

# Heritage Newsletter

California African American Genealogical Society

“Inspiring Family  
History Research



One Person  
At A Time.”

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2024

Volume 36 Issue 1-2

## President's Message

By Dr. Edna F. Briggs

*HAPPY NEW YEAR - Dr. Martin Luther Birthday - HAPPY VALENTINES DAY  
Black History Month*

As my third term (one year) begins as President of the Society, all are aware that currently there is no Heritage Newsletter Editor. Therefore, this represents my effort to temporarily perform this job, along with all other duties. In so doing, I am appealing to all Members to consider contributing information that can be formatted and published and assist with identifying and recruiting someone who can take on the official duties of a Newsletter Editor.

If we're not successful in recruiting someone, the Newsletter may be SUSPENDED. Sadly, this will eliminate one of CAAGS' longstanding membership benefits.

The March 2024 meeting will mark CAAGS' 38<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The first meeting was held on the third Saturday, March 1986. In two years, on March 21, 2026, the 40<sup>th</sup> year of existence will occur. Or will it?

Other genealogical organizations around the country are undergoing or considering transitioning into another structure – a special interest group- or closing entirely. The reasons vary - aging membership, no recruitment of young people, preference for virtual rather than in-person meetings.

What is CAAGS future? “*What says the Church? It isn't the Church – Its You.*”

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## FEATURED:

*Celebrating Black History Month - The Civil War Ancestor  
Upcoming Events - Financial Report*

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# CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The story of Black History Month begins in Chicago during the summer of 1915. An alumnus of the University of Chicago with many friends in the city, Carter G. Woodson traveled from Washington, D.C. to participate in a national celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of emancipation sponsored by the state of Illinois. Thousands of African Americans travelled from across the country to see exhibits highlighting the progress their people had made since the destruction of slavery. Awarded a doctorate in Harvard three years earlier, Woodson joined the other exhibitors with a black history display.

Well before his death in 1950, Woodson believed that the weekly celebrations—not the study or celebration of black history—would eventually come to an end. In fact, Woodson never viewed black history as a one-week affair. He pressed for schools to use Negro History Week to demonstrate what students learned all year

In the 1940s, efforts began slowly within the black community to expand the study of black history in the schools and black history celebrations before the public. In the South, black teachers often taught Negro History as a supplement to United States history. During the Civil Rights Movement in the South, the Freedom Schools incorporated black history into the curriculum to advance social change.

The 1960s had a dramatic effect on the study and celebration of black history. Before the decade was over, Negro History Week would be well on its way to becoming Black History Month. President Gerald Ford was the first president who played a pivotal role in establishing Black History Month in 1975. In 1986, Congress passed a law officially designating February as “National Black (Afro-American) History Month.”

What Carter G. Woodson would say about the continued celebrations is unknown, but he would smile on all honest efforts to make black history a field of serious study and provide the public with thoughtful celebrations.

Source:

Daryl Michael Scott  
Professor of History  
Howard University  
Vice President of Program, ASALH  
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# I Have a Civil War Ancestor . . . Now What?

## Civil War records at the National Archives and online

Although there is a wealth of information available for Civil War soldiers, four main records exist to get a good overview of Civil War service for both Union and Confederate soldiers.

The pension tends to be a large file (usually between 50-100 pages). These usually have information about his service, any injuries he suffered, medical reports, statements from other friends and families, etc. It's not unusual to have genealogical information in these files. Pensions for Union Soldiers are at the National Archives. Confederate pensions are kept at the individual state archives and were granted by the state where the soldier was living after the war. Confederate pensions also tend to be much smaller files than Union pensions.

Compiled military service records will tell if a soldier was transferred, promoted, deserted, killed, captured etc. These can also contain prisoner of war records and enlistment papers. These exist only for state army regiments, not regular army soldiers or Navy sailors. These exist for both Union and Confederate soldiers and are both at the National Archives.

The carded medical records tell if the soldier was sick, injured or hospitalized. They're a good addition to get the complete picture of your ancestor during the war. Some soldiers have one card in their file; some have five or more, and some have none at all. These are all at the National Archives. Confederate medical records are filed within the compiled military service records. Union medical records are filed separately at the National Archives.

The company's record of events will tell where each company was during the war. You can often tell if they were engaged in a specific battle, where they were stationed at different points during the war, and what was going on each month. These exist for both Union and Confederate regiments and are both at the National Archives.

### **Online resources:**

#### **Confederate pensions:**

- [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Confederate\\_Pension\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Confederate_Pension_Records) (links to some of the files that are online)
- <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension> (addresses and phone numbers of various state archives that have the Confederate pensions)
- Look for the soldier in the state he was living in when he would have filed, which isn't always the state he served from.

**Union pensions:**

Fold3.com has the widow/dependent pensions for army soldiers up through #148,100. Many of these are soldiers who died during the war or shortly after. If your ancestors lived well past the end of the war, their pensions are most likely not on Fold3.

Many of the Union Navy pensions are on Fold3.com.

**Compiled Military Service Records:**

Fold3.com has Union Army service records for the following states online:

Alabama	Missouri
Arkansas	Nebraska
California	Nevada
Colorado	New Mexico
Dakota Territory	North Carolina
Delaware	Oregon
District of Columbia	Tennessee
Florida	Texas
Georgia	Utah
Kentucky	Vermont
Louisiana	Virginia
Maryland	West Virginia
Massachusetts	
Mississippi	All of the US Colored Troops

Fold3.com also has all of the Confederate service records online, for all states.

**Source:**

Brian Rhinehart

[Brian@CivilWarRecords.com](mailto:Brian@CivilWarRecords.com)

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

<p><b>UPCOMING EVENTS.....</b></p> <p>March 9,2024 -African American Genealogy Virtual Seminar – Register online: <a href="http://www.AAFHS.com">www.AAFHS.com</a></p> <p>March 16, 2024 – CAAGS Monthly Hybrid Meeting, Los Angeles Family Search Library</p> <p>March 23, 2024 – CAAGS DNA Special Interest Group Meeting, Los Family Search Library</p>	<p><b>CAAGS FINANCIAL SUMMARY</b> Month Ending January 31, 2024</p> <table> <tr> <td>BEGINNING BALANCE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 8,093.46</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INCOME</td> <td style="text-align: right;">871.92</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DISBURSEMENTS</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2,013.86</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ENDING BALANCE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$6,951.52</td> </tr> </table>	BEGINNING BALANCE	\$ 8,093.46	INCOME	871.92	DISBURSEMENTS	2,013.86	ENDING BALANCE	\$6,951.52
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**CALIFORNIA AFRICAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

P.O. BOX 8442  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90008-0442  
(323) 806-5634

General Membership Meetings  
Third Saturday monthly (except July & August)  
10:30 a.m.  
Los Angeles Family Search Library  
1591 East Temple Way  
(Near 10741 Santa Monica Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90024

**2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ELECTED OFFICERS	APPOINTED OFFICERS
<p>Dr. Edna F. Briggs – President VACANT – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Valerie Warrick-Durette- 2<sup>nd</sup> VP /Membership Christina Ashe – Recording Secretary Jean Wright-Calhoun – Treasurer Marie Bryant - Corresponding Secretary VACANT – Parliamentarian</p> <p>Gloria Wallace – Immediate Past President</p>	<p>Carolyn Conway – Librarian Steve Allen - Volunteer Coordinator Dr. Edna F. Briggs – Historian/NGS Delegate Web Site Admin – Vanessa McBride VACANT – Newsletter Editor VACANT – Public Relations/Fund Raising</p>

# Heritage Newsletter

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MARCH 2024

Volume 36 Issue 3

## President's Message

By Dr. Edna F. Briggs

*CELEBRATING*



Do you feel as I do? The year 2024 is rolling along. It's March already; I've blinked, and days have slipped by. To honor Women's History Month, this issue features two stories written by CAAGS Writers Group members Peggy Powell and Michelle LeDoux. We are fortunate and grateful for their contributions.

Every year, we're reminded that March marks CAAGS anniversary...the first meeting was held on the third Saturday, March 1986. For those struggling with remembering, the meeting locations are featured to assist with recalling the initial membership as a CAAGS member.

The March meeting will also feature CAAGS celebrated Show and Tell, made possible by members who share their family history/genealogical research projects.

Welcome to the first day of spring on March 19<sup>th</sup>. During the past two centuries, it's been reported that Easter has occurred fifteen times during March. Consider using the Writing Prompts to describe your memories from the past. The next occurrence will be in the year 2035.

