3,939,625, with African Americans making up 19 percent of that number (9 percent free and 10 percent slaves). 90 percent of the African American population lived in the South.

Large families were the norm, with an average of eight children. The white American population would double every twenty-two years.

New York was the largest city in the country with a population of 33,131, while Philadelphia followed in second place with 28,522 citizens. More than two-thirds of that city turned out in April for the funeral of the beloved statesman, Benjamin Franklin.

In London, women breathed a collective sigh of relief as the alleged “London Monster” was arrested. For several years someone had been terrorizing attractive women in that city, accosting them and usually stabbing them in the thigh or posterior, although occasionally he was said to have hidden a knife in a nosegay and stabbed them in the nose. A Welshman named Rynwick Williams was arrested after a victim pointed him out. However, he had a strong alibi for at least one of the crimes, and it was speculated that he was set up to gain a handsome reward that had been offered for the capture of the perpetrator. Regardless, young Rynwick was sentenced to six years in prison.

In northern England the first lifeboat was tested and proved successful. Inspiration for its creation came following a shipwreck tragedy the previous year in which eight men drowned in sight of the shore. The rescue in the stormy sea was thought to be suicidal, so a shore-based rescue boat, the Original, was created to avert future tragedies. The Original went on to save hundreds of lives and spawned the creation of many more such boats. *-From Ancestry.com*

**Los Angeles Black Book Expo, Saturday June 14<sup>th</sup>; 10A-8P, Ahmanson Senior Center, Exposition Park, 3980 Menlo Ave., Los Angeles, on the web at [www.labbx.com](http://www.labbx.com)**



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**June/July 2008      Volume 20      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)

### **2008 Board of Directors**

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

### **Committee Chairs**

Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Publications Editor  
Lillian Glover – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Marilyn White – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate/Fundraising Chairman  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

I would like to start by thanking all the people in our organization who make things happen by volunteering. Thank you to Dorthylou Sands for coordinating book sales at the meeting last month. It had been a while since we had our books out for sale during a meeting. Thank you to Ron Farley for help setting up the table for the book sale and for setting up the tables and chairs for the general meeting. Thank you to Jessie McClennan for the beginner class presentation. Thank you to Marjorie Sholes for being our guest speaker and for helping the new people after the meeting with a special beginner's genealogy class.

I hope that others will follow their example and volunteer for the other positions we need assistance with. See Ron Higgins or any board member if you are interested in volunteering some time to help.

Our June meeting will be our bi-annual Show and Tell. If you have something you would like to "Show and Tell" please come prepared to do it in June. Please keep your presentations brief so that everyone who signs up has a chance to do their presentation. Nancy Carlsberg will be our guest speaker in September. She will do a presentation on plantations. Also, we are planning to have our September meeting at the Mayme A. Clayton Museum and Library. The facility is located in Culver City at the old Culver City Courthouse. Please be sure to read your newsletter for more updates on this meeting.

Speaking of volunteers we are getting ready for our 2009 budget review and audit and need volunteers to help with this. Contact Ron Higgins or Anjail Bakeer (CAAGS Treasurer) if you are interested.

*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).*

Don't forget to celebrate Juneteenth during the month of June. Please try to attend the annual celebration at Allensworth or one of the local celebrations hosted here in LA commemorating this historic day in our history.

Lastly, the CAAGS board meeting date has changed. Effective in June the board meetings will be held immediately following general monthly meeting. CAAGS members are invited to stay and attend.

#### 2008 Calendar of Event

##### June 21

CAAGS board meeting following general meeting

##### June 21

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Class - Newspapers, Books and Other Sources of Information About Our Ancestors. Show & Tell

##### June 27 -29

Jamboree - Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel and Convention Center. For more info visit [scgsgenealogy.com](http://scgsgenealogy.com)

##### July/August

Summer break – No CAAGS general meetings

##### September 20

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; beginners class Land and Probate Records. Nancy Carlsberg, guest speaker

##### October 15-17

CAAGS will be participating in the Eighth West Coast Summit of African American Genealogy in Seattle

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

#### Websites of Interest

Ancestry.com has launched a collection titled Former Colonial Dependencies Slave Register Collection, 1812-1834, which will allow Caribbean Americans descended from British Empire slaves to delve into their history online.

The registers now on Ancestry.com include details for more than 2.7 million slaves and 280,000 slave owners from a total of 17 former colonial dependencies, including Jamaica, Barbados, Bahamas, Honduras and more.

The British Government, in order to monitor ownership and stamp out illegal trading, required British slave owners to complete a slave register every three years, beginning in 1812. The registers list each slave by name and include gender, approximate age and, in some instances, birthplace, as well as parish of residence.

According to the 2000 U.S. Federal Census, more than 1 million U.S. residents reported having ancestors from the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, the British West Indies and Trinidad and Tobago. This collection becomes a vital

resource for Caribbean Americans with slavery in their ancestry.

#### General Interest Genealogical sites

- [www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/freedmens-bureau/](http://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/freedmens-bureau/)
- [www.archives.gov/locations/](http://www.archives.gov/locations/)
- Genealogical Society of Utah: [www.gensocietyofutah.org/](http://www.gensocietyofutah.org/)
- Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s site on DNA testing: [www.africandna.com/](http://www.africandna.com/)

#### NGS 2008 Fall Salt Lake City Research Trip

The National Genealogical Society is pleased to announce a research trip to the Family History Library™ in November 2008. This trip sponsored by NGS and will be co-led by Sandra MacLean Clunies, CG<sup>SM</sup> and Shirley Langdon Wilcox, CG<sup>SM</sup>, FNGS. Space is limited to 30 attendees. For more information visit [www.ngsgenealogy.org/edutripsaltlakefall.cfm](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/edutripsaltlakefall.cfm)

The trip package price includes seven nights at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel, located next door to the Family History Library™. The Plaza is ideally located, not only for access to the library but also within walking distance of shopping malls, movie theaters, restaurants, and clubs.

Also included are an informal reception on the first Sunday evening, a pizza party on Wednesday evening, and a Saturday night banquet. Other meals will be on your own.

**UpFront with NGS** is a free, monthly genealogy newsletter by e-mail, designed for members of the National Genealogical Society and the entire genealogical community.

#### To Keep or Not to Keep?

by Juliana Smith

As in many of your homes I'm sure, spring cleaning is well underway in my house (much to my daughter's chagrin!). Closets, cabinets and we are making regular trips to the Goodwill store with drop-offs. I'm also doing a gradual spring cleaning in my office. I had to move some things around to accommodate the new all-in-one printer/scanner I got for my birthday and decided it was time to go through some of the storage boxes I had stashed under the printer stand.

A few weeks ago, I wrote about being a gatherer and the positive side of that practice. The downside to it is that it can lead to an overabundance of papers that can quickly become overwhelming. Every so often we need to go back and take stock of what we've gathered and clear some things out. In some cases it may mean letting go of things we don't need. Yes, I mean actually throwing things out.,

drawers, and shelves are being reorganized (Gasp!) I know, it goes against the grain. After all, we're the preservers of our family history. We should be preserving everything, right?

Well, maybe not. I read a post a while back on Sally Jacobs's "Practical Archivist" blog that stuck with me. The article was talking about photographs, but is totally relevant to other family history materials as well. Accompanying the article was this warning sign:

*"Caution: Keeping everything means that someone else decides what gets tossed later."*

Scary stuff! It made me really think about not only what I kept, but where I kept it. So this week, let's take a look at some ways we can dispose of some of our excesses, so that someone doesn't overdo it for us down the line.

### **Storing the Maybes**

I typically keep a separate section in the back of my family binders for those folks that may be related—"the maybes." Keeping them there is convenient, but in cases where they are starting to take over, I am moving them to a different binder. I'm also going through them and actually getting rid of some that I know I don't need anymore. For example, once upon a time we found a record that gave one ancestor's maiden name as Nesen. For year we collected every scrap we could find on Nesen, Nessen, Nesson, etc. Turned out that was a typo. Her maiden name was Nelson. Do I really need to keep all the Nessens now? No. The Nesens are off to the recycle bin.

You may also be holding on to the records of individuals with the same or similar name as your ancestor, despite having proven that they are not the same person or even related. Because I may run across records of this person again and will want to be reminded why they're not related, I really don't want to toss these. But rather than keep the paper copies of the records, why not save them electronically into a "not related" file, with a typed up report of how you ruled them out. It will be easier to access, regardless of where you are researching, and you'll free up filing space for ancestors that are really yours.

### **Duplicate Copies**

As I'm going through papers, I occasionally run across duplicate copies I've made of records for my ancestors. Perhaps I printed out a census copy again, not realizing that another copy was sitting in my bin waiting to be filed. Instead of just throwing the copy away, sometimes I'll send it to another family member, with a quick note explaining the find. It's a great way to get other family members interested, and you may find that it opens up some dialogue that will reveal other clues.

