

Heritage Newsletter

California African-American Genealogical Society



January 2020

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

General Membership Meetings
Third Saturday monthly, 10:00a.m. (dark July & August)
LDS Church, 10625 S. San Pedro, Los Angeles, CA

2020 Board of Directors

Elected Officers

Cartelia Marie Bryant – President
Ron Batiste – First Vice President
Norma Bates – Second Vice President/Membership
Ronald Fairley – Corresponding Secretary
Christina Ashe – Recording Secretary
Shirley Hurt – Treasurer
Charles Hurt – Parliamentarian

Committee Chairs/Appointed Officers

Peggy Powell – Books and Acquisitions
Open – Public Relations/Fundraising
Betty Whitson – Librarian
Edna Briggs – Historian
Lanetta Lyons – Newsletter Editor
James Murray – FGS Delegate
Akosua Hobert – Volunteer Chairman
Website – <http://www.caags.org> 📞 (323) 806-5634

GEORGIA ANN HILL ROBINSON
1879 -1961



Georgia Ann Hill Robinson became the first black female police officer to work for the Los Angeles, CA Police Department (LAPD), and possibly the first in the country, in 1916. Months before 15 percent of the police force of the United States would begin enlisting to enter combat in the first World War, Robinson began her

Neither the newsletter editor nor CAAGS guarantees publication of any submission. Submissions are due by the third Saturday of each month.

GEORGIA ANN HILL ROBINSON (cont.)

groundbreaking twelve-year career with the LAPD. Robinson's work for the LAPD would lead her to civic work, and she would devote her life to serving the residents of Los Angeles by fighting against segregation and for women's welfare.

Robinson was born Georgia Ann Hill in Opelousas, Louisiana on May 12, 1879. She never knew her parents and was raised by her older sister and later grew up in a Roman Catholic convent. When she was eighteen, Robinson moved to Kansas to work as a governess. There, she met and married Morgan Robinson. The couple moved first to Leadville, Colorado, and then to Los Angeles with their daughter Marian. In Los Angeles, Robinson's desire to serve led her to get involved with various community organizations, and it was through her work with these groups that she was approached and convinced by an LAPD recruiter to join the force.

On July 25, 1916, at the age of thirty-seven, Georgia Ann Hill Robinson became a volunteer for the LAPD. Three years later, on June 10, 1919, Robinson became the city's first black policewoman when she was hired as a jail matron. Later, she became involved in juvenile and homicide cases investigated by the department. In her position as an investigator, Robinson discovered the need for a women's shelter in Los Angeles, and subsequently helped establish the *Sojourner Truth Home* for destitute women and girls.

Robinson's time with the LAPD came to an abrupt end when, at the age of forty-nine, she tried to break up an altercation between two...women in her jail. In the resulting fight, Robinson suffered a devastating head injury that left her permanently blind. In 1954, *Ebony* magazine asked Robinson about her injury and her police career, and she said, "I have no regrets. I didn't need my eyes any longer. I had seen all there was to see."

Far from retreating into a quiet retirement, Robinson continued to serve her community. She worked with community leaders, including Dr. Claude Hudson, longtime president of the Los Angeles branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), in the effort to desegregate Los Angeles schools and beaches. Robinsons continued to work with women in the shelter she'd helped to found until her death on September 21, 1961 in Los Angeles. She had just celebrated her eighty-second birthday.

<https://www.blackpast.org/author/bryanerika/>

PLUGGED IN

CATHERINE MORETON will instruct the January intermediate class on using Ancestry.com in research.

RESEARCH TRIP to Family Search Library in Salt Lake City, UT will be on May 3-9, 2020. Select the round trip airfare from LAX with 6 nights single and double occupancy at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel at Temple Square or other available packages.

FamilySearch has formed an African Heritage team focused solely on helping people of African Descent around the world discover and connect with their homeland. You can opt-in to the "new" quarterly African Heritage email newsletter at [FamilySearch African Heritage Quarterly Email Opt-In](#). Your personal information will not be shared or sold. Do invite others to opt-in.