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### *FEATURED:*

*Celebrating Women's History Month - "Black Palm Springs" - "The Bernice Moore Story" -  
CAAGS Meeting Places - Writing Prompts - Upcoming Events - Financial Report*

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**Bernice Moore Le Doux (1918 – 2018)**

## *One Act of Human Kindness Opened the Door: The Bernice Moore Story*

My mother's (Bernice Moore Le Doux) career with the United States Navy began with the kindness of a wealthy white woman from a prominent Bakersfield, California family.

During high school and after graduation, Bernice sometimes worked with some of her older sisters doing "day work" (cleaning white homes) and office buildings. This was one of the few jobs for colored women in the 1930s.

An employment agency opened for colored women, getting them jobs doing "day work." Bernice and her sisters went to register with the agency for employment. One day, a movie casting director came in to hire extras to play farm laborers in a movie. He told them they would have to provide their transportation to the field in Lamont, California, and would be supplied with a lunch and \$5.00 per day, a lot of money for a day's wage in the 1930s. Quite a bit of filming was done around the Kern and San Joaquin Counties in those days. Bernice and her sisters would be called on whenever other filming projects were in the area. The only two films that I can remember by name that she was in were *Rainbow on the River* (1936) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940).

One day, a former white high school classmate told Bernice that her mother wanted to speak with her and invited Bernice to her home, the Bakersfield Stockdale Country Club. It was 1940, and Black people were prohibited from using the country club. They could only work there. Bernice assumed Mrs. Stockdale would ask her to work at a party.

She was seated in the dining room when she arrived at the country club. She did not know anyone of her race who had ever been inside the dining room. Mrs. Stockdale came and brought food to the table. She began by asking about what Bernice had been doing since high school and where she had been

working. Mrs. Stockdale listened to her and told her she felt a woman of her race could do better. She asked

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Bernice, if she could get a job working with the Federal Government through her family's connections, would she accept it? She told her she would have to leave California to accept a job. Bernice told her she was interested, never thinking such a job existed.

A short time later, Mrs. Stockdale asked her to come back to her home. She handed Bernice a one-way train ticket to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and informed her that she had gotten a job working as a clerk with the Navy in Philadelphia. She would have to find her housing.

My grandparents were suspicious and afraid to let their daughter go. She was the 12<sup>th</sup> of 13 children. She was 23 years old and had never been out of Bakersfield. They took her to the train station, where she boarded a train on her journey to Philadelphia, which took approximately one week. In Chicago, a Black woman named Myrtle Stewart boarded. Myrtle told Bernice she was also going to work with the Navy in Philadelphia. Myrtle's mother had a friend who knew of a woman in Philadelphia who had a boarding house for colored working women. Upon arrival, they went to the boarding house and got a room they shared.

The next day, they reported to their new jobs. The supervisor looked at them and said there were no jobs for them. All positions had been filled. Bernice did not know what to do, so she called Mrs. Stockdale and told her what happened. She asked Mrs. Stockdale to send her a train ticket to return home. She had spent what little money she had on the room and food. She promised she would get a job when she returned to Bakersfield and pay her back. Mrs. Stockdale was furious and told Bernice she would call her back. Mrs. Stockdale called back later that day and told her to return to the federal building the next day. There was indeed a job waiting for her. If she has any further problems, call her back.

Bernice returned to the job the next day, and the supervisor, with an attitude, showed her to her desk.

She worked in Philadelphia for a few months, then was transferred to the Naval Department in the unfinished Pentagon in Washington, DC, in late 1941. She worked there for approximately six months and was moved in 1942 with three other women to the Naval Base in Oakland, California. World War II began in December 1941.

She retired from the Naval Supply Center in Oakland in 1975.



Author: Michelle Le Doux





## *BLACK PALM SPRINGS*

I recently joined two childhood friends, Helen and Pat, for a leisurely lunch at Houston's Restaurant in Manhattan Beach. We have not been together as a trio for many years, so we enjoyed reminiscing over growing up in the racially isolated "Blodgett Tract" during the 1940s. (*Louis Blodgett, a mulatto migrant from the state of Georgia, had construction contracting experience. He seized a unique opportunity as the contractor and owner of a black Savings & Loan to build a tract of new homes for "Blacks Only" in South Los Angeles.*) Blodgett Tract, located a little west of Central Avenue and just south of Imperial Highway, was surrounded by either wide-open Japanese gardens or clusters of modest, clapboard houses occupied by poor "Okies" who had escaped the "Dust Bowl." It was great fun reminiscing over lunch, bringing to mind our youth's names, places, and experiences. As noticed by other patrons around us, we were pretty exuberant and animated in our chatter and laughter.

One of the places we recalled from deep in our collective memories was the day outings to Val Verde Park. Wow! The mention of Val Verde took me back in time. Val Verde, or "Green Valley," was a large park in the hills of the distant, northwest corner of Los Angeles County. Today, the area is near Santa Clarita; it was close to nothing.

As an only child, I often joined Helen's family for the long automobile trip to this distant park, reserved for Negroes, as we were called in those years. The big attraction for Helen and me was the Olympic-sized swimming pool, the only other Olympic pool in the County other than the one at Exposition Park, where people of color were not allowed to swim at the time. Even at ten and eleven years of age, I thought it was a strange phenomenon to have an Olympic-sized pool out in nowhere, just for us colored folks. But the joy and liberty of enjoying God's nature and a swimming pool silenced my question.

Reflecting on that time suggests the feeling of total freedom within Val Verde more than justified the long drive. The black population of Los Angeles was tiny by today's standards, made up primarily of the first wave of Southern migrants eager and determined to pursue opportunities denied them under Jim Crow. However, their daily existence was filled with the constant struggle against the "soft" discrimination encountered above the Mason-Dixon Line, devoid of posted signs but just as effective. Val Verde symbolized for this generation of black people their total freedom to do what they wanted, the way they wanted to do it, and without fear of denial or judgment by white folks.

The energetic among the park visitors, like Helen's older brothers, could hike and explore the surrounding hills or ride horses along the bridle paths. The more sedentary adults enjoyed picnicking on fried chicken and peach cobbler or socializing under the remarkable shade trees. There was also jazz and blues

music, live in the park or on records in the jukebox, black beauty pageants, jitterbug dances in the social hall, ping-pong tournaments in the recreation center, and the pool. There was something for everyone.

Going to Val Verde was before “Freeways” in Los Angeles, when anyone going north from the City drove out San Fernando Road to connect to the two-lane Route 99, the major highway that ran the length of the state. Route 99 was eventually replaced by Interstate 5 in 1956. Before bucket seats and seat belts limited the number of car passengers, we would pile into the Freeman family car for the long trip. Helen, who had a tendency toward car-sickness, could always claim a window seat. We, kids, passed the time counting out-of-state license plates or identifying different models of cars. Helen remembered her great relief when we finally passed a waterfall that seemed to pour out of the mountainside. That was the signal we were getting close to the turn-off onto Old Telegraph Road. Soon, we would reach the narrow, winding country road leading into Val Verde Park with its surrounding homes and businesses. I want to say it was an unpaved road, but that may be just my lasting impression.

In my mind’s eye, I can still see that sad, winding road. We drove past unpainted houses, really shacks, surrounded by dirt, chickens, lazy dogs, and occasionally, small children in their underpants or bare bottoms. If we saw any grown people, they stared at the parade of passing cars with total disinterest. I suspect most of these rural residents probably could trace their ancestors back to when California belonged to Mexico.

For us day visitors to Val Verde, the fun began as soon as we arrived. We all helped unload the car full of clothing, blankets, food, and drinks to last the day. Someone once put a pan of baked beans on the bench instead of on the picnic table. Helen’s mom, a lady who always saw the sunny side of life, inadvertently sat in the pan of beans. Everyone else would have been angry, but Mrs. Freeman laughed at her misfortune. She probably wrapped a towel around her waist while she washed and dried her skirt. She was always a perfect example of keeping your focus on the good regardless of what happens.

We kids ran free and loose in the park after the picnic table was settled. We went to explore any rock or crevice we could find or reach. It was hard for us girls to keep up with the boys, considering our age and size limitations, but we always gave it a try. Climbing up hills and sliding down footpaths was hard on my knees, and my rear-ends were not covered by Levi’s, which is not yet appropriate attire for girls. Of course, the boys delighted in losing us in the dust or scaring the living wits out of us with captured lizards or furry tarantulas. That’s when Helen and I would retreat to the pool.

As we moved into our teenage years, there were other closer and more exciting activities to occupy our summers, and the trips to Val Verde faded away. For instance, a public pool was built on 109<sup>th</sup> Street in Watts that offered our community a full range of water activities. By age sixteen, a couple of us within Blodgett Tract had our cars, and we could reach isolated beaches to attack and conquer the Pacific waves. And also, there were summer jobs and summer school to keep us busy. I don’t think I gave another thought to a Val Verde-type experience until I married my husband, Specs Powell, some twenty years later in New York.