### **Magazines and Periodicals**

I don't know about you, but part of my office problem is an overabundance of magazines. I also keep and print out

articles that I find helpful online and they help add to the clutter. I love having the reference materials, but it never fails—whenever I want to reference an article I read a while back, I can't find it in the pile.

This year, I'm going through that mountain of magazines and I'm pulling out only the articles I really need. This way I can file them in a way so that I can actually find them when I need them. I keep a locality file for each place in which my ancestors lived. It gives me a place to stash odds and ends I find for each location (e.g., vital records availability, Family History Library Catalog print-outs for records they hold, articles about research in that area, etc.).

I've also started a new file in one of those plastic file boxes with articles that don't relate to a particular place, but that I think may help me jumpstart my research or overcome a problem down the road. Manila folders help me to organize the articles by topic making it easier to locate those items when I'm wondering, "Now where did I read that?" Plus it saves space because I don't have to save the whole magazine.

Also, keep in mind that many magazines now have an online presence. *Ancestry Magazine* has an archive online in the new Learning Center with articles posted as recently as May 2007. Relying on online searchable archives is often more practical than retaining paper copies.

### **Clearly Indicate What's Important**

While we gaze lovingly at the collection of records we have amassed filling out our family tree, other family members may just see files or piles of papers. Have you organized the documents you have collected so that it is evident what is part of your family history? A well-organized binder, especially one that is well-labeled and that chronicles your ancestor's life in an interesting way, is more likely to survive than papers stuffed into a manila folder. Decorate the binder with ancestral images so that it attracts attention.

Or perhaps it's time to take that step and start working on publishing your finds. If you haven't tried AncestryPress, take it for a test drive. They've added new backgrounds and embellishments, and now you can invite family members to view your book online and order copies for themselves. It's a great way to help ensure that all of your hard work won't be tossed and forgotten. You can find an article I wrote about AncestryPress on the blog and you can keep up with the latest features on the AncestryPress blog.

### **Start Today**

Take fifteen minutes today to begin your family history spring cleaning. Taken in bite-sized pieces each day, you'll find that you can really make strides, even in the space of just one week. Not only will you be helping to secure all of your hard work for the future, you'll find that by clearing out some of the clutter, you can be more productive.



**Freedmen's Bureau papers uncover the past**  
**By Kantele Franko Excerpt from Scripps Howard News Service**

WASHINGTON – Hollis Gentry first visited the National Archives at age 13 and began her near-obsession with genealogical research two decades ago as a college student trying to identify a distant ancestor.

It landed her eight generational branches up the family tree as she became enthralled by the names of hundreds of relatives, both African-American slaves and free men, in pre- and post-Civil War records.

The National Archives has been highlighting those records during Black History Month with special discussions and displays, but Gentry nurtures her passion year-round.

The 44-year-old, a genealogist with the Daughters of the American Revolution, jumps at any chance to show new researchers the microfilmed records of the agency known as the Freedmen's Bureau, from which she has learned plenty about her own past.

After the Civil War, the government established the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands to help slaves make the transition into free lives through material, medical, educational and legal assistance. More than 1 million of the resulting records from the 1860s were transferred to microfilm between 2001 and 2006, making them more accessible to researchers in Washington and at the Archives' 13 regional offices.

The Freedmen's Bureau collection is unusual because it brings state-level documents to be analyzed together, removing the need for researchers to skip among state archives in search of information, archivist-genealogy specialist Reginald Washington said after a lecture at the National Archives earlier this month.

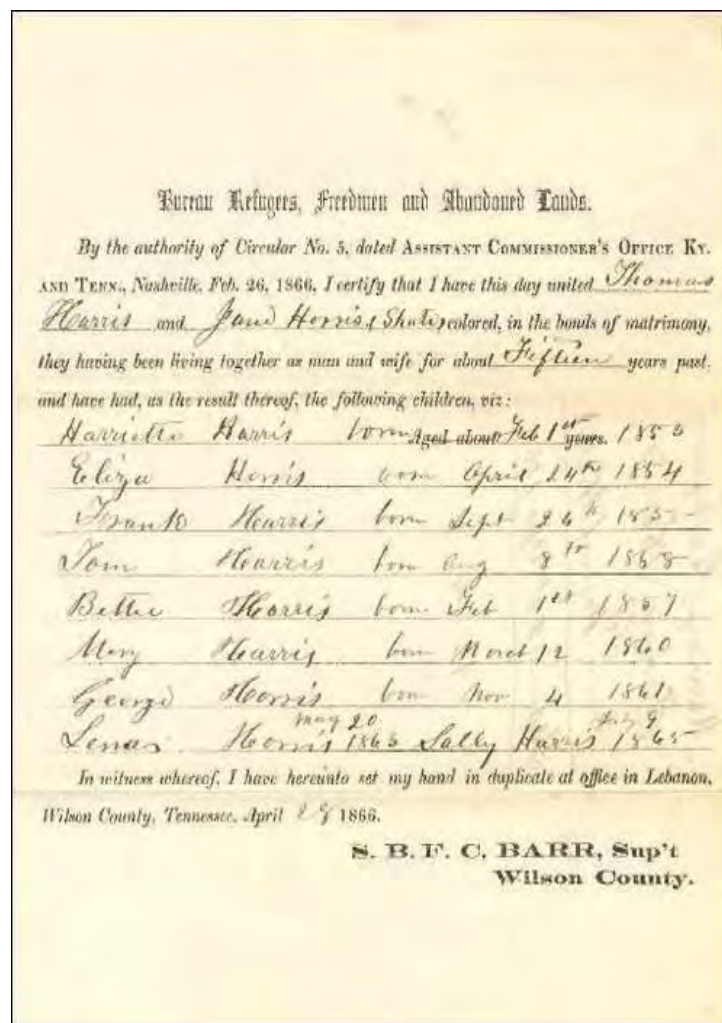
Although the collection lacks records from some counties and states that had different record-keeping processes in the post-war years, researchers have traced the lineage of entire black families in the thin, angled script of the bureau's marriage, labor and legal records. Washington's most illustrative example of the records' value involves the history of two Tennessee slaves named Benjamin Manson and Sarah White. The Mansons' marriage certificate showed they had nine children and 23 years of unrecognized matrimony by the time they got a piece of paper to prove it in 1866.

Using information from that certificate, Washington cross-referenced the bureau's military, pension, labor and bank documents to learn that Manson had been bought by White's master and then sold back to his old owner until he was freed. At least one daughter had married, and three of the Manson boys served in the military – one using his

mother's surname, one using his father's and one using an alias. "If you hadn't had these documents to bring all this to light, you'd be looking all day in the service records," Washington said.

Gentry has traced her relatives to the area around Norfolk, Va., using similar techniques. She found a record of the first time her great-great-great-grandfather, a free man, cast a vote. In the 1980s, before microfilming and sophisticated preservation techniques prohibited it, she touched the original records that her relatives had touched and discovered century-old photos of them, copies of which now hang on a crowded wall in her small apartment. Like Washington, Gentry gets excited about technological advances in the study of genealogies and history, especially those of black families.

Such popular and cutting-edge studies offer a lot of research possibilities, Gentry said. But she's convinced that researchers have yet to fully explore the value of the hard-copy archives and the discussions they spur, at an academic level and at a personal one.



**This certificate recognizes the union of Thomas and Jane Harris 15 years after they were first married.**



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**August/September 2008    Volume 20    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)

### 2008 Board of Directors

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

### Committee Chairs

Open – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Publications Editor  
Lillian Glover – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Open – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate/Fundraising Chairman  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

Welcome Back!

I would like to give a very big thank you to CAAGS members that donated money for my stay at the Marriott Hotel in Burbank for the Jamboree. The Jamboree was a great success. Thanks to Ronald Batiste for sharing his time with me in the CAAGS booth.

Did you go on vacation or to a family reunion? Did you have an opportunity to get information from family members and friends? When you get information about a different part of the country, it is like starting over with your research. Genealogical societies across the nation are tremendous sources of information and can suggest research strategies to help get you started in their local area. Record access is important to all genealogists. Not only do you need to know what office is responsible for keeping the records, you must determine if the public is allowed to see them. This is especially true for vital records. Some states are very open with their records, other are closing or restricting access as fast as they can pass legislation. Even within a state, records may not be in the same place from county to county. One county probate court may house their 19<sup>th</sup> century records; an adjoining county may have sent theirs to an archive or records center.

The Internet has countless websites for specific areas. The websites for local genealogical societies and county Genweb projects are often your best starting places. Message boards and mail lists are two ways to ask questions about the records and repositories in a particular location.

*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).*

Remember our September 20, 2008 meeting will be held at the Mayme Clayton Library and Museum which is located at 4130 Overland Ave., Culver City CA 90230-3734.