CAAGS INTRODUCES THE GENEALOGY NOTEBOOK to keep your research in pristine condition for you, your family and the future. The cover is UV protected and embossed with the CAAGS logo. Inside are a large pedigree chart (11" x 16") and 80 pages awaiting your findings. This coil-bound treasure is available with a donation of \$12.50 by members and \$15.00 by nonmembers.

SUPPORT CAAGS

Boost your meals appeal with recipes from the CAAGS cookbook (\$10 donation).

FINDING YOUR ROOTS- HENRY LOUIS GATES

Check local listings for showings of season 6 on PBS.

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (NGS) offers two new courses: African American Roots: A Historical Perspective and Federal Land Research. For information, go to <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/>

GENEALOGY MAGAZINE

This You Tube series offers advice and tips for the family historian.

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

CAAGS FINANCIAL SUMMARY Month Ending November 30, 2019

BEGINNING BALANCE.....	\$9,578.63
INCOME.....	425.37
DISBURSEMENTS.....	390.53
DESIGNATED FUNDS.....	131.22
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$9,715.35

Shirley Hurt, Treasurer

FOREVER REMEMBERED

IRVING LOUIS BURGIE

July 28, 1924 – November 29, 2019

Sometimes known professionally as Lord Burgess, he was an American musician and songwriter, regarded as one of the greatest composers of Caribbean music. He composed 34 songs for Harry Belafonte, including eight songs on the 1956 *Calypso* album, the first album of any kind to sell one million copies. Burgie also wrote the lyrics of the National Anthem of Barbados.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irving_Burgie

WILLIAM HARRISON "Bones" DILLARD

July 8, 1923 – November 15, 2019

An American track and field athlete, He is the only male in the history of the Olympic Games to win gold in both the 100 meter and the 110 meter hurdles, making him the "World's Fastest Man" in 1948 and the "World's Fastest Hurdler" in 1952.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harrison_Dillard

ERNEST JAMES GAINES

January 15, 1933 – November 5, 2019

He was an American author whose works are taught in college classrooms and translated into many languages, including French, Spanish, German, Russian and Chinese. Four of his works were made into television movies, and his 1993 novel, *A Lesson Before Dying*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction. He was a MacArthur Foundation fellow, National Humanities Medal awardee, and an inductee into the French Ordre des Artes et Lettres.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_J._Gaines

ELISE WOODSON (Motisola Omowale)

1953 - Dec 7, 2019.

Head of Education at California African American Museum, Elise conducted a public program on "The Power of Story: Writing Personal Narrative" in 2013. The overwhelming public response led to an ongoing writers workshop. Under her leadership and vision the persistent writers agreed to self-publish their personal stories for a "sense of permanence". In 2015, The Community Writers Group released *Snapshots, Vol. 1*. *Snapshots, Vol. 5*, which Elise worked on until the very end, will be released in February 2020.

Memorial services will be held in Detroit, and in Los Angeles (Bootleg Theater at 2220 Beverly Blvd on MLK Day at noon). *Snapshots, Vol. 5*, can be ordered from CAAGS members Akosua Hobert or Peggy Powell. Information courtesy of Peggy Powell

CALENDAR

May 3-9, 2020

Research Trip to Family Search Library in Salt Lake City, UT

May 20 - 23, 2020

National Genealogical Society Conference
Salt Lake City, Utah; www.ngsgenealogy.org

July 7 - 9, 2020

Midwest African American Genealogy Institute (MAAGI) Conference; Allen County Public Library Ft. Wayne, IN; www.maagiinstitute.org

Southern California Genealogical Society

Offers many webinars and user group meetings
<https://www.scqsgenealogy.com>

ON-GOING

January 11, 2020

Writers Group

(monthly, 2nd Saturday)