During our first summer together, while we were staying at his country place in Westbrookville, a small village at the foot of the Catskill Mountains, Specs suggested we go out for dinner and some music at a nearby African American summer retreat called Paradise Farms. In its heyday, Paradise Farms was a popular summer escape from the heat and humidity of New York City when most, if not all, recreational areas would not accept African Americans. Paradise Farms offered rental cabins, horses, a clubhouse, and a pool that families could enjoy by the week or day without fear of discrimination. I realized that was exactly the retreat that Val Verde had been for us in Los Angeles.

After the lunch at Houston's with Helen and Pat, I decided to check out Val Verde on the Internet...I was curious about its creation and ultimate disappearance. I found that the emerging black middle class in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century sought a place to buy property free from "Restrictive Covenants" and develop a black resort community. Most African Americans of that day believed the best way around discrimination was to build their own businesses and institutions. Black professionals like insurance man Norman O. Houston, movie director Sidney P. Dones, newspaper owners Joseph and Carlotta Bass, and actress-entertainer Hattie McDaniel, to name a few, organized a cooperative effort to develop a black recreational area. The sparsely populated old mining town in the Santa Clarita Valley was a perfect location, eventually earning the nickname "The Black Palm Springs." Some Angelinos vacationed in private homes or the hotel, while many more made day trips to the park like I described. A parcel of land was subsequently donated to the County of Los Angeles, and with a grant from Roosevelt's New Deal WPA, the Olympic pool was constructed during the late 1930s.

I suspect every major city had its form of a Val Verde Park. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 eliminated the need for separate recreational areas as discriminatory practices in public places were toppled. Today, Val Verde is just an integrated community with a County pool. However, for some of us in Los Angeles old enough to remember, trips to Val Verde will live on in our memories of a previous era in local African American history. For nearly thirty years, Val Verde stood as a symbol of freedom and racial pride for Black Angelinos and their success in overcoming the sting of discrimination, if only for a day in the park.

Author: Peggy Powell

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## *9 Tips for Getting Started on Writing Your Family History*

### **1. Know Your Purpose**

Before you begin, knowing what you hope to accomplish with this writing project is important. Do you want to summarize all your research, share your family legacy, pass down the stories Grandpa told, tell how your family fits into local history, share the story of an ancestor or family you admire, celebrate your ethnic heritage, or something else?

### **2. Make a Plan**

An outline gives you a framework for building your project, especially if it involves multiple people or an extended period. Make a list of elements you want to include. Don't worry about organizing the list yet.

### **3. Say It with Pictures**

Pictures and graphs will engage your readers, help them follow complicated lineages, and show what you're talking about.

### **4. Get Organized and Utilize Apps**

Now you're ready to write. As you work, review your records for families and people you're writing about.

### **5. Generate Ideas through Prompts and Research**

If you still have trouble knowing what to write, answer the family history writing prompts.

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## 6. Seek Out Help

Look for writers' groups and classes in your community. From online groups to friends and family members, having a community you can rely on for feedback and encouragement is essential.

## 7. Begin in the Middle

Don't let the "how to start" roadblock stall your project right out of the gate.

## 8. Write Naturally

If you're writing for relatives, pretend to tell a friend your family story. If you're writing for a publication, tailor your work to that publication's style.

## 9. Take Your Time

A deadline can motivate you, but give yourself plenty of time. Start now and work on your writing project a little at a time, once weekly or every evening, if you can manage it. Imagine where you'll be a year from now.

Editors of Family Tree Magazine

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## *Letter to the Editor...*

Please consider writing a review about any aspect of the content of this Newsletter and forward it to the Newsletter Editor. It will help to know if the effort to keep this publication going should be continued.

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## *CAAGS CELEBRATING*



### MEETING LOCATIONS OVER THE YEARS:

- 1986 – 1990 California African American Museum
- 1990 – 1992 Broadway Federal Bank
- 1992 – Returned to California African American Museum
- 1992 – 2001 Martin Luther King United Methodist Church
- 2001 - 2002 Washington Irving Library
- 2002 - 2008 Returned to Martin Luther King United Methodist Church
- 2008 - 2019 Mayme Clayton Library & Museum
- 2019 - 2023 LDS Church of Jesus Christ (10625 S. San Pedro)
- 2023 - Present Los Angeles Family Search Library

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<p><b>UPCOMING EVENTS.....</b></p> <p>March 9, 2024 -African American Genealogy Virtual Seminar – Register online: <a href="http://www.AAFHS.com">www.AAFHS.com</a></p> <p>March 16, 2024 – CAAGS Monthly Hybrid Meeting, Los Angeles Family Search Library</p> <p>March 23, 2024 – CAAGS DNA Special Interest Group Meeting, Los Family Search Library</p> <p>April 11, 2024 – CAAGS Writers Group Virtual Meeting, 5 pm</p> <p>April 20, 2024 - CAAGS Monthly Hybrid Meeting, Los Angeles Family Search Library</p>	<p><b>CAAGS FINANCIAL SUMMARY</b> Month Ending January 31, 2024</p> <table> <tr> <td><b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$ 8,093.46</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>INCOME</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>871.92</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>DISBURSEMENTS</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>2,013.86</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>ENDING BALANCE</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$6,951.52</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 8,093.46</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>871.92</b>	<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>2,013.86</b>	<b>ENDING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$6,951.52</b>
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LOS ANGELES, CA 90008-0442  
(323) 806-5634

General Membership Meetings

Third Saturday monthly (except July & August)

10:30 a.m.

Los Angeles Family Search Library

1591 East Temple Way

(Near 10741 Santa Monica Blvd.)

Los Angeles, CA 90024

**2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ELECTED OFFICERS	APPOINTED OFFICERS
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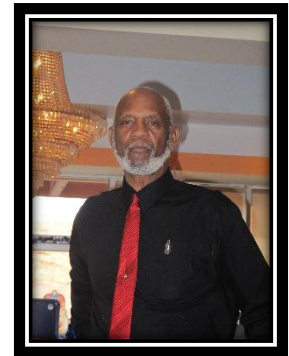
APRIL 2024

Volume 36 Issue 4

## President's Message

By Dr. Edna F. Briggs

In celebration of CAAGS 38<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at our March meeting, Past-President Ronald Higgins provided members with a “walk down memory lane” review of CAAGS history. His “Memory Book Photo Collection” was also an essential and unique reminder of our past. The in-person audience celebrated with “Cupcakes with Ron” as a pleasant reminder of his Charter Membership and more than ten years (1994-1998 and 2007-2013) of leadership as CAAGS President.



Ron asked that the following message be shared with all:

*“My thanks to all members of CAAGS through the years for your hard work and diligence in learning for self-enrichment and in helping the public find/discover their ancestors. Wishing all continued success in the years to come.”*

*As CAAGS' current NGS (National Genealogical Society) Delegate, I was assigned to a task force focused on a self-assessment quality/excellent development program based on the standards and guidelines of genealogical organizations. As I currently see it, the challenge will be to design and implement a system that can be successfully applied to very small non-profit societies, along with large entities (libraries, universities, institutes, etc). More to come....*

*Please remember to forward comments about this Newsletter issue and support this interim effort by submitting articles for inclusion in upcoming editions.*

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## FEATURED:

*Remembering Richard Procello - “Remembering April 4, 1968 “ - “Generations” - Collateral Relatives – Hiring a Professional Genealogist - Upcoming Events - Financial Report*

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# IN MEMORIAM

## Remembering CAAGS Member Richard Procello



**Richard PROCELLO**

April 17, 1939 - February 21, 2024

Richard H. Procello was a native of Los Angeles. Born and raised as an African American, Richard was also a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. He attended Fremont High School, where he was later inducted into the Hall of Fame for his accomplishments in cross country and track, and he remained active in the Fremont Alumni Association.