### 2008 Calendar of Events

#### September 20

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm; Mayme Clayton Library and Museum, Culver City, CA -Beginners class on Land and Probate Records; Guest Speaker Nancy Carlsberg on Plantations

#### October 10-11

CAAGS will be participating in the Eighth West Coast Summit of African American Genealogy in Seattle

#### October 18

CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm. Guest Speaker Captain Johnnie Lee, Burials at Sea. CAAGS board meeting 2pm

#### November 15

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm. Class – Putting it All Together; Guest speaker Alva Stevenson; CAAGS Board meeting, 2pm

#### December 20

CAAGS Holiday Party 10am – 2pm; Class - The Year in Review

\* *Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Websites of Interest

Two years ago the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (CIS), formerly called the INS, proposed rules to establish a fee-for-service genealogy program. The final rule was published in the Federal Register on May 15, 2008. You may view/download the final rule at:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-10651.pdf>. The final rule goes into effect on August 13, 2008.

As a result of the comments made to the proposed rule the amount per index or record/file request (from a microfilm) will be \$20 and \$35 for a textual record. The original proposal was a range of \$16-\$45 for an index search and \$16 to \$45 for a record/file microfilm request and \$26 to \$55 for a copy of a textual document.

### FamilySearch Publishes Civil War Updates

FamilySearch, a genealogy website maintained by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has announced its agreement with Footnote.com to publish two Civil War-era databases online — the 1860 U.S. Census and the Civil War Pensions Index. The two collections will provide free online access to millions of names of individuals from 1860 to 1865 in the United States.

### WHO IS GOT GENEALOGY?

**Gotgenealogy.com**

We're genealogists, and have been for several decades. We

started doing genealogy long before personal computers had been invented and eons before the internet was available to do any sort of real research, and over the years we've learned to take full advantage of ALL of the resources available to family historians no matter what their ancestral origins.

### Request A Search For Your Ancestors At The World's Largest Genealogical Library

Ancestor Seekers researchers at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City will search this vast collection for your ancestors from the United States, Canada, Germany, Italy, Poland, Ireland, England, Austria, France, Switzerland, Spain, Romania and other European countries. Friendly service, affordable prices.

For a no-obligation research assessment visit [AncestorSeekers.com](http://AncestorSeekers.com).

### Let's Scuba to the Cemetery!

Just when I think I've seen it all, I spot this article on an underwater cemetery:

*Artificial reef near Miami is cemetery, diving attraction*  
I hope they keep good records because this would be a tricky one to transcribe!

*Artificial reef near Miami is cemetery, diving attraction*  
<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=4827364>

To mark the first day of the **2008 National Genealogical Society Conference** in Kansas City, Missouri, Tim Sullivan has published a letter to the genealogy community. He highlights several recently released content collections and product enhancements on Ancestry.com, and gives insights into some exciting new projects on the horizon.

His letter has been posted on the TGN media site.  
<http://tgn.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=121>

### Storage Facility

CAAGS is currently looking for a storage facility to keep our library holdings and equipment. If you know of a place we could use please contact Ron Higgins at 213 925-5651.

### The GOTGENEALOGY.COM Golden Rules of Genealogy

**Rule No. 1 "SPELLING DUSN'T COWNT"** - Folks couldn't spell and many could barely write, so check all variant spellings of names.

**Rule No. 2 ASSUME NOTHING** - Check all your facts, don't assume that any particular document is right or wrong, and always try to find other independent sources to corroborate your facts as much as possible. Verify, verify,

verify. For instance, don't assume that:

- your ancestors were married
- census information is accurate
- vital (or other) records were correct
- your ancestor's life events were recorded
- your ancestors were enslaved
- newly freed slaves in the same vicinity with the same surname were related

**Rule No. 3 USE DISCRETION** - Never lie in your genealogy reports, but use discretion when reporting family information, as it may affect living relatives.

**Rule No. 4 ALWAYS DOCUMENT YOUR SOURCES, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY CONTRADICT ONE ANOTHER** - Over time, you will compile more data and those once seemingly contradictory pieces of evidence may prove to be just the pieces of the puzzle you need to prove or disprove your theory. But be consistent as you cite your sources. There are all sorts of standard citation formats that you can follow, but even if you just make up your own form for listing your sources, be consistent with it. Future researchers (your descendants) will thank you.

**Rule No. 5 MOST DATES ARE APPROXIMATE** - Prior to the 20th century, anyway. It's okay to state that someone was born "abt. 1845" or died "May 1915" if you don't have an exact date. And even if you have an exact date from one document, another document may have a different date.

**Rule No. 6 IF YOU'RE UNSURE, SAY SO** - Future researchers will thank you for being honest if you simply say that you cannot prove a specific fact, yet you "suspect" such and such is true.

**Rule No. 7 REMEMBER WHY YOU'RE DOING THIS** - Tell the stories as completely and as accurately as possible. The legacy of your ancestors rests in your capable hands. Always remember that you have been chosen to tell their stories. Do it well.

© Copyright 2004 - 2008 www.gotgenealogy.com

#### **CAN YOU DO IT ALL ONLINE?**

**No, no, a thousand times no!** We know that one day you'll finally find the time (and money) to make that trek to an archive, library, county courthouse or cemetery and we know that by doing as much research as you can online beforehand, you'll be able to concentrate on finding those items that are only to be found in person. And besides, the internet can also help you identify additional sources of information that you'll need to search out in person.

## **Are You up to Date?**

*by Paula Stuart Warren, CG*

My Mom, Patricia (Hanley) Stuart, passed away on 8 January 2008 while I was teaching at the annual Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. I remember exactly when I received the call from my sister, Linda. I was eating a hot fudge sundae at JB's in the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel with a friend while another friend was massaging my neck and shoulders already tight from stress and not enough sleep. Mom always did things on HER own schedule! That night I stayed up 'til the wee hours of the morning writing Mom's obituary and a tribute to her.

It got me to thinking. Whether you use paper to record your family history or a software program such as Family Tree Maker, are you up-to-date? I mean, have you entered all recent family data, logged those cute new family additions, added marriages and spouses, checked for your family in the Social Security Death Index, gathered obituaries, funeral cards, and even prepared questions for the next family gathering of any kind?

### **Hatched, Matched, and Dispatched**

My apologies to whoever created that phrase as I am tailoring it. Today, we add other events to the basic three--born, married, and died. Adoptions, step-siblings, foster children, engagements, partnerships, commitment ceremonies, marriage contracts, divorces, burials, cremations, and memorial services are also important family events to be documented. I am always asked how to include things that don't fit the genealogy software fields; notes and memo sections are great for that. Genealogy software continues to evolve to include more such events and some allow for tailoring of event and relationship labels.

### **Genealogists, Obituaries, and Tombstones**

As a genealogist, I wanted to include as much detail as my Dad could afford for the paid obituary. I had tears, but also had some nice memories as I wrote. I wanted to include both birth and death dates, her parents' names, her high school and graduating year, that her sister had died five years previously on the same date, marriage date, and the names of all children, spouses, grandchildren and great grandchildren, as well as her wonderful caretakers. My family added her main doctor's name. Be sure to have someone else review your writing.

The tombstone is out of my control as far as extra details because it is a military headstone in Fort Snelling National Cemetery due to my Dad's WWII Army Air Corps service. However, a genealogy friend told me about the tombstone she already ordered for herself, with all the life details to make it a future genealogist's dream. Have you thought about your own family details for obituaries and tombstones? Many genealogists have already begun their own

obituaries. Whenever I see an obituary that mentions the word genealogy or that the person is a member of ABC Genealogy Society, I smile

### Family Group Sheets

A friend told me it took two years to add her mother's death date to the genealogy software she uses. I haven't been able to do that yet. But, what if something happens to you? Who will enter the details for future genealogists? Will they remember Cousin Nancy's death date and place or will your second cousin's son who died young be added?

### Funeral Guest Books

Have you asked family members to either save these for you or to allow you to make photocopies? On the photocopy, make notes as to who each person is and the family connection if there is one. My grandmother had old funeral cards and programs that gave me some family details. We are also making notes on the sympathy cards so everyone knows if the sender was a relative, friend, or co-worker.

### Social Security Death Index

When was the last time you checked the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) for your less-common surnames? Check it for those distant cousins you last corresponded with in 1992 or elderly relatives you have not been in contact with. Check the SSDI each time it is updated. Armed with a date and the place, you can begin a search for an obituary.

### Your Holiday Notes

Make time to review the holiday letters, notes on greeting cards, and photos you received from family over the past few months. Middle names, graduations, weddings, births, places of residence, names of colleges, and other details can probably be gleaned. Be sure to add the source of the details you add in case Aunt Dorothy mistyped a date. Even these things need to be verified.

### Even If It Is Difficult

As the historians of our families, it is important for us to ferret out the details and add them to our family history. It might be difficult, but wouldn't our jobs be easier if earlier generations had added such details to their own records. We can set an example for the rest of our family and for future generations.