10a.m.– noon, A.C. Bilbrew Library

150 East El Segundo Blvd; Los Angeles, CA

January 16, 2020

CAAGS Board Meeting (monthly, 3rd Thursday)

January 18, 2020

CAGGS General Membership Meeting

(monthly, 3rd Saturday)

The Christmas party will occur in lieu of a meeting

February 22, 2020

CAAGS DNA Interest Group 9:00a.m.- 12:00p.m.
LAFHL, 10741 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles
Bring your account username and password

*The calendar is subject to change without notice.
Please check our website for current information.*

<http://www.caags.org/> 📞 (323) 806-5634

A Returning to [His] Roots

A young man grew up in Baltimore understanding that his forebears were from Africa, but he always wanted to know more. "You don't know why you walk around with an emptiness inside and have that feeling... on culture day when you don't have a dish to bring in that's from another country. So, in 2009 he took a DNA test through African Ancestry and learned that he shared maternal ancestry with the Tikar people, many of whom now live in the Bamum kingdom in northwestern Cameroon. He spent about three years learning the Bamum culture and language, and in 2015 flew to Cameroon.

Everyone he met was surprised that he spoke the language and he was surprised at how strangely familiar the place and the people seemed. When asked if he would like a traditional name, he stated that he absolutely would. A few days later, he stood nervously before Mbombo Njoya, the king of the Bamum, who gave him a birth certificate and the new name, NSangou Njikam. Ever since, he has been NSangou (pronounced SAN-goo).

The second astonishing moment occurred in Bimbia, a port notorious for its role in slave trade. After a long walk to the water's edge, NSangou found the remains of small stone structures that had once detained the men and women who would cross the Atlantic and never return; also, he held pieces of chain in his hand. It was then that he realized where and who we were supposed to be, had slavery not happened, and it was very like who we are now, minus the trauma. It was the beginning of healing.

[AARP, October/November 2019,p.65](#)

TIPS FOR PLANNING AN ANCESTRY TRIP

More Americans are traveling to explore their family homeland, since it has become much easier these days to learn about one's family history, thanks in part to services such as Ancestry and 23andMe. These services offer historical record searches and DNA testing. Once you know where you're from, you may want to see it for yourself. If you're interested in a roots trip, here's some advice:

- **Research your ancestry in advance.**
That can include identifying a local contact, such as a family member or a guide who can help you when you arrive,
- **Pack Smart.**
You'll want to bring
 1. A summary of important information about your ancestors (names, dates of birth and death, addresses)
 2. Locations and records of offices you hope to visit
 3. Photographs of yourself and your family
 4. Thank you gifts for relatives and other helpful people you'll meet on your journey
- **Keep Expectations Realistic.**
Some people who take heritage trips are disheartened if they fail to find a specific missing piece of a family puzzle, according to Jackie Hogan, a sociology professor at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. Hogan urges acceptance of, and gratitude for, whatever you do discover. "If you go into the trip with a goal of soaking in your environment- the sights, smells, tastes and sounds of the place- you will not be disappointed."
[AARP, October/November 2019,p.67](#)

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

The bill to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day a holiday first came to a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1979. However, it fell five votes short of the number needed for passage. Soon after, the King Center sought support from the corporate community and the general public. The success of this strategy was cemented when musician Stevie Wonder released the single *Happy Birthday* to popularize the campaign in 1980 and hosted the *Rally for Peace* Press Conference in 1981. Six million signatures were collected for a petition to Congress to pass the law, termed by a 2006 article in *The Nation* as "the largest petition in favor of an issue in U.S. history". On November 2, 1983, President Reagan signed a bill, proposed by Representative Katie Hall of Indiana, to create a federal holiday honoring Dr. King. The bill passed the Senate by a count of 78 to 22 and the House of Representatives by 338 to 90. The holiday was observed for the first time on January 20, 1986. It is observed on the third Monday of January. ·
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_King_Jr._Day#cite_note-statute-9

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