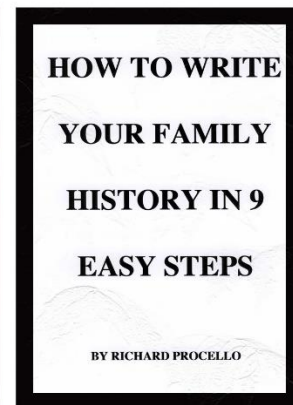
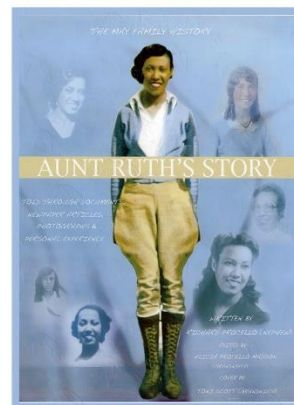
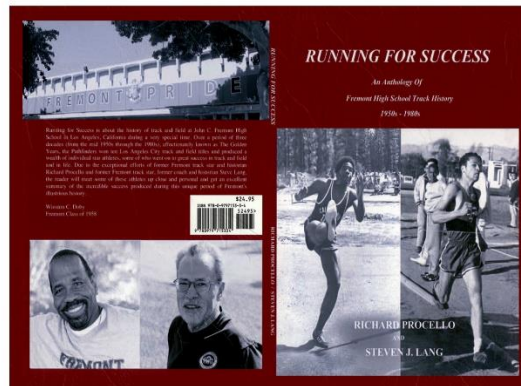
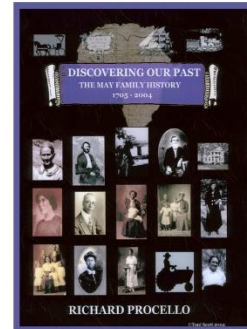
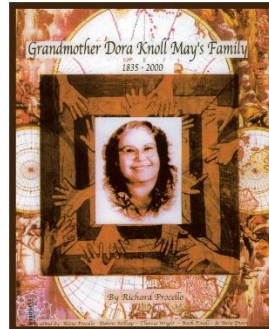
He also attended Los Angeles City College and California State University, Los Angeles, where he received his Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees. He received his Marriage, Family and Child Counselor license from the State of California while working as a vocational rehabilitation counselor for the Department of Rehabilitation in Watts. Richard was employed by the State of California for 34 years with the Employment Development Department (EDD), Job Service Branch, where he managed offices in West, Central and South Central Los Angeles.

Richard was an accomplished artist, from painting to drawing to photography. He first exhibited his art and photography at the Watts Festival in 1966, and other exhibits include the Fox Hills Mall Salute to Black History Month and the Haramokngna American Indian Cultural Center. He also published three books about his family's history: the first traces his Native American and Black family history; the second traces his family's slave heritage; and the third tells the story of his aunt and grandfather, who were entrepreneurs and business owners in South Central Los Angeles. He also published "Running for Success, An Anthology of Fremont High School Track History, 1950s - 1980's" (2011), in partnership with fellow alumnus Steve Lang, to honor student-athletes (including those who participated in the Olympics) and coaches who helped create champions and taught valuable life lessons.

Richard transitioned on February 21, 2024, after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease. The family has set up a needs-based scholarship in his honor to support deserving students at Fremont High School. His spirit will continue to live on through the memories we share of him, the lessons he imparted, and the love he gave us so freely.

He is survived by his children, Alicia Procello and Chris Procello; their mother, Barbara Hunt; and three grandchildren, Martise and Mason Procello Maddox and Quinn Procello. He also loved and was loved by his long-term partner, Joyce Smith.

### Publications



Source: Los Angeles Times Obituaries, April 7, 2024, B10

## ARTICLES

### **COLLATERAL RELATIVES – WHO THEY ARE, WHY THEY MATTER**

Collateral research is a genealogy technique that encourages studying relatives besides your direct-line ancestors.

What Is a Collateral Relative? A collateral relative is a family member who is not your direct ancestor or descendant. Some examples include:

- Siblings
- Aunts and uncles
- Nieces and nephews
- Cousins of various kinds
- Siblings of your grandparents (great-uncles and -aunts) and other ancestors
- Your ancestors' in-laws, step-siblings, step-children, other spouses, and any adopted family members might also be considered collateral relatives.

You may have also heard of ancestral “clusters.” Cluster research examines an even wider group of people, including those who might not be related to you at all: your ancestor’s neighbors, coworkers, friends, associates, and others in their community. “Collateral relatives” and “clusters” are widely used as genealogical terms. However, Elizabeth Shown Mills and her “FAN (friends, associates, and neighbors) principle” popularized a similar methodology, highlighting the importance of researching your ancestor’s wider social networks.

Why Should I Research Collateral Relatives? You may not have inherited DNA from them, but collateral relatives can still prove immensely helpful in researching your ancestors. Indeed, their records can be substituted when your ancestors' documents are missing or incomplete.

Collateral research is beneficial when:

- Determining a woman’s maiden name (and researching women in general);
- Researching common surnames; distinguishing between two similarly-named people;
- Tracing aging or dependent ancestors (e.g., elderly parents may have lived with adult children besides your ancestor); learning the name of a family’s specific ancestral hometown ;
- Researching ancestors who were enslaved; finding relatives to collect (or share) stories, heirlooms, or photos; identifying family members to take DNA tests;
- Participating in heir research or surname studies;
- Studying family health history or naming patterns.

Source: Family Tree Magazine, February 2024

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## REMEMBERING APRIL 4, 1968



**Specs and Peggy Powell (1968)**

Like those of us old enough to remember the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the recognition of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination date always brings to my mind where I was at that historical moment. My husband, Specs, and I left New York City on vacation at the end of March 1968. This would be my first trip to the Caribbean, specifically to Montego Bay, on the island of Jamaica.

Specs had been to Jamaica in 1962 when the complete cast of the Ed Sullivan Show set up base on the island before entertaining the troops at Guantanamo, following the Cuban Missile Crisis. As a West Coast girl, I thought the Caribbean was an unknown mystical paradise. I had savored colorful pictures of quiet beaches and happy people dancing under swaying palm trees. That vision of paradise immediately dimmed as I stepped from the plane into a blast of hot, humid air. Before I could adjust to the overwhelming humidity, the world's largest mosquitos attacked me with a vengeance. Welcome to the tropics with no mosquito abatement program! Specs was spared the bug attack. I was told the difference had something to do with my blood type. Specs accused me of having too much white blood. Covering myself with foul-smelling, anti-bug ointment was my only recourse.

We were booked into a beautiful, self-contained, beachfront resort in Montego Bay. As soon as we settled into our room, we strolled out on the beach. I couldn't believe the white sand and the almost still, perfectly clear water extending out yards from the beach to a protective reef. It became immediately apparent that all the hotel guests were white except us. Only the service staff was Black. We suddenly had the feeling of being "the fly in the buttermilk." Remember, this was 1968. The presence of Black tourists was an anomaly at resorts and the Jamaican staff was puzzled as to how to treat us. We looked like them, but we couldn't be touched. Soon, we learned the staff was not to fraternize with guests for fear of losing their jobs. This was not the type of vacation Specs had envisioned; being of West Indian heritage, he was anxious to mix with the islanders to get the true flavor of Jamaica. So off he went down to the beach to meet the Jamaican glass-bottom boat handlers in hopes of finding someone willing to show us the "real Jamaica."

Apparently, word of our presence at the resort spread along the beach like lightning. Suddenly, the young men who were casually bargaining with Specs stepped back to make way for an older man, forcefully marching toward us. Solidly built, he was as wide as he was tall. He introduced himself by one name: Kanoot. He announced that he "owned this beach," and whatever we needed, he, and he alone, would provide.

For the remaining days of our stay, Kanoot escorted us around the island from the back seat of our rental car, which he was not allowed to drive. Specs, a true New Yorker, had only learned to drive an automatic shift, so I became the designated driver of the stick-shift vehicle. Of course, the steering wheel was on the right side of the car, which in turn was on the left side of the road. Thank goodness there was a sticker on the windshield

warning the driver to “stay left when you turn left.” However, nothing helped me navigate around walking people or bands of animals equally sharing the roadway.

We went everywhere within a reasonable driving distance of Montego Bay, from the black cliffs of Negril Beach in the north, to Dunn’s River Falls in Ocho Rios to the south. Under Kanoot’s direction, we ate real “cow-foot soup” at a local restaurant, (sharing one torn napkin between us), and we drank 200-proof white rum, poured from coke bottles, at a local, outdoor bar. We indeed enjoyed the true taste of Jamaica. The only destination suggested by Kanoot that Specs rejected was a trip into the central mountains under the control of islanders known as the Maroons. The map of the island labeled the region, “Me No Send, You No Come,” and Specs took that warning literally. Back in the colonial days, African slaves had escaped into these mountains, and the English elected not to risk the fight to go after them, allowing them to create their own enclave. Specs suspected Kanoot was a Maroon but was afraid we could disappear up there, never to be seen again.