### Pay Attention to Details

If you did read this column fully, you would be able to put together a good picture of my family. Names, dates, places, relationships have been mentioned. You could take these details and do a lot of searching on Ancestry.com and other websites. For much of your own family details from a death record or obituary, you might easily find birth dates, siblings, children, marriage dates, divorce dates, cousins, and ancestors. Now go back and review your own family's

2007 pictures, graduation, birth, and marriage announcements, and holiday letters again. What clues did you miss?

### ANCESTRY.COM Uncovers California's Political Persuasions With More Than 30 Million Names In Voter Registration Lists, 1900-1944

Ancestry.com, the largest online resource for family history, today announced the launch of California Voter Registration Lists documenting more than 30 million names of Californians who registered to vote between 1900 and 1944. The collection, now searchable for the first time online, comes just prior to Super Tuesday, one of the most significant milestones in the 2008 race to the White House.

The unique collection reveals the political persuasions of California residents – including famous celebrities who registered to vote during the first half of the 1900s. The collection also documents the voter's name, occupation, gender, age, street address, voting district, and city and county of residence. Many of the earliest voter registrations include detailed physical descriptions of the register and even naturalization information. Because the lists were updated every two years, the collection enables users to track their ancestors through time and serves as a valuable replacement for census records since California did not take state censuses.

Several California celebrities and political figures are found inside the collection, including:

➤ Actor and future U.S. President **Ronald Reagan** was registered to vote in 1942 as a **Democrat** and remained a registered party member until at least 1954. According to Reagan's 1958 voter registration, he and wife **Nancy Reagan** changed their party affiliation to **Republican**.

➤ **Lucille Ball** is found in the collection registered as a **Communist in 1936 and 1938**, and was later asked to testify before Congress during McCarthy's Communist witch hunts.

➤ According to the 1944 records, **Ozzy and Harriett Nelson** are both registered as **Republicans**. Harriett was employed as an "actress," and Ozzy as an "orchestra leader."

➤ In a 1924 voter registration list, **Walt Disney** is found alongside brothers Robert and Roy. Walt and Robert were registered as **Republicans**, while Roy chose to "decline statement." In 1940, Walt's wife Lillian changed her party affiliation to **Democrat**, while Walt remained **Republican**.

*Taken from Ancestry.com*

Our condolences to the family of Melrose Carson Bell who passed on Friday, August 1<sup>st</sup>.



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

*Please join us at our new meeting location  
Mayme Clayton Library and Museum*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

**October 2008    Volume 20    Number 8**

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)

**\*\*\* Our New Location \*\*\***

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

### **2008 Board of Directors**

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

### **Committee Chairs**

DorothyLou Sands – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Publications Editor  
Lillian Glover – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
Open – Historian  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate/Fundraising Chairman  
Charlotte Bodge – NGS Delegate

Our September meeting was wonderful and a historic day for CAAGS. We held our first meeting at our new home in the Mayme Clayton Library and Museum (MCLM) located at 4130 Overland Blvd. in Culver City, CA. We are still working out some details with them as the facility is not fully open to the public yet. They expect to open in 2009. Many thanks to Avery Clayton for allowing CAAGS to be a part of the MCLM dream. Our guest speaker was Nancy Ellen Carlsberg, a noted and professional genealogist. She spoke about probate records and plantations. Her credentials include assisting in the research of Alex Haley's book *Roots II* and she has authored numerous genealogical books herself.

We would also like to thank Marilyn Elaine Patrice White for the extensive book collection she donated to the MCLM. These books will greatly enhance their genealogical research center which will be staffed with CAAGS volunteers.

Jessie McClennan gave us a preview of the intermediate class she will teach at the October meeting and Marjorie Sholes who taught the September beginners class will do a follow up next month. Thanks to both of them for volunteering to teach classes.

We need volunteers to lead the 2008 nominations committee. This committee will be responsible for getting volunteers to run for our executive board positions that are up for re-election. These offices include 1<sup>st</sup> vice president, recording secretary, treasurer and FGS delegate. The term of office is two years. This is your chance to make a difference in our society and be a part of our growth.

Later this month I will be at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual West Coast Summit and I am looking forward to seeing those of you

*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) Our new meeting location, Mayme Clayton Library and Museum, 4130 Overland Blvd., Culver City, CA.*

from our society who are also attending. The summit is being held October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> in Bellevue, WA.

Our October meeting will be held at the Mayme Clayton Library and Museum. They have a courtroom on the north side of the building that we will be using. This is located behind the courtroom we used in September.

Lastly, a reminder that October is Family History Month.

### 2008 Calendar of Events

#### October 10 & 11

8<sup>th</sup> Annual West Coast Summit, Bellevue, WA

#### October 18

**CAAGS general meeting 10am-2pm. Mayme Clayton Library and Museum, Culver City, CA;** Guest Speaker Captain Johnnie Lee, Burials at Sea. CAAGS board meeting 2pm

#### November 15

**CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm. Mayme Clayton Library and Museum;** Executive Board Elections; Class – Putting it All Together; Guest speaker Alva Stevenson on her personal genealogy; CAAGS board meeting, 2pm

#### December 20

Installation of officers; CAAGS Holiday Party 10am – 2pm; Class - The Year in Review. The location for this meeting will be published in the November newsletter.

\* *Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Staple's Rewards

When shopping at Staple's please give the clerk our rewards number at check out. A rebate will be given to CAAGS and used to offset the cost of printing our newsletter. Rewards number 2638818399.

### Websites of Interest

**Tavis Smiley's exhibit of 400 years of Black History** is touring the country. For more info visit <http://www.americaiam.org/>

A page of interest from [www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov), the U.S. government's official web portal.

[http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/History\\_Family/State\\_Genealogy.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/History_Family/State_Genealogy.shtml)

### Online Irish Family Name Search

This site is a certified jaw-dropper:

[http://griffiths.askaboutireland.ie/gv4/gv\\_family\\_search\\_form.php](http://griffiths.askaboutireland.ie/gv4/gv_family_search_form.php)

Not only does it provide surname and place name searches of Griffith's [Valuation], it has townland maps with the tenement numbers and lot boundaries overlaid. (This info is very difficult to locate on Family History Library

microfilms). The townland maps are linked to satellite images and modern highway map overlays!

### Chicago and Cook County Vital Records Now Online

The Cook County, Illinois Clerk's Office has a new website where you can obtain online copies of Cook County and Chicago birth certificates 75 years or older, marriage licenses 50 years or older, and death certificates 20 years or older. You may search the database for free, but payment is required to download copies of the records. The records begin circa 1872. Cook County vital records before that were destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871. Not all of the records have been posted online yet, but more are being added. Also see: Cook County Genealogy: Vital Records - Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates and Chicago and Cook County Death Records Indexes and Obituaries

### CAAGS 2008 Request for Nominations

Positions for election are 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and FGS delegate. Please contact us if you are interested in running for one of these offices.

### Mayme Clayton Library and Museum Needs

**Volunteers** to help with cataloging their holdings. Please contact Leah Kerr at (323) 669-0431. Leah will train volunteers how to use the cataloging software.

### Types of Marriage Records

- By George G. Morgan

Marriages can be cause for great joy and celebration with families. The binding of two families together provides the opportunity for closer familial ties and, in some cases, the combining of family fortunes. From a genealogist's perspective, a marriage provides another life event at which time documents were created. However, few researchers really examine the marriage documents and use them as clues to locate other records.

### Types of Marriage Documents

There are several types of documents that may have been generated by the announcement and consecration of a marriage. These may include an engagement announcement published in a newspaper, a pronouncement of marriage banns, the issuance of a marriage license, a record in a county marriage ledger, a marriage certificate, the records of a religious institution, or a newspaper marriage announcement. All of these provide opportunities for information to be recorded for posterity. Let's look at the types of information each might include.

➤ **Engagement Announcement.** Newspapers today still publish a limited number of engagement announcements. In earlier times, though, when newspaper space was at less of a premium and less expensive, a couple or their families might publish a notice of engagement. The



couple's names, the names of their parents and other family members, the couple's places of origin, their educational institutions, their religious affiliations, and other details might be included.

➤ **Marriage Banns.** This is an announcement of a forthcoming marriage, proclaimed in the church of the engaged couple on three successive Sundays. There is usually a record of the banns in the church minutes, and sometimes you will find them listed in church bulletins.

➤ **Marriage License.** The marriage license was typically issued by the county or parish clerk in which the marriage was to take place. It always included the names of the bride and groom and the signature of the issuing clerk or ordinary. Sometimes the names of the couple's parents are listed. Often the couple's ages and their addresses are included. Other information varies, depending on the state and the county and municipal laws in effect at the time. A space for the officiating person's signature and the date of the ceremony is also included.

➤ **Marriage Ledger.** On completion of the ceremony, the signed license is returned to the clerk or ordinary for recording. The date and the name of the officiating clergy or other official are added to the license book, and entries are made in the bride and groom indexes of marriages. (These are often compiled at a later date in alphabetical sequence.)

