

Heritage Newsletter

California African-American Genealogical Society



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

General Membership Meetings
Third Saturday monthly, 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
Corrine Hill – First Vice President
Carolyn Conway – Second Vice President/Membership
Ronald Fairley – Corresponding Secretary
Christina Ashe – Recording Secretary
Shirley Hurt – Treasurer
Charles Hurt – Parliamentarian

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Peggy Powell – Books and Acquisitions
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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

FLOYD NORMAN: ANIMATOR



Floyd Norman

Born June 22, 1935, Floyd E. Norman is an animator, writer, and comic book artist. Over the course of his career, he has worked for several animation companies, among them Walt Disney Animation Studios, Hanna-Barbera Productions, and Ruby-Spears Film. Norman began his career in his hometown of Santa Barbara as an assistant at *Katy Keene* comic books. In 1957, he was employed by the Walt Disney Studios on *Sleeping Beauty* as an inbetweener (an artist who creates the frames between two images that give the

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

Floyd Norman (cont.)

illusion of motion). Thus, he became the first African-American artist to remain at the studio on a long-term basis. After being drafted and serving in the military, Norman returned to Disney in 1960 to work on *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* and *The Sword and the Stone*. Upon seeing some of the inter-office sketches Norman made to entertain his co-workers, Walt Disney reassigned him to the story department, where he worked on the story for *The Jungle Book*.

After Walt Disney's death in 1966, Norman left the Disney studio to co-found Vignette Films, Inc., with business partner animator/director Leo Sullivan. Vignette Films, Inc. produced six animated films and was one of the first companies to produce films on the subject of black history. Norman and Sullivan worked together on various projects, including segments for *Sesame Street* and the original *Hey, Hey, Hey, It's Fat Albert* television special. In 1972, a different *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* Saturday morning cartoon series was produced for CBS. Also in the early 1970s Norman returned to Disney to work on the animated feature, *Robin Hood*, and then worked on several animated television programs at Hanna-Barbera and Ruby-Spears. In the 1980s he worked as a writer in the comic strip department at Disney and was the last scribe for *Mickey Mouse* before it was discontinued.

Norman worked on motion pictures for Walt Disney Animation Studios and Pixar, contributing creatively as a story artist on films such as *Toy Story 2* and *Monsters, Inc.* for Pixar, and *Mulan*, *Dinosaur* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* for Walt Disney, and *Free Birds* for Reel FX.

In 1999, Norman and Leo Sullivan created a multicultural internet site, afrokids.com, designed to present a variety of African-American images to children. Also, Norman published several books of cartoons inspired by his lifetime of experiences in the animation industry. Additionally, he authored a semi-biographical animation primer: *Animated Life: A Lifetime of tips, tricks, techniques and stories from an animation Legend*. In 2016, Norman was the subject of a documentary, *Floyd Norman: An Animated Life*.

Norman was inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame and was a recipient of the Winsor McCay Award for "recognition of lifetime or career contributions to the art of animation" at the 2002 Annie Awards. In 2007, Norman was named a Disney Legend, and in 2016 he was appointed to the education and outreach committee of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

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

CAAGS Reporter: Charles Hurt, member since 2016

PLUGGED IN

Want to participate in the newly formed Website Committee? Contact Dr. Edna Briggs. Three members are needed for this vital group. <http://www.caags.org>

Have you paid your dues? \$15 for students, \$30 for individuals, \$35 for families, \$40 for organizations and libraries, \$15 for newsletter via USPS.

RESEARCH TRIP to Family Search Library in Salt Lake City, UT is scheduled for May 3-9, 2020. Stay tuned for more information, as COVID-19 impacts our lives. <http://www.caags.org>

FamilySearch has formed an African Heritage team focused solely on helping people of African descent around the world discover their homeland. You can opt-in to the "new" quarterly African Heritage email newsletter at [FamilySearch African Heritage Quarterly Email Opt-In](http://www.familysearch.org/afrika). Your personal information will not be shared or sold.

CAAGS INTRODUCES THE GENEALOGY NOTEBOOK to keep your research in pristine condition for you, your family and the future. 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 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 February 29, 2020

BEGINNING BALANCE.....	\$10,473.85
INCOME.....	882.00
DISBURSEMENTS.....	253.07
DESIGNATED FUNDS.....	131.22
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$11,035.78

Shirley Hurt, Treasurer

QUILTING An African-American Tradition

The art of quilting is evidence of our rich cultural history. With roots in Africa, it is a time-honored tradition. Among our African ancestors, the number of patterns and the type of cloth sometimes correlated with the status of the owner. In America, quilting is as old as the country. On plantations, Black women were needed for spinning, weaving, sewing and quilting. Scraps of fabric from discarded feedbags, rags, dresses, shirts and pants were used to make many unique patterns. The quilts were used for bed covers and clothing. On a cold winter night, the warmth of a quilt was unsurpassed.

Many of the quilts told stories. But among the fascinating quilts that enslaved women made were the encoded quilts, used to assist in navigating the escape of slaves. In the book, *Hidden in Plain View*,* the authors offer proof that certain quilt patterns, specifically "the Charleston Code," were an integral tool for escape by tracing some of the trails to freedom. This is just another example of the creativity and ingenuity of our ancestors.

In the 21st century, quilting has taken on new dimensions. The artistry is difficult to adequately describe- the beauty, the rich colors, the new techniques employed. All of this pageantry is breathtaking. With the incorporation of new techniques, varied textured fabric, and different media, quilting is an art like no other! There are even social commentary quilts that pay homage to civil rights leaders and modern legends like Travon Martin.