Then the sun “went black,” and everything abruptly changed. It was April 4, 1968, and Martin Luther King, Jr. had been shot and killed in Memphis. Martin was known to escape to Montego Bay to write and relax during the years of his activism and the Jamaicans there considered him as one of their own. News of his murder exploded in anti-American rage at the “killing of their King.” Kanoot risked coming to our hotel room to warn us not to leave the resort grounds for any reason until time to depart the island; he rushed away into town to find his teenage son, fearing for his safety. The next day we learned there was a U.S. Naval ship in port and roving gangs of angry Jamaicans chased the sailors on shore-leave back to their ship.

Specs and I left Jamaica the following day, a sad and tragic end to our Caribbean adventure. On the plane, we heard rumors of rioting across many American cities, causing us to fear for our family’s welfare in New York City. Thank goodness, the City stayed reasonably calm, mainly due to Mayor John Lindsey’s courageous visit to Harlem leaders to plead directly for peace. James Brown, the singer, was credited for keeping the lid on things in Boston by electing to televise his scheduled concert there at great personal cost to appeal to Bostonians to remain home and calm.

But things would never be quite the same in America. A strategic civil rights era had suddenly and abruptly ended. Martin’s persistent attack on tangible human inequities, admirably masked behind stoic resistance, had revealed America’s racial injustices not only to itself but to the whole world. As a result, unjust Jim Crow laws had fallen, and racist attitudes and traditions were being changed or challenged in both the North and the South. Many doors of opportunity had been thrown opened, or at least cracked, allowing the “first Black person” to enter. Without Martin’s personal leadership, his non-violent strategy was essentially extinguished and replaced by angry, impatient voices that evoked resistance more than change. Yes, I’ll always remember that fateful day, April 4, 1968.

**Submitted by: Peggy Powell**  
**Source: Snapshots, Vol IV, 2015**

# GENERATIONS

## *A study with implications for discussion*

Organizations across the spectrum of our society - social, political, religious, and other voluntary associations - are seeking ways to engage with a broader audience. As they face this dilemma, they are asking the common question: "How do we attract younger people to our organization?" While this is a challenge for any membership organization, it becomes crucial as organizations build longevity. The question surfaced yet again at our most recent meeting (March 16, 2024), which celebrated our 38th anniversary.



Similar to CAAGS, these organizations recognize that past recruiting methods have proven ineffective. The puzzle of growing membership overall, let alone refreshing with younger candidates, invites consideration

of the context in which such efforts are undertaken. Examination of contemporary social and cultural realities may enable more successful outreach efforts.

Today's fast-paced, technology-laden environment has eased large portions of the population into cocooning in their homes. With an increasingly polarized climate, confining social connections to a limited circle of like-minded individuals has also become a comfortable default.

Jean Twenge, a professor of psychology at San Diego State University, is one researcher in investigative psychology concerned with structures and social interaction in modern society. Her research focuses on issues of generational change and transitions in attitudes and behavior. The six commonly accepted terms applicable to these demographic categories grouped by birth year are The Silents (born 1925-1945); Boomers (1946-1964); Gen X (1965-1979); Millennials (1980-1994); Gen Z (1995-2012); and a yet-unnamed category born after 2012. These are familiar terms to the lay public as well.

In most previous social science research on generational differences, the conventional view was that what defined the character of any given demographic group was the experience of a common major event. The Great Depression and World War II, or other historical events are examples for the Silent Generation. Each demographic category would have its own example.

Twenge's perspective on generational change diverges from many of her fellow generational change researchers. Her analysis of the most impactful factor in how individuals live is technology. She believes that the same big events, while important, do not shape routine daily life and behavior as profoundly.

Twenge has devoted much of her research to interpreting survey data related to Gen Z. They constitute the group reaching their high school years beginning in 2009 roughly. These are the years when Twenge noticed a marked change in habits or behaviors from earlier teen populations. While most behavioral shifts across generations have been gradual, in this demographic, there were abrupt and often dramatic shifts in expected cultural patterns.

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Professor Twenge has devoted her career to investigating the differences between the generations living in contemporary society. Her special focus has become a generational change in experiences, perspectives, and behaviors in what are referred to as digital natives. This cohort was the first to be born into a digital reality.

Jean Twenge's latest book, "Generations: The Real Differences Between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents—and What They Mean for America's Future," a culmination of her 30-year career, offers insights into effectively closing the communication gap. Understanding guides not only the content and style but also the manner of delivery.

**Submitted by: Marilyn Poston & Muriel Jones (Photo)**  
**March 2024**

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### *Letter to the Editor...*

Please consider writing a review of any aspect of this newsletter's content and forwarding it to the newsletter editor. It will help to determine whether the effort to keep this publication going should be continued.

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## **CAAGS NEWSLETTER EDITOR NEEDED**

**Please consider volunteering**

**Duties include:**

**Appointed by the President;**

**Solicit and Collect Relevant Articles/Updates;**

**Publishing 10 Newsletter Annually;**

**Publish Combined Newsletter – June/July and August/September;**

**Distribute Newsletters Via Email;**

**Mail Newsletter to Members Who Subscribe;**

**Appointment Subject to Approval of Full Membership;**

**Serve as a Voting Member of the Board – Attend Virtual Monthly Board Meetings.**



**Los Angeles Public Library June Jubilee**

**See Steve Allen, CAAGS Volunteer Coordinator**

Visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org) and follow us on Facebook, California African American Genealogical Society.

<p><b>UPCOMING EVENTS.....</b></p> <p>April 11, 2024 – CAAGS Writers Group Virtual Meeting, 5 pm</p> <p>April 20, 2024 - CAAGS Monthly Hybrid Meeting, Los Angeles Family Search Library, 10:30 am</p> <p>April 27, 2024 – Black Writers On Tour +Business &amp; Tech Expo, Carson Center, 801 E. Carson St., Carson, CA, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm, Seminars, Exhibits</p> <p>June 8, 2024 – Los Angeles Public Library June Jubilee, Carson Center, 630 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, CA 90071, 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM</p>	<p><b>CAAGS FINANCIAL SUMMARY</b> Month Ending March 29, 2024</p> <table> <tr> <td><b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$ 7,237.56</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>INCOME</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>385.00</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>DISBURSEMENTS</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>341.00</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>ENDING BALANCE</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$ 7281.56</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 7,237.56</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>385.00</b>	<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>341.00</b>	<b>ENDING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 7281.56</b>
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**CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

P.O. BOX 8442  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90008-0442  
(323) 806-5634

General Membership Meetings

Third Saturday monthly (except July & August)  
10:30 a.m.

Los Angeles Family Search Library  
1591 East Temple Way  
(Near 10741 Santa Monica Blvd.)  
Los Angeles, CA 90024

**2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ELECTED OFFICERS	APPOINTED OFFICERS
<p>Dr. Edna F. Briggs – President Muriel Jones – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Education Valerie Warrick-Durette- 2<sup>nd</sup> VP /Membership Christina Ashe – Recording Secretary Jean Wright-Calhoun – Treasurer Marie Bryant - Corresponding Secretary VACANT – Parliamentarian Gloria Wallace – Immediate Past President</p>	<p>Carolyn Conway – Librarian Steve Allen - Volunteer Coordinator Dr. Edna F. Briggs – Historian/NGS Delegate Web Site Admin – Vanessa McBride VACANT – Newsletter Editor VACANT – Public Relations/Fund Raising</p>

Efb: Interim Editor, 4/17/2024

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# Heritage Newsletter

California African American Genealogical Society

“Inspiring Family  
History Research



One Person  
At A Time.”

MAY 2024

Volume 36 Issue 5

## President's Message

By Dr. Edna F. Briggs

“WELCOME”

*Meshia Russell, Newsletter Editor*

It is with great pleasure that I WELCOME Meshia Russell to our Team as the Society's Newsletter Editor. The May issue has been delayed this month, but we can now look forward to getting back on track. It is newsworthy to point out that spring is giving way to summer by ushering in return to CAAGS' participation in Outreach activities. The first invitation in more than three years came from the Los Angeles Public Library downtown to participate in their Jubilee scheduled for June 8<sup>th</sup>. Additional invitations have also been received requesting our presence at two additional June events and one in August (see Upcoming Events below). It is safe to say, pandemic recovery is well underway!

As May provided another chance to celebrate Mother's Day (grandmothers, great-grandmothers) and Memorial Day (those who gave it all for our peace and freedom), we can look forward to graduations, Father's Day, and Juneteenth celebrations in June. Consider pausing to write about your past celebrations or your plans for the upcoming summer hiatus. Above all, please and support welcome our new Newsletter Editor, Meshia Russell.



Please forward comments about this newsletter issue and support our new editor by welcoming her and submitting articles for inclusion in upcoming editions.