➤ **Marriage Certificate.** Some municipalities issued a marriage certificate on completion of the ceremony and when the marriage was recorded. Sometimes elaborate and complete with a ribbon and wax or metallic seal, these certificates were intended for framing or display. Sometimes the religious institution issued certificates on behalf of their church or regional organization. The amount of information on such a certificate varies but always includes the couple's names, marriage date, and location.

➤ **Newspaper Marriage Announcement.** Newspaper announcements were not uncommon in earlier times. Some larger ones for more prominent society figures might include photographs and extensive details of the ceremony, names of family members and ceremony attendees, and announcements of the couple's plans for honeymoon and residence. Less prominent couple's marriage announcements might be smaller but can often contain details of the wedding; names of family members, attendees, and officiating clergy; and other pertinent facts.

### **Finding Clues**

If you have not examined marriage records such as the ones described above, take some time to go back and look at them. Newspaper announcements of engagements and weddings, like obituaries and death notices, can be filled with little details that can point you to other record sources.

A completed marriage license can contain the name of the person who officiated at the ceremony. If you find a name succeeded with the initials J.P., you know that person was a

Justice of the Peace. If you find a name succeeded by the initials M.G., you can be certain this represents a Minister of the Gospel. Even if the signature is followed by no initials, the person could have been a minister. I was pleased to have seen the M.G. following the name on the marriage license for one set of my great-grandparents. I had little information about them, but, when I saw the M.G., I decided to try another research avenue. I contacted the library in the town where they lived and asked that they search the city directories on and before the date of the marriage for the minister's name. The librarian found him listed, along with the name of his church. I then contacted the church and the secretary there was able to search the church records and found membership, baptism, wedding, and service records for both my great-grandparents. Their names also appeared in a small published history of the church. What a bonanza!

If you are researching your African American ancestors, don't be surprised to find that their marriage licenses and the resultant bride and groom index records are maintained in separate books. The segregation of races even extended to record keeping. However, this can be a bonus in that it can help narrow your search to specific records, particularly when the given name and surname might have been common in an area.

### **Re-examining the Obvious**

We often take marriage licenses for granted. We look at names and dates and simply record the data. We assume that all the information on them is correct, but that is not always the case. (One license I have shows the surname of SWORDS spelled as SANDERS.) We also always expect to find a license when, in fact, some were not recorded until after the ceremony — sometimes months or years after the ceremony.

The point here is that you should take the time to re-examine the marriage records you have. If you have a marriage license, look at the name (and initials) of the officiating person and trace him or her to their religious institution — where you may just find more records concerning your ancestor. In the absence of a license, look for alternative records in the form of newspaper announcements, religious records, census records, and city directories showing the couple listed as man and wife. Re-examine the obvious for facts that may not be so readily apparent and really think about what the data means. You may find clues right under your nose that you overlooked before.

*- Taken from Ancestry.com*

### **Why Obama's Irish Kearney Ancestors Came to America**

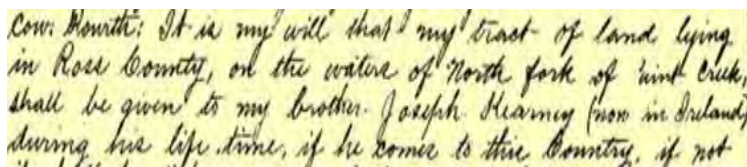
The other day, I blogged about the recent flurry of articles about Barack Obama's Irish roots. Now that I've had a chance to take a closer look at what the skilled researchers



at Eneclann have uncovered, I see that there's still a little piece of the puzzle missing -- and that's what prompted Senator Obama's Kearney ancestors to leave Moneygall and emigrate to Ohio. There will be an article coming out on this shortly, but I thought I'd share a bit more of what I learned while conducting research in my capacity as Chief Family Historian of Ancestry.com.

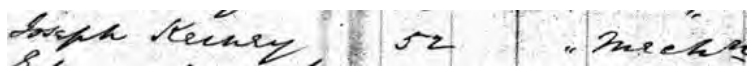
Barack Obama's great-great-great-grandfather, Fulmoth Kearney, came to New York in 1850. At first I assumed that this was a typical famine-driven emigration, but it turns out that's not the case (although the famine could obviously have been a contributing factor). What caused Fulmoth's family to come to America was the offer of land.

In a nutshell, here's what happened. Fulmoth's uncle Francis died in Ohio in 1848 and left land to his brother Joseph (Fulmoth's father), but only if he came to the U.S. to claim it:



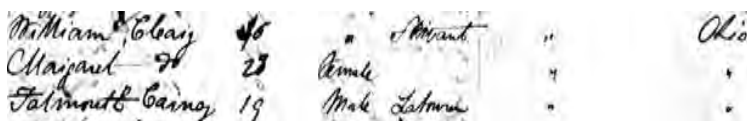
Con. Wmth: It is my will that my tract of land lying in Ross County, on the water of North fork of Wind Creek, shall be given to my brother Joseph Kearney (now in Ireland) during his life time, if he come to this Country, if not

Pockets of the Kearney family had been chain-migrating to the U.S. since the late 1700s, but this will is what triggered the emigration of Fulmoth's immediate family. His father Joseph arrived here in 1849:



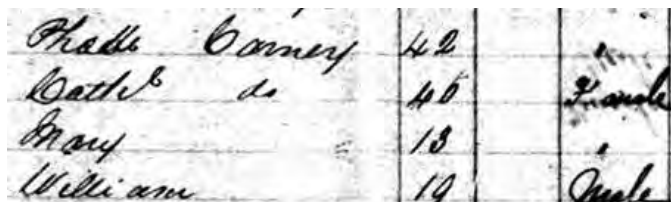
Joseph Kearney, 52, "Mechan"

Fulmoth and his sister Margaret came in 1850:



William Clay	48	Mount	Ohio
Chapman	28	Female	"
Fulmoth Kearney	19	Male	Ladonia

And Fulmoth's mother Phebe, as well as sister Mary and brother William, came in 1851:



Phebe Conroy	42	"	"
Bath	40	"	Female
Mary	18	"	"
William	19	"	Male

I was actually surprised when I did this research as it's rare to have such a clear picture of motives emerge, but in this case, I'd have to say it's quite clear!

- By Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak  
Taken from *Honoring Our Ancestors* August 2008

## \$40 off Y-DNA Testing at GeneTree

Become a part of the largest and most diverse databases of linked DNA and family history information in the world. Come explore your past with a Y-DNA test for \$40 off! Prices begin at a market low \$149 PLUS an additional \$20 off if you have already had an mtDNA test through GeneTree.

Steps to your DNA test kit:

- 1) Click Order Y-DNA Kit Now!
- 2) Log in or create an account
- 3) Click DNA tab
- 4) Click Order Your DNA test
- 5) Enter the corresponding test coupon code to receive your discount (33 marker test: **promo33** or 46 marker test:

**promo46**).

Order a Y-DNA kit and discover your ancestral origins today! The Y-DNA test can only be done by males but women may arrange for their father, brother, or other male relative in their direct paternal line to be tested.

## The Lowcountry Africana website, sponsored by the Magnolia Plantation Foundation in Charleston, SC

The results of groundbreaking genealogical research to reconstruct family lineages of enslaved communities on Drayton family plantations in the United States and Barbados was released Saturday, March 29 with the launch of the Lowcountry Africana Web site ([www.lowcountryafricana.com](http://www.lowcountryafricana.com)) in Charleston.

The yearlong project, sponsored by the Magnolia Plantation Foundation of Charleston, South Carolina, focused on gathering, compiling and interpreting records from all known Drayton family plantations. The Draytons held plantations in Barbados, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Texas.

No former slaveholding family has ever funded such research in their plantation records to rediscover the names and life stories of former slaves. The Drayton family is taking an unflinching look at its history; a history shared by the hundreds of Africans and African Americans who lived and worked on Drayton family plantations. This research demonstrates, in a remarkable way, that we have nothing to fear from bringing this painful history out into the light.

Read the full article in the March 29, 2008 edition of the Times and Democrat. Filed: under: Florida, Barbados, South Carolina, Texas, Georgia, African American

"You don't choose your family.  
They are God's gift to you, as you are to them."  
~ Desmond Tutu



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

**November 2008    Volume 20    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)

**\*\*\* Our New Location \*\*\***

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

#### **2008 Board of Directors**

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

#### **Committee Chairs**

DorothyLou Sands – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Publications Editor  
Lillian Glover – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
DorothyLou Sands – Historian (Interim)  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate/Fundraising Chairman  
Charlotte Bocage – NGS Delegate

## **President's Message**

Ronald Higgins

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual West Coast African American Genealogy Summit "Putting the Pieces Together" was held in Bellevue, WA (a suburb of Seattle) on October 10 & 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008. It was held at the Stake building of the LDS church. There were 150 in attendance, with 16 members from CAAGS traveling by all modes of transportation, plane, train and bus.