Among America's outstanding contemporary quilters are The African American Quilters of Los Angeles (AAQLA). Their recent show displayed over 280 beautiful quilts, wall hangings, wearable art, and other items. This year, the biennial event was entitled *Faith, Family & Fellowship* and was held at the Carson Community Center. In CAAGS there are several talented quilters: Norma Bates and Tommie Mallet (quilters of the distinctive CAAGS quilt), Jamesetta Hammons, Lloydine Outen, Marjorie Sholes and others. If you ever have the opportunity to attend an African American Quilters Show, by all means, GO! It is a feast for the eyes and a comfort to the spirit.

*Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad by Jacqueline Tobin and Raymond Dotard

CAAGS reporter: Carolyn Khadija Connor, member since 1992

CALENDAR

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted these events.
Check online for latest information.

May 3-9, 2020

Research Trip to Family Search Library

Salt Lake City, UT; www.caags.org/

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; <http://www.maagiinstitute.org/>

September 2-5, 2020

Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS)

Kansas City, MO; www.fgs.org/

October 14 -17, 2020

Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society

(AAHGS) Conference; Hampton, VA

<https://www.aahgs.org/conference>

February 3 – 6, 2021

ROOTS TECH 2021

Salt Lake City, UT

May 27 – 30, 2021

Southern California Genealogical Society

Coming To America

<https://www.scsgenealogy.com>

ONGOING

April 16, 2020

CAAGS Board Meeting (monthly, 3rd Thursday)

7p.m. call-in to 1-712-775-8972, pin 830090

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED

Writers Group

(monthly, 2nd Saturday)

10a.m.– noon, A.C. Bilbrew Library

150 East El Segundo Blvd; Los Angeles, CA

CAGGS General Membership Meeting

(monthly, 3rd Saturday)

LDS Church of Jesus Christ

10623 South San Pedro; Los Angeles, CA 90003

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

FOREVER REMEMBERED

Katherine Coleman Johnson

August 26, 1918- February 24, 2020

Johnson graduated from West Virginia State College summa cum laude in 1937 in mathematics and French, at age 18. She was one of three African-American students, and the only woman, selected to integrate the graduate school of West Virginia University.

She worked as a mathematician at Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory in a pool of women performing math calculations, known as virtual "computers who wore skirts." From 1958 until her retirement in 1986, Johnson worked as a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) aerospace technologist.

At NASA, Johnson calculated the trajectory for the 1961 space flight of Alan Shepard, the first American in space, and John Glenn asked for her specifically, refusing to fly unless Johnson verified the calculations for his orbit around the moon. When the 1970 Apollo 13 moon mission was aborted, her work helped set a safe and accurate path for the crew's return to earth. Johnson recalled, "Everybody was concerned about them getting there. We were concerned about them getting back."

In the 2016 movie, *Hidden Figures*, Johnson was portrayed by Taraji P. Henson.

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

Barbara Elaine Smith

August 24, 1949 – February 22, 2020

Born in Everson, Pennsylvania, she was known professionally as B. Smith, an American restaurateur, model, author, businesswoman and television host. In the mid-1960s, Smith modeled in the *Ebony* Fashion Fair and with the Wilhemina Model agency. She was the first African-American model to be featured on the cover of *Mademoiselle* magazine.

The owner of multiple restaurants called B. Smith, she opened the first in New York City, followed by Sag Harbor, New York and then the historic Beaux-Arts Union Station restaurant in Washington D.C.

Her weekly television show, *B. Smith With Style*, debuted in 1997. In 2001 she debuted her first home collection at Bed Bath and Beyond. Her books include *B. Smith's Entertaining and Cooking for Friends* (1995), *B. Smith's Rituals and Celebrations* (1999), and *B. Smith Cooks Southern Style* (2009).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B._Smith

WHO ARE THE BEMANS?

Middletown's Beman family were abolitionist contemporaries of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass and leaders of free African-American communities in Connecticut, but their contributions to Connecticut and national history have largely been forgotten in modern historical consciousness. The Bemans were members of one of the first generations of freed slaves and played a critical role bridging the gap between "their enslaved fathers and their educated and prominent sons. These African Americans laid a foundation that paved the way for a generation of leaders."

Middletown's Beman family were descended from Caesar Beman, a slave in Colchester. In 1781, Caesar Beman volunteered to fight in place of his master, John Isham, and was subsequently granted his freedom. Instead of taking Isham's last name, as was the practice for freed slaves at the time, Caesar Beman created his own name based on the words "Be a Man."

In 1830, Caesar Beman's son, Jehiel, became the first regular pastor at the Cross Street AME Zion church and quickly became a cornerstone of the free African-American community in Middletown, fighting tirelessly to abolish slavery. Another son, Leverett Beman, was equally involved in the abolitionist movement and is responsible for what is now known as the Beman Triangle.

In 1834, Jehiel Beman founded the Middletown Anti-Slavery society. At the time, anti-slavery movements were controversial, and the first meetings of both white and black abolitionist groups were met with violence. That same year, Jehiel's second wife Nancy and Leverett's wife, Clarissa, founded one of the first African-American women abolitionist movements — the Colored Female Anti-Slavery Society of Middletown.

The Bemans wrote essays and created petitions to advocate for the end of slavery, and they also took serious risks aiding escaped slaves. The family, in collaboration with prominent white Middletown businessmen Jesse Baldwin and Benjamin Douglas, became conductors on the underground railroad despite the fact that the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act criminalized helping escaped slaves.

The Bemans were in Middletown from 1830 to 1916, and were at the forefront for the struggle to end Southern slavery. Also, they were at the forefront of the underground railroad and the fight for the right to vote. They were Middletown's most prominent and important abolitionists and proponents for equal rights in the 19th century.

Article revised from an article By Kathleen McWilliams, The Hartford Courant, 09/28/2019
CAAGS Reporter: Akosua Hobert-Pierce, member since 2016

To Unsubscribe, contact ljslyons@gmail.com