## FEATURED:

*The Generations Defined – A Good Read – Family Reunion Origin and The Next Generation  
YouTube Channel – Quick Facts – Volunteers Need – Upcoming Events – Financial Report*

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## ARTICLES

### THE GENERATIONS DEFINED

In ancient times, people used the term generation to describe everyone alive. Over time, that has changed to more of a biological definition, which is the period from when one is born to when they have children. Because the median age of giving birth is 30 years, that period became too long to define a generation.

Today, the sociological definition of a generation-spanning 15 years is widely recognized. This allows for an organized way of defining each generation rather than waiting for an event or unexpected situation to end a generation or start a new one. It defines exactly when a generation starts and ends. It enables planning for the future and more accurately comparing across generations.

#### **MISSIONARY GENERATION**

Born: 1860 – 1882

#### **GENERATION of 1914**

Born: 1883-1900

#### **GREAT GENERATION**

Born: 1901 – 1926

#### **SILENT GENERATION**

Born: 1927 – 1945

#### **FIRST WAVE OF BABY BOOMERS**

Born: 1946 – 1954

#### **SECOND WAVE OF BABY BOOMERS**

Born: 1955 - 1964

#### **GENERATION X**

Born: 1965 - 1981

#### **MILLENNIALS or GENERATION Y**

Born: 1982 - 1994

#### **GENERATION Z**

Born: 1995 – 2012

#### **GEN ALPHA**

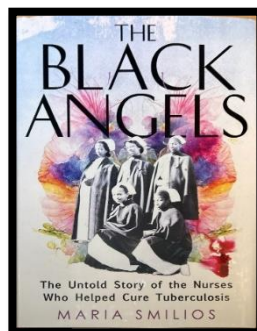
Born: 2013 – 2025

*Submitted by: Dr. Edna F. Briggs 5/29/2024*

### A GOOD READ

Another “Hidden Figure” account of heroic work of a compassionate cadre of nurses whose work resulted in leading to treatment and cure of tuberculosis during the 1930’s in New York. These courageous women desegregated hospitals and tamed an airborne killer, provided professional devotion to the indigent, incurable patients whose care became their cause, all while being unwelcome in most American hospitals because of their race.

*Available from Amazon.com*



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## **FAMILY REUNION ORIGIN AND THE NEXT GENERATION**

As summer approaches, the days are sunnier, the weather begins to spike, and the smell of barbeque permeates neighborhoods across the country. Family reunions and family gatherings are a staple in the black community. Growing up, attending a family reunion every few years or a Sunday dinner with relatives, was common for most.

The origin of the black family reunion is rooted in Emancipation. The Thirteenth Amendment gave the enslaved their freedom. With this newfound freedom, most searched for years to be reunited with their families. However, this was not the case for some. Family reunions were revitalized in 1976, with the publication and later television series of Alex Haley's book "Roots: The Sage of an American Family." This story of Kunta Kinte, which was sold into slavery and separated from his family, activated people to research and document their family genealogy.

After discovering and documenting our family history, how do we preserve it? For the continuity of tradition, family elders need to reach out to younger generations to get them involved as soon as possible. The next generations to learn the process of hosting family reunions would be Millennials and Generation X with the help of older Generation X and Baby Boomers, followed by Generation Z as onlookers. Starting early will create long-lasting memories, building family history interest over time. This is key to assuring the history is not only passed down to the next generation, but that it will be passed down to several generations to come. The following are tips to assist in grabbing the attention of younger generations:

- Create interactive games that incorporates family history and current trends or technology.
- Plan fun activities outside or all ages to get everyone participating and interacting with each other.
- Have different themes for family photo shoots, which can be viewed at future reunions.
- Tell interesting stories about deceased family members and compare it to current day.
- Provide a variety of foods and snacks to kids and young adults' preference.
- Plan for future reunions, by asking what they would like to see or do at the next reunion.
- Ask for their commitment to help or attend one activity at the next reunion.
- Keep in contact. Keep the line of communication open to build rapport and excitement.



**1986 Ross Family Reunion, Okmulgee, Oklahoma**

*Submitted by: Meshia Russell 5/27/2024*

*Photo: Author's personal collection*

*Source: National Museum of African American History & Culture. (n.d.)*

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## YouTube Channel

The FORGOTTEN Legacy of Black Memorial Day  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiHB\\_suuEbQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiHB_suuEbQ)

Rare Audio of Enslaved People Connects History to the Present  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Cb\\_-jw\\_NEI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Cb_-jw_NEI)

Roots Recovered: Reclaiming Our Names  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8zNlavEjNk>

FamilySearch Hidden Records: Full Text Search: 2024  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-D6c1fVU3LQ>

New Timelines Features on Ancestry (2024)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plwTXLIn5wY>

How to Research Like a Pro in 30 Minutes a Day  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55JwlWJqB\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55JwlWJqB_M)

## Quick Facts

May 29, 1973 – Thomas Bradley was elected the first black mayor of Los Angeles. He was born in Calvert, Texas, being the son of sharecroppers and the grandson of slaves. At the age of 7, his family moved to Los Angeles seeking a better life. In the years to come, he would attend UCLA, become a police officer for 21 years, become an attorney and ultimately, the first black mayor of Los Angeles.

*Source: Bridging the Divide, Tom Bradley and the Politics of Rage. (n.d.)*

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### *Letter to the Editor...*

Please consider writing a review about any aspect of the content of this Newsletter and forward it to the Newsletter Editor. It will help to know if the effort to keep this publication going should be continued.

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**Please consider volunteering**



Los Angeles Public Library June Jubilee

See Steve Allen, CAAGS Volunteer Coordinator



### UPCOMING EVENTS.....

May 9, 2024 – CAAGS Writers Group-Virtual Meeting

May 16, 2024 – Board Meeting

May 18, 2024 – CAAGS Monthly Hybrid Meeting,  
Los Angeles Family Search Library, 10:30 am

May 16-18 – National Genealogical Society (NGS)  
Virtual Family History Conference (Sacramento, CA)  
[www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)

June 8, 2024 – Los Angeles Public Library June Jubilee,  
Carson Center, 630 W. Fifth St.,  
Los Angeles, CA 90071, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

### CAAGS FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Month Ending April 30, 2024

BEGINNING BALANCE	\$ 7,281.56
INCOME	216.53
DISBURSEMENTS	360.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$ 7,138.09

## CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

P.O. BOX 8442

LOS ANGELES, CA 90008-0442

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# Heritage Newsletter

California African American Genealogical Society

“Inspiring Family  
History Research



One Person  
At A Time.”

August-September 2024

Volume 36 Issue 8

## President's Message

By Dr. Edna F. Briggs

I am genuinely grateful that I have not heard about the demise of any of our members or associates during the summer hiatus and that I can say, “Welcome back to all!”

Even though I did not leave Los Angeles, I spent significant time as an honorary “Couch Coach” for the 2024 Olympics and Paralympics in Paris, France. I ventured to Hawthorne, CA, to attend Congresswoman Maxine Water’s Town Hall Forum focused on her district’s United States Postal Service issues and Northridge, CA, to attend the L.A. City Attorney Reparation Commission meeting in mid-to-late August.

In between, I managed to continue purging and better organizing my home office space, enabling me to settle down into serious family history writing and publishing as soon as my term as CAAGS President ends after December 2024.

Give a shout-out to Steve Allen and all who volunteered to represent CAAGS at six events between June 10 and August 24, 2024. More than 63 contacts were made at our event booth. These event visitors will be invited to attend our NEW RE-DESIGNED VIRTUAL BEGINNERS CLASS (September 5).

As a Delegate/Administrator representing CAAGS at the National Genealogical Society (NGS), I attended several meetings during the summer. Last fall, I was recommended and began serving as a Task Force for Organizational Excellence member. This group is focused on developing new performance standards for NGS member organizations. In early to late August, I was invited, accepted the invitation, and was approved to serve as a member of the Delegates Steering Committee for Oct 2024- Sep 2025. Other initiatives being focused on include establishing standards for how NGS and its member organizations will address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and special interest groups (SIG) going forward. More to come about these initiatives later...

This leads us to ask what’s on the horizon for CAAGS for the remainder of the year...On August 26, 2024, a special Board meeting was held to discuss the upcoming 2024 CAAGS election of officers, succession planning for CAAGS’s new 2025 leadership team, and long-term succession planning for CAAGS. These issues and establishing a CAAGS Reparation Task Force will be discussed during the Business Meeting at the upcoming September 21, 2024, membership meeting...I hope to see you all there, either virtually or in person!!

--Dr. Edna Briggs

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### FEATURED:

*New Members – Member Birthdays – Genetic Genealogy – Golden Rules of Genealogy –  
YouTube Channel – Quick Facts - Volunteers Needed – Upcoming Events – Financial Report*

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Visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org) and follow us on Facebook, California African American Genealogical Society.