#### **Highlights of the Conference**

On Friday evening there was a reception at the newly opened Northwest African American Museum in Seattle WA. The museum is housed in an old elementary school. It is a three-story building that has low-income housing on the upper floors. The museum has a genealogy Library. The library was a donation by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter- Day Saints. The conference started on Saturday with many informative classes, the keynote speaker was Dr. Quintard Taylor a University of Washington Professor at the Allen County Public Library on October 29-31, 2009. We are looking for donations and of History. A boxed lunch was provided.

A special trip to the National Archives was provided after the conference for research. Thanks to all the members of the Black Genealogy Research Group of Seattle for a successful conference.

#### **CAAGS October meeting**

This month's meeting was held in the back courtroom of the library located on the north side. Our special guest was Captain Johnnie Lee, who spoke on Burials at Sea. He gave us information on the process, required permits, different type of burials (ashes/ intact body) distance and depth from the shoreline and the cost.

*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) Our new meeting location, Mayme Clayton Library and Museum, 4130 Overland Blvd., Culver City, CA.*

Mr. & Mrs. LeFlore donated 15 candle holder cup and saucers and the society members voted to use them for a fundraiser at the December meeting. Lastly, the members voted to have the Christmas meeting at a restaurant. Several suggestions were made and Ophelia Sanders volunteered to research them. A Chinese restaurant was found on Imperial & Crenshaw that could accommodate a large group on December 20<sup>th</sup>, from 1-4pm. Look for details next month.

### International Black Genealogy Summit

Everything is being put into place for the Summit to be held in Fort Wayne, Indiana sponsors. Your help would be highly appreciated. You can make your check payable to CAAGS/IBGS to the P.O. Box 8443, Los Angeles, CA 90008.

The CAAGS board wishes you and your family a wonderful Thanksgiving.

### 2008 – 2009 Calendar of Events

#### November 15

**CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm. Mayme Clayton Library and Museum;** Executive Board Elections; Class – Putting it All Together; Guest speaker Alva Stevenson on her personal genealogy; CAAGS board meeting, 2pm

#### November 26 – December 1

The LARFHC will be closed. This Center is now called the Los Angeles Regional Family History Center or LARFHC.

#### December 20

CAAGS Holiday Party, 1-4pm, location will be published in the December newsletter

#### December 24 – January 1, 2009

The LARFHC will be closed

#### January 17, 2009

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm. Mayme Clayton Library and Museum

#### February 21, 2009

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm. Mayme Clayton Library and Museum

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Staple's Rewards

When shopping at Staple's please give the clerk our rewards number at check out. A rebate will be given to CAAGS and used to offset the cost of printing our newsletter. Rewards number 2638818399.

### Websites of Interest

#### Free or Trial Genealogy Software:

Personal Ancestry File (PAF) [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

Legacy - (look for Standard Edition)

[www.legacyfamilytree.com](http://www.legacyfamilytree.com)

The Master Genealogist - (download a 30 day trial)

[www.whollygenes.com](http://www.whollygenes.com)

Roots Magic [www.rootsmagic.com](http://www.rootsmagic.com)

Reunion (Mac) – (click on Demo) [www.leisterpro.com](http://www.leisterpro.com)

### Los Angeles Regional Family History Center

[www.larfhc.org/](http://www.larfhc.org/)

Check this site for online and regular classes on genealogy

### Heritage Quest (H.Q.) is now available Free online at the LARFHC

See this link about how to research H.Q..

[www.larfhc.org/hqresearch.htm](http://www.larfhc.org/hqresearch.htm) H.Q. has all 1790 - 1930 census images online.

### New At Ancestry.com

-- For military brats who know what it's like to have no home town: Military Brats Registry

-- For those interested in playing with the recently released income tax records (1862-1918): *A Taxing History*

-- A really cool, recent database U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914

-- A list all of the NARA series and films that are currently in databases on Ancestry.

[www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/nara.aspx](http://www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/nara.aspx)

### CAAGS 2008 Request for Nominations

Positions open for election are 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and FGS delegate. Each is for a two year term and you can refer to your copy of the by-laws to see the duties involved for each office. Please contact us if you are interested in running for office.

The IBG Summit is looking for a volunteer to be the registration chairperson. If you would to take part in a historical event scheduled for October 2009 contact Gena Weaver at [funeralprograms@hotmail.com](mailto:funeralprograms@hotmail.com).

**CAAGS Needs Volunteers** to help pack our genealogical holdings at MLK United Methodist Church and move to our new home. Please contact your president or any board member if you can help.

### 74 Million Records Now Available on Washington State Digital Archives

Washington State Digital Archives contain about 74 million records, all online. People can look up marriage licenses, birth and death certificates, census data, military service, election data, property deeds and even old pictures. Chief Spokane Garry's death certificate, for instance, is linked with a photograph.

The 74 million figure represents about 3 percent of the historic and contemporary records state officials hope to eventually put online. Coming soon: A database that will allow listeners to search 50,000 audiocassette tapes of

Washington legislative hearings by topic. Microsoft is helping with the project.

Washington leads other states in its digital archives, Handfield said. The center received a \$1 million Library of Congress grant to help seven other states establish their digital archives. The center is currently working with Colorado, its eighth state. Delegations from other countries also visit the center, to see how the system is set up.

The 1861 marriage registry of James O'Bryan and Susannah Finley is one of the older paper records. Both bride and groom were illiterate when they wed in what is now Stevens County. They signed with "X's." Archives Assistant Lee Pierce is working on a project to digitize Spokane's jail records from 1898 to 1901. The records provide a fascinating glimpse into local history, he said. The records reveal that prostitutes paid monthly fines of \$10 to stay in business. Men arrested for running gaming operations paid \$5 monthly fines.

The city took in \$1,275 from prostitution and gaming fees during November 1898.

The museum-like ambiance in the building doesn't reflect the digital center's true use, officials said. About 1,000 visitors log on each day to [www.digitalarchives.wa.gov](http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov).

State Digital Archives it is free on line  
- Taken from *Eastman Online Genealogy*

## Scanning Old Photographs

by Kay Spears

Do you have some old photographs you want to scan, but you're not sure what format to use when saving them? Well, here's the definitive answer: it depends. Yes, what format you choose for saving images depends on how you intend to use them once they are scanned. Here are some general guidelines.

1. If the image is to be used for the Web/online, use JPEG, PNG or GIF. If the image is to be printed or used in a print publication, use TIFF.

2. JPEG should be used when you need to keep the file size small and don't mind giving up quality for a significant reduction in size. JPEGs are optimal for posting and transferring photos online. JPEGs aren't suitable for images with text because crisp lines will blur. If you plan on doing any kind of restoration work on your photograph, JPEGs are not the format to use.

3. PNG is ideal when you need smaller file sizes with no loss in quality. PNG supports alpha transparency (soft edges). PNG files offer greater compression and a much

wider range of color depth than GIFs. However, not all web browsers support PNGs.

4. GIF is a good choice for simple Web graphics with limited colors. GIF should rarely be used for photos.

5. TIFF is good for any type of bitmap image. If you want to archive your family photographs, this is the format to use. This is also the format to use if you are planning on doing restoration work. Unlike JPEGs, TIFFs do not lose any compression when edited and resaved. I recommend that you scan your family photos as TIFFs; you can always reduce them to JPEGs for sending through emails or putting online. Always keep the original TIFF saved in a separate file. The downside: TIFF files are extremely large and take up a lot of storage space. However, the cost of disk storage continues to plummet while options continue to increase.

6. BMP may be used for any type of pixel-based image. BMPs are huge files, but there is no loss of quality. BMP has no real benefit over TIFF, except you can use it for Windows wallpaper.

A final tip: for sharing a photo via the Web or email, scan at 75 or 100 dpi. A standard computer monitor is only 72 to 96 dpi, so it's not necessary for anything larger. For printing, scan at 300 dpi. Printers have higher resolution than monitors. If you're planning on enlarging an image, the general rule of thumb is double the resolution when doubling the size.

*Taken from Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library No. 45, November 30, 2007*

## Coroners and Genealogists Join Forces in New Show to Tackle Quiet Epidemic of Unclaimed Persons

What happens to people when they die with no next of kin to claim their bodies? RootsTelevision.com, an online channel dedicated to all aspects of genealogy and family history, has launched a new show, *Unclaimed Persons*, to bring attention to this largely unknown epidemic. Coroners' offices across the country are struggling to cope with thousands of unclaimed people whose identities are known, but for whom no family can be found.

"I knew about John and Jane Does," said genealogist Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak, "but I had no idea about all these unclaimed people who are usually cremated and buried in unmarked graves, and that's often after several months on a shelf in a morgue. We hear about abandoned pets, but you never hear about these abandoned bodies."

Accidentally stumbling across an article about one such case is what prompted Smolenyak Smolenyak to cold call a couple of coroners' offices and offer her sleuthing skills for

tracking down family members. *Unclaimed Persons* features cases -- one involving a man who was found in his jeep in the desert and had been lost to his family for more than 50 years -- from Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania and San Bernardino County, California.

Unclaimed Persons can be viewed at  
[www.RootsTelevision.com](http://www.RootsTelevision.com).or  
<http://unclaimedpersons.org/>

RootsTelevision.com was launched online in late 2006 and already provides more than 1,000 videos -- free, on-demand and 24/7 -- for family history enthusiasts around the globe. In its first year, this Internet-based channel won four Telly Awards for its diverse programming.

- Taken from *Honoring Our Ancestors*

### **Tips from the Pros: Genealogical Trip Savings**

from Michael John Neill

Summer is travel time and genealogists are no exception. Keeping in mind that what works for one person may not work for another, here are a few quick ideas for stretching your genealogical travel dollar.

Can you take the train? The next time I go to downtown Chicago to do research, I plan on taking Amtrak. While not everyone lives close to an Amtrak station, for me this is an easier option and gets me downtown without the hassles of driving.

Is gas mileage the problem? If one day of research will do you, consider getting a weekend car rental. I have rented a car before on Thursday afternoon, returning it on Sunday. This works well for facilities that are open on Saturday as well as during the week. Many times this qualifies me for a much cheaper rate and I usually get a car that gets better mileage than mine. An added benefit is that if I have car trouble a distance from home, the rental company has to deal with it--not me.

Make digital copies. I love taking digital pictures of records, or using digital scanners (where available) to make copies from microfilm. On recent trips to Salt Lake and Ft. Wayne, I did not make one microfilm or photocopy the entire time. While not all facilities support digitally scanning microfilm, some do, and those who are adept at using their digital camera may even have success photographing microfilmed images. I would suggest that this technique be practiced at home before your trip. Get advice from the locals. If you will be traveling a distance to perform research in your ancestral hometown, post a question about local accommodations and other info to the message boards at Ancestry. Residents in the area may be able to give you suggestions on the best inexpensive motel, inexpensive activities to occupy spouses and children, and maybe even ideas on how to save money

at the courthouse. Network with other researchers at your local genealogical society and with friends in your destination area to get additional ideas.

Are there other locations where you get the same record for less? Does the Family History Library or a state archives have the same record the county has? Do they charge a different fee than the local records office? A vital records clerk is not going to tell you that someone else has the same information or document at half the cost.

### **Got Genealogy Academy**

Take Your Online Genealogy Research to a Whole New Level! We can help you master online genealogy through our intensive, two-day, hands-on training workshop, where you'll learn how to do genealogy in a whole new way.

When: November 14 -15, 2008 Friday and Saturday  
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Where: Emeryville, CA - The Marriott Courtyard Hotel  
Located just six miles from San Francisco, at the foot of the Bay Bridge, the Marriott Courtyard hotel is across the street from Bay Street Mall and adjacent to Powell Street Plaza.

Cost: \$495 (Special inaugural pricing); \$100 refundable deposit required to register.

Includes: • Two full days of intensive hands-on computer training (we provide laptops or \$50 discount if you bring your own laptop - Mac or PC) • All workshop materials  
•One-on-one training

Pre-Requisites:

1. Pedigree chart of your own family, minimum 3 generations, including you.
2. A basic understanding of computers.
3. A minimum of one year's experience doing genealogy.
4. A good sense of humor - we intend to have a ton of fun while doing some serious learning.

\$10 of every registration will be donated to a genealogical society. You can designate the society of your choice, or leave it blank and we'll donate the money to a genealogical society of our choice.

It's time to renew your CAAGS membership for 2009 if you want to continue receiving our newsletter. Please note membership fees have increased \$5 for 2009.

**Mayme Clayton Library and Museum Needs Volunteers** to help with cataloging their holdings. Contact Leah Kerr at (323) 669-0431, she will train volunteers to use the cataloging software.



# Heritage Newsletter

*California African American Genealogical Society*

## President's Message

Ronald Higgins

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. We are also in the process of starting our writers group back at CAAGS. Contact Daisy Jenkins-Saffold if you would like to be a part of this group. The writers group will meet during our monthly meetings.

During 2009 I look forward to a good year for our society. We have a new home at the Mayme Clayton Library and Museum and as your president and program chair I am looking to have our society members being our speakers and presenters at the general meetings. Please let me know if you or someone you know would like to make a presentation to our group. We have the annual Discover Your Roots Conference in March and the International Black Genealogical Summit in October.

If you have not done so already please renew your membership with CAAGS. If you are interested in running for an office on the board please contact Hal Jackson. We will hold our election and installation of officers at the January meeting. Also as mentioned at the November meeting we are in need of volunteers. Anything you can do to help would be appreciated. We need assistance doing everything from setting and up and breaking down equipment at the monthly meeting to volunteering to chair various committees. Currently the position of Historian is open and needs to be filled as soon as possible. We also need a publications editor. The CAAGS by-laws contain a description of the positions and the responsibilities.

**December 2008    Volume 20    Number 10**

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)

**\*\*\* Our New Location \*\*\***

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

### 2008 Board of Directors

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

### Committee Chairs

DorothyLou Sands – Book Sales and Acquisitions  
Open – Publications Editor  
Lillian Glover – Public Relations  
LaVerne Anderson – Librarian  
DorothyLou Sands – Historian (Interim)  
Monica Maurasse – Newsletter Editor  
Colette DeVerge – FGS Delegate/Fundraising Chairman  
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) Our new meeting location, Mayme Clayton Library and Museum, 4130 Overland Blvd., Culver City, CA.*

Our December meeting and holiday party will be held at the Carson Buffet, located at 888 E. Dominquez St. in Carson, CA from 1-4pm. The cost is \$9.99 per person.

Last but not least we wish you all a safe and happy holiday season.

### 2008 – 2009 Calendar of Events

#### December 20

**CAAGS Holiday Party**, 1-4pm, Carson Buffet, 888 E. Dominquez St., Carson 90746, Ph 310/324-3688 \$9.99 pp

#### December 24 – January 1, 2009

The LARFHC will be closed

#### January 17, 2009

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm. Mayme Clayton Library and Museum (MCLM)

#### February 21, 2009

CAAGS general meeting 10am – 2pm. Mayme Clayton Library and Museum (MCLM)

*\* Calendar is subject to change without notice*

### Websites of Interest

These sites are valid as of September 26, 2008. If they do not link up, please notify me at [charsroots@yahoo.com](mailto:charsroots@yahoo.com). Use the University library web sites to see what is in their catalog (i.e. special collections, plantation records, maps or papers) so you can request a look up, an inter-library exchange, or go to the library.

**Various websites have information for their group but also information that may be informative for another group.**

\$ = Fee-based or may require membership

#### Search Engines:

[www.google.com](http://www.google.com) [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)

Google Web Page Translator [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), click language tools

Locating People and Businesses [www.switchboard.com](http://www.switchboard.com)

#### Genealogy databases:

Family History Center [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

Rootsweb [www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com)

USGenWeb [www.usgenweb.org](http://www.usgenweb.org) and WorldGenWeb [www.worldgenweb.org](http://www.worldgenweb.org)

HeritageQuest Online [www.heritagequestonline.com](http://www.heritagequestonline.com)

Footnote \$ [www.footnote.com](http://www.footnote.com)

GenealogyBank \$ [www.genealogybank.com](http://www.genealogybank.com)

Ancestry \$ [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

U.S. Census Bureau [www.census.gov/genealogy/](http://www.census.gov/genealogy/)

Census Online [www.census-online.com](http://www.census-online.com)

U.S. Vital Records [www.vitalrec.com](http://www.vitalrec.com)

Vital Records [www.vitalrec.com/links2.html](http://www.vitalrec.com/links2.html)

Ellis Island Records [www.ellislandrecords.org](http://www.ellislandrecords.org) and [www.ellisland.org](http://www.ellisland.org)

Castle Garden [www.castlegarden.org](http://www.castlegarden.org)

One Step Form [www.stevemorse.org](http://www.stevemorse.org)

The Ships List [www.theshipslist.com](http://www.theshipslist.com)

Social Security Death Index records

[ssdi.genealogy.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/ssdi.cgi](http://ssdi.genealogy.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/ssdi.cgi)

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board [www.rrb.gov/geneal.html](http://www.rrb.gov/geneal.html)

Distant Cousins [www.distantcousin.com](http://www.distantcousin.com)

Kindred Trails [www.kindredtrails.com](http://www.kindredtrails.com)

My Trees [www.mytrees.com](http://www.mytrees.com)

Last Name Meanings Dictionary [www.last-names.net](http://www.last-names.net)

World Vital Records \$ <[worldvitalrecords.com](http://worldvitalrecords.com)>

One Great Family \$ [www.onegreatfamily.com](http://www.onegreatfamily.com)

My Genealogy [www.genealogy.com](http://www.genealogy.com)

Family History Search Online \$ [www.familyhistory.com](http://www.familyhistory.com)

My Family \$ [www.myfamily.com](http://www.myfamily.com)

Find My Past \$ [www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com)

Family History Online \$ [www.familyhistoryonline.net](http://www.familyhistoryonline.net)

### Include Family History with Holiday Greetings

As family historians, we are often the proud owners of old family photographs, Bibles, and records. Why not make a copy of a family photo or document and include it with your holiday greetings? Your family will appreciate the thoughtful gesture, and it may even jog their memories or inspire them to return the favor. An added benefit is that by sharing, you're helping to ensure the survival of the image or document for future generations.