# CAAGS OUTREACH EVENT

Southeast LAPD Station  
145 W. 108<sup>th</sup> St  
Los Angeles, CA 90061  
August 6, 2024

## National Night Out



## CELEBRATING



Visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org) and follow us on Facebook, California African American Genealogical Society.

 **NEW MEMBERS WELCOME**

**Brown, Jonnie**

**King, Verna**

**Langley, Sharon**

**Language, Patricia**

**McKinney, Leroy**



 **JUNE-SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

**3 June - Annette James-Rogers**  
**6 June - Christina Ashe**  
**6 June - Leroy McKinney**  
**10 June - C. McIntyre-Michel**  
**23 June - Jeanie Price**  
**24 June - Monika Hall**  
**25 June - Carolyn Norman**  
**26 June - Lanetta Lyons**  
**29 June - Raymond Marshall**  
**2 July - Asbury Ellis**  
**3 July - Steven Allen**  
**4 July - Lynette Allen**  
**22 July - Jamesetta Glosson-Hammons**

**6 August - Sherrilyne Headley**  
**12 August - Lonnie Bunkley**  
**13 August - Gwendolyn Hills**  
**14 August - Sandy Mayfield**  
**18 August - Cagle Moore**  
**25 August - Kelley Lewis**  
**30 August - Barbara Thomas**  
**3 September - Ron Batiste**  
**4 September - Frankye Charles**  
**4 September - Ophelia Sanders**  
**12 September - Sharon Langley**  
**16 September - Carolyn Connor**  
**22 September - Norma Bates**  
**24 September - James Murray**  
**28 September - Colette DeVerge'**  
**29 September - Dolores Cruse-Kemp**  
**29 September - Marjorie Sholes**



## ARTICLES

### GENETIC GENEALOGY

Genetic genealogy combines DNA testing with traditional family history research to help people discover ancestral origins and living relatives. Autosomal DNA tests from consumer companies like 23andMe and AncestryDNA can identify shared genetic segments that indicate cousin relationships going back several generations. By finding and connecting genetic matches, individuals can extend their family trees beyond the limitations of historical records.

This technology is particularly valuable for descendants of ancestors who left little or no documentary trace due to social, political or economic marginalization. By engaging with distant cousins who share specific ancestral lineages, people can recover lost branches of their family trees and gain a more complete sense of the histories that may have impacted their lives.

For African Americans descended from enslaved ancestors, genealogical records alone are often insufficient to trace lineages prior to 1870 when the U.S. census began recording African Americans by name. Sometimes the names of ancestors may be listed as property within bills of sale and estate inventories. This makes it incredibly difficult to trace family lineages through documentation alone. Moreover, slavery systematically fractured African American family structures through the domestic slave trade and forced family separations, leading to huge gaps in knowledge about ancestral identities, homelands and kinship ties. So, descendants today often lack a cohesive family narrative extending back prior to slavery. Genetic genealogy offers a way to restore some of these lost connections.

Finding living African relatives who descend from the same pre-slavery ancestors in Africa provides meaningful validation of family roots and a transnational network of contemporary relatives. It opens the door for African Americans and Africans to connect and learn from each other's family histories and lived experiences. These connections can forge a new sense of identity rooted in specific ancestral lineages and homelands.

Given the long history of unethical medical experimentation and discriminatory policies targeting African Americans, there is an understandable distrust of biomedical research among some African Americans. People worry about the potential misuse of genetic information and the lack of transparency around the use of DNA samples. There are also concerns that genetic ancestry results can be misinterpreted in ways that reinforce biological views of race or impose essentialist notions of African identity onto complex diasporic cultures. That said, it's important to contextualize African Americans' actual engagement in genetic testing. According to national surveys, Black adults are pursuing genetic ancestry testing at the same rate as the general U.S. population, which challenges the misconception that African Americans are universally distrustful of or disinterested in genetic research. The reality is more nuanced.

Many African Americans are strategically using consumer testing to fill in genealogical gaps and restore ancestral knowledge that was lost through the disruptions of slavery. The comparable participation rates suggest it is an overgeneralization to say descendants are reluctant to engage in genetic studies. A more accurate assessment is that African Americans expect genetic research to be relevant and accountable to their communal interests and needs. By centering descendant perspectives, more researchers will find willing research partners within the African American population.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Submitted by Meshia Russell. Source Adapted from: news.Illinois.edu. Partners in time: Reconnecting African Americans with their tribes of origin

## **GOLDEN RULES OF GENEALOGY**

### **1. “SPELING DUSN’T COWNT”**

Many people could not spell, read, or write back in the day. Therefore, how a name sounded was more important than how it was spelled. The same holds today. Always check all variations of a name.

### **2. USE DISCRETION**

Always tell the truth in your reports and use discretion when reporting stories or other family information, especially when it involves living relatives.

### **3. ASSUME NOTHING**

Do not assume that any document is right or wrong. Verify facts and attempt to identify as many independent sources as possible to validate your information. For example, do not assume that records are always accurate or that ancestors assumed the same name of their enslavers.

### **4. ALWAYS DOCUMENT SOURCES, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY CONTRADICT ONE ANOTHER**

Be consistent as you cite your sources. You want your descendants to be able to retrace your research.

### **5. MOST DATES ARE APPROXIMATE**

If you do not have the exact dates or various documents have different dates, it’s okay to state that someone was born “abt 1900” or died in “July 1966”.

### **6. IF UNSURE, SAY SO**

Don’t fudge the facts. Simply state you cannot prove it. Future researchers will thank you for being honest.

### **7. YOU CANNOT DO IT ALL ONLINE**

The use of technology has opened new opportunities. However, nothing can replace research in libraries, courthouses, or archives. Do as much as possible online and consider visiting official halls or keepers of history.

### **8. JUST BECAUSE IT’S ONLINE DOES NOT MEAN IT’S TRUE**

Be very careful. Do not assume that everything you find online is true. When possible, consult the original source and verify information against other sources.

### **9. DNA IS NOT A TRUMP CARD**

DNA is just one of many sources of information to verify or deny a relationship. DNA results should always be used with other information, using a pedigree chart as a guide.

### **10. ANYTHING YOU POST ONLINE WILL BE “BORROWED”**

Accept that any family information you post online may be borrowed or stolen. You may never receive credit; this is the nature of the beast.

### **11. PASS ALONG YOUR RESEARCH**

No matter how many decades you spend researching your family, research will never be done. Plan early to pass along your research to the next generation. Leave excellent notes, cite all sources, explain your shorthand, and leave your research the way you wish you had found it.

### **12. MOST IMPORTANTLY, DON’T DIE WITH YOUR STORIES STILL IN YOU**

Always regard genealogy to be more than research. Tell stories completely and accurately, to ensure your ancestor’s legacies live on for generations. Consider it a duty to share your stories before you die.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Submitted by Dr. Edna F. Briggs. Source: Adapted from GotGenealogy.com, August 2024

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## YouTube Channel

### African American Societies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoxH1-Ba9iA>

### Best Tools on FamilySearch in 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnyBUHq9MRk>

### Rare Footage of the 1965 Watts Riots

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkN3Gzob\\_Vk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkN3Gzob_Vk)

### Introducing the 10 Million Names Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIZoz1rQkkM>

### Top 10 Awkward Moments on Finding Your Roots

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8uleAewBA4>

### Who is My Ancestor? Tracing Individuals with Similar Names

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rk05Yj0o1-g>

## Legacy Family Tree

### Upcoming Webinars

<https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars/>

### Webinar Library

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar-library/>

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## Quick Facts

August 11, 1965 – The Watts Rebellion, also known as the Watts Riots, was a large series of riots that broke out August 11, 1965, in the predominantly Black neighborhood of Watts in Los Angeles. The Watts Rebellion lasted for six days, resulting in 34 deaths, 1,032 injuries and 4,000 arrests, involving 34,000 people and ending in the destruction of 1,000 buildings, totaling \$40 million in damages.<sup>1</sup>



September 4, 1781 – A group of settlers consisting of 14 families, which totaled 44 people of Native American, African and European heritage journeyed over one-thousand miles across the desert from present-day northern Mexico. These families established a farming community in the area and named it "El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles de Porciúncula" which in English translated to "The Town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels of Porciúncula". Over time this community would grow under the flags of Spain, Mexico and eventually the United States to become one of the largest metropolitan cities in the world, the City of Los Angeles.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> History.com Editors. Watts Bellion. (2020) <https://www.history.com/topics/1960s/watts-riots>