### Neat Tricks Using Ancestry.com

Discover Your Roots - Sacramento, CA

March 8, 2008 • Lisa B. Lee, PLCGS

• **Trick 1:** Your female ancestor got married and left the state. You don't know whom or when she married, nor to where she moved.

**Solution: No-name search**

• **Trick 2:** The surname for which you search can be spelled a number of different ways, but despite your best efforts, exact and Soundex searches fail to find them.

**Solution: Wild Card search**

**\*\* Double Wild Card search**

• **Trick 3:** The surname from hell ... even wild-card searches still don't find them.

**Solution: Think Southern (it probably won't sound like it looks)**

• **Trick 4:** You don't even know the surname but you want to find your ancestor at a certain place and time.

**Solution: First-name-only search**

• **Trick 5:** You've searched and searched for your male ancestor with the funny name, still cannot find him but you just KNOW he's gotta be there.

**Solution: Use gender search carefully**

• **Trick 6:** All else has failed. You know your ancestor was in a certain place at a certain time, but searches just don't reveal them.

**Solution: Browse**

## **Saving Your Family Treasures Four Destructive Habits**

*by Maureen Taylor*

### **Poor Storage Areas**

Some of the worst damage to our family photographs and documents occurs in the name of preservation. There are a lot more than four destructive habits that cause our family history treasures to deteriorate, but the ones listed here are commonly done by the most well-meaning genealogists.

### **Mis-Handling**

There is no debate on what you should do before looking at photographs and documents. Wash your hands with soap and water then dry them completely. This removes the dirt and oils you could leave behind during handling. In some archives they make you wear cotton gloves and in others clean dry hands are enough. I prefer wearing gloves, because not only will you protect your pictures from the naturally occurring oils present on your hands, but you won't transfer surface grime from one photo or document to another. Try the white glove test with your pictures. You won't believe how dirty documents and pictures get from hanging around for a hundred years! I always wash my gloves after wearing them.

If you don't know where to buy some inexpensive supplies search "white cotton gloves" in an online search engine to locate vendors. I recently ordered a dozen for around \$8.00. That's enough so that you can give a pair to all the photographers and genealogists in your family.

### **Poor Storage Areas**

Probably the most common question I'm asked is where to store photographs and documents. The best place is often the hardest to find—a windowless closet away from exterior walls and water pipes. I don't have one of those in my house, so I create a better environment by nesting one box of photographs in a larger box. The buffer created by the outside box helps prevent fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Many folks have written to me about their storage dilemmas. It's difficult to locate just the right spot in your house that protects valuable family items from damaging heat, light, and humidity. Trust me. Basements, attics and garages make convenient storage places, but in the long-term you'll end up destroying the material you're trying to save.

Here's a perfect present for the keeper of family materials. Buy them a selection of reinforced boxes made from acid- and lignin-free board from a company such as Hollinger Corporation.

### **Lamination**

Several times a year I receive a question about laminating photographs and important papers. This technique falls into the NEVER category of how to save family treasures.

Lamination consists of poor quality plastics, adhesive and heat. This trio is toxic to anything you laminate, and it can't be reversed. Anything laminated slowly deteriorates due to the glue, the chemicals in the plastic, and the ingredients of the item you're trying to save.

Instead try encapsulation. This process uses two sheets of non-PVC plastic or mylar, a safe adhesive strip and no heat. You can order a kit with all the necessary supplies from Carr McLean or buy items separately through companies like Light Impressions.

### **Labeling**

Unless you want your pictures and documents to end up in an estate sale you should take time to label them. Before you reach for a gel pen or other writing tool think about whether that utensil is light-fast, waterproof, and permanent. If you want to write on a heritage photo all you need is a soft lead pencil available in any art, craft, or office supply store. If however, you're trying to caption a picture with a plastic coating then you'll need something like a Zig marker also readily available at any of those outlets. Along with the cotton gloves, give the genealogist on your list one of each. Then offer to help them label all those family photos and documents. Just write on the back in the upper, left-hand corner.

For photographs, include the name of the person in the portrait, their life dates, and when the photo was taken. Don't worry that you don't have all the answers, put down what you know. On documents, include the name of the person who wrote it and when. Scrapbook hobbyists might want to compose an extended caption that actually tells the story of the item.

Think about the wonderful family history kit you can put together—gloves, boxes, and writing utensils for that special person on your list. You can find additional information on preserving family history treasures on Sally Jacob's blog.

### **The Year Was 1844**

*Taken from The Ancestry Weekly Journal*

The year was 1844 and in the United States, it was an election year. Former president Martin Van Buren went in to the Democratic convention hoping to win the nomination, but when it became clear that he would not, he threw his support behind the first "dark horse" candidate—James K. Polk. Henry Clay was on the ballot for the Whig Party, and a new anti-slavery party on the political scene, nominated James G. Birney.

At the heart of the election were the issues of the annexation of Texas and slavery. Slavery opponents opposed the annexation of Texas because it would upset the fragile balance of slave vs. free states. Polk supported the



annexation, solving the balance issue by also committing to secure the Northwest areas that now include Oregon, Idaho, Washington, and part of British Columbia. His slogan, "Fifty-four Forty or Fight," referred to the northernmost latitude of that territory.

In the closest election in American History, Polk won by a mere 38,367 votes, and didn't even carry 50 percent of the popular vote. The third party candidate had played a huge role. He won votes that Clay needed to carry the state of New York. Had Clay won that state, he would have won the election.

1844 was also a year that would transform communications. On 24 May Samuel F.B. Morse sent the words "What hath God wrought?" electronically through wires from the capitol in Washington, D.C., to a train station in Baltimore, some forty miles away. Soon, his telegraph machines were tapping out messages throughout the country and in 1866, communication by telegraph connected Europe with America, dramatically reducing the time in which news reached foreign shores.

A New York farmer named William Miller had been spreading the word that based on calculations he drew from Scripture, there was to be a second coming of Christ on 22 October 1844. As the date approached many of the Millerites left their jobs, sold all that they owned, donned white robes, and prepared to meet their Maker. When the day came and went without event, many became disillusioned with the movement, while some remained faithful and formed the Adventist Church.

In 1844, Joseph Smith, the founder of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and his brother were murdered by a mob in a jail in Carthage, Illinois. Continued violence following their deaths would lead to the Mormon exodus to the West under the leadership of Brigham Young in 1846.

Already wagon trains had begun making the 2,000 mile trek across the U.S. along the Oregon Trail to settle in the Pacific Northwest. In April of 1844, seventy-two wagons, carrying 300 people (called the Independent Colony), began their journey along that famous route. Among these pioneers was the Sager family. Both parents died along the trail leaving seven children to be cared for by other families in the wagon train. When they arrived in Oregon country, they were adopted by Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, missionaries who had traveled to the area in one of the first wagon trains in 1836. The Sagers were orphaned a second time when the Whitmans were massacred by Cayuse Indians in 1847, along with the two Sager boys. The daughters were captured and held for ransom. One of the girls died in captivity and the rest were freed a month later. The oldest daughter of the Sagers, Catherine, later wrote an account of their journey that is among the few first-hand accounts of the westward migration.

**Request A Search For Your Ancestors At The World's Largest Genealogical Library - Ancestor Seekers** researchers at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City will search this vast collection of records from the United States, Canada, Germany, Italy, Ireland, England, Scotland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and other European countries. Friendly service, affordable prices. For a no-obligation research assessment visit **AncestorSeekers.com**. Or join us February 22-27 for our **Eleventh Salt Lake City Research Trip**.



This is a picture of my grandfather whose name was Gabriel Augustus Adams, born in 1870 in Kingston, British West Indies. Gabriel came to the United States in 1913 and passed thru Ellis Island. He eventually moved to Boston, Massachusetts, in 1915 and sent for his family in Jamaica. In the picture are my two aunts, Lestelle and Myrtle, and my Uncle George. My grandmother was sick that day and unable to make the photo shoot. Gabriel had secured a job as a baggage man with the Boston Railroad in 1921 which was a good job for a man of color. *Taken from The Ancestry Weekly Journal, Contributed by Dolores Mangaroo*

### Parental Place Holders

This tip was prompted by the "Missing Maiden Names" Tip. I have several files where the earliest persons I know of are brothers. I do not know their father's given name, nor the mother's given or maiden name. In order to prepare a Descendants Report or a Relative Chart, in Reunion, I will assign given names such as "John's father" or "John's mother," and use a question mark for the mother's maiden name. Charts using this method show clearly the relationship between the descendants of the brothers.

- Samuel Kraus, Rancho Palos Verdes, California