<sup>2</sup> No Name. The History of Los Angeles. (2024) <https://lacity.gov/government/history-los-angeles>





### UPCOMING EVENTS.....

August 6, 2024 – SE LAPD National Night Out  
SE Station, 145 West 108<sup>th</sup> St, Los Angeles, CA 90061

August 10, 2024 – Watts Summer Festival, 9:00 am

August 26, 2024 – Board Meeting-Virtual, 7:00 pm

September 5, 2024 – New Virtual Beginners Class-  
Virtual, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

September 12, 2024 – CAAGS Writers Group-  
Virtual, 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

September 19, 2024 – Board Meeting-Virtual, 7:00 pm

September 21, 2024 – CAAGS General Meeting-Hybrid

October 6-10, 2024 – 53<sup>rd</sup> Jamboree Conference

October 10, 2024 – CAAGS Writers Group-  
Virtual, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

October 10-12, 2024 – African American  
Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS)

October 12, 2024 – SCGS Jamboree and DNA Conference

October 16, 2024 – National Archives and Records  
Administration (NARA) – Riverside Visit

October 19, 2024 – Board Meeting-Virtual, 7:00 pm

October 26, 2024 – DNA Special Interest Group-  
In-Person, Los Angeles Family Search Library,  
Computer Room, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

*\*Schedule subject to change. Questions? Call (323) 806-5634*

### CAAGS FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Month Ending August 30, 2024

<b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 7,123.10</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>35.00</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>(178.27)</b>
<b>PETTY CASH</b>	<b>127.16</b>
<b>ENDING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 7,106.99</b>

*\*Submitted by Jean Wright-Calhoun, CAAGS Treasurer, 9/2/2024*

**3 REPARATIONS BILLS**  
**2 BILLS BLOCKED FROM FLOOR VOTE 8/30/2024**



SB 1403 - Creates New State Agency



SB 1331 - Creates State Fund



SB 1050 - Restitution For Taken Land

## CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

P.O. BOX 8442

LOS ANGELES, CA 90008-0442

(323) 806-5634

### General Membership Meetings

Third Saturday monthly (except July & August)

10:30 a.m.

Los Angeles Family Search Library

1591 East Temple Way

(Near 10741 Santa Monica Blvd.)

Los Angeles, CA 90024

Visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org) and follow us on Facebook, California African American Genealogical Society.

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## Letter to the Editor...

Please consider writing a review about any aspect of the content of this Newsletter and forward it to the Newsletter Editor [CAAGSNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:CAAGSNewsletter@gmail.com) It will help to know if the effort to keep this publication going should be continued.

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Please consider volunteering



VACANT – Public Relations  
VACANT – Fund Raising  
VACANT – Parliamentarian

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## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ELECTED OFFICERS	APPOINTED OFFICERS
<p>Dr. Edna F. Briggs – President Muriel Jones – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Education Valerie Warrick-Durette- 2<sup>nd</sup> VP /Membership Christina Ashe – Recording Secretary Jean Wright-Calhoun – Treasurer Marie Bryant – Corresponding Secretary VACANT – Parliamentarian Gloria Wallace – Immediate Past President</p>	<p>Carolyn Conway – Librarian Steve Allen – Volunteer Coordinator Dr. Edna F. Briggs – Historian/NGS Delegate Web Site Admin – Vanessa McBride Meshia Russell – Newsletter Editor VACANT – Public Relations VACANT – Fund Raising</p>

# Heritage Newsletter

California African American Genealogical Society

“Inspiring Family  
History Research



One Person  
At A Time.”

December 2024

Volume 36 Issue 12

## President's Message

By Dr. Edna F. Briggs

First, it is with much gratitude that I have had an opportunity to add a one-half term to two full terms served previously as CAAGS President. In looking ahead, I hope to be of service and will provide support in any other capacity you would like to have me.

Johnette Brooks, our November meeting guest speaker, reminded me of several things. Among them, her topic, “Researching Your WWI African American War Ancestors,” strongly reinforced that our history is not limited to plantation life but is embedded everywhere humanly possible. Documented evidence may be complex to access at the outset of your research journey, but we can find the missing links that help us create and complete our stories by persevering over time.

On December 1, 2024, “60 Minutes,” the oldest televised and most-watched newsmagazine, featured a story about the 1955 abduction and murder of Emmitt Till in Mississippi. The program emphasized that this occurred nearly 70 years ago. Yet despite the presence of historical markers placed in various locations associated with this horrific event (The Emmitt Till Interpretive Center, Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market, the barn where the young boy was tortured to death), many African Americans who were interviewed for this segment were not aware of this history. Today, stories told by older residents in that area (Glendora and Money, MS) have not been collected or have been suppressed. This is extremely unfortunate because it will appear like this horrific event never happened as more time passes.

For these and other reasons, one of my personal, immediate goals includes compiling my short stories (the good and the bad) into published works and distributing them in some format before my clock winds down and stops. I urge you to join me.

As we approach the **CHRISTMAS SEASON**, the end of 2024, and turn the page into 2025, I wish all members, friends, and families a happy and prosperous **NEW YEAR...**



# DECEMBER REMINDERS

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## HOLIDAYS

December 2 – International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

December 5 – International Volunteer Day

December 7 – CAAGS Holiday Celebration

December 23 – National Roots Day

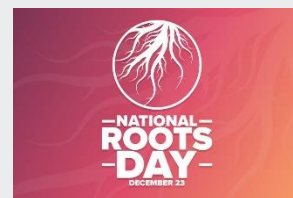
December 24 – Christmas Eve

December 25 – Christmas Day

December 26 – Kwanzaa

December 31 – New Years Eve

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## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

6 December – Velma Anderson

17 December – Ron Fairly

23 December – Jessie McClennan

26 December – Glenda McKay

26 December – Valerie Warrick-Durette

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## NEW MEMBERS

None

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

The CAAGS Election of 2025 Officers took place at the general meeting on November 16, 2024. In accordance with the Bylaws, Articles III and IV, the Nominating Committee developed a slate of officers. Each voting CAAGS Member in attendance at the Election Meeting was presented with a slate listing the nominees and space for write-in candidates before the vote.

To qualify as a Voting Member, one must have been a paid member of CAAGS for at least thirty (30) days prior to the election date. All members in attendance voted for the following. Congratulations to our new Officers!

**President – Muriel Jones**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Education – Dr. Edna F. Briggs**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President/Membership – Valerie Warrick-Durette**

**Corresponding Secretary – Marie Bryant**

**Parliamentarian – Open**



## UPCOMING

Our very own CAAGS Founder Lonnie G. Bunch, III was announced to be featured on Season 11 for *Finding Your Roots*, hosted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. The episode “Moving On Up”, is set to air on April 1, 2025. Be sure to tune in for this very special episode!

**WATCH TRAILER:** <https://www.pbs.org/articles/finding-your-roots-season-11>

## REPARATIONS NEWS



**California** - On November 13, The City of Palm Springs announced that former residents of Section 14 have accepted the City’s final \$5.9 million settlement offer. This offer includes housing and economic development initiatives that will assist in the City’s commitment to equitable growth in marginalized communities. The Palm Springs City Council approved a settlement package in April, targeted at addressing historical injustices for 1,200 Section 14 residents, as well as their descendants. The package contains \$5.9 million in cash, \$20 million in housing programs, \$1 million for small business support and cultural initiatives to honor Section 14’s legacy.<sup>1</sup>

**Missouri** – The St. Louis City Reparations Commission released its final reparation report in October. The volunteer eight-member commission held 27 public meetings from April 2023 through September 2024. The commission recommends payment to current or former Black residents that can trace their ancestry back to slavery. Additionally, payments of up to \$25,000 were recommended for former residents or their direct descendants of the Pruitt-Igoe Housing Project or Mil Creek Valley neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

**Submitted by Meshia Russell**

<sup>1</sup> City of Palm Springs. News. (2024) <https://www.palmspringsca.gov/Home/Components/News/News/8135/23>

<sup>2</sup> First Alert 4. St. Louis Reparations Commission (2024) <https://www.firstalert4.com/2024/10/16/st-louis-reparations-commission-makes-final-recommendations/>



## ARTICLES

### CAAGS President Radio Appearance

KBLA 1580 AM is a progressive radio station serving the Southern California region and formerly known as KDAY. It is associated with Smiley Audio Media, which is owned by celebrity talk show host, Tavis Smiley. The station is home to various popular shows and airs “*First Things First With Dominique DiPrima*” weekday mornings 6am-9am. The radio talk show offers news and commentary from a uniquely different perspective. Newsmaker stories and current event discussions are featured and led by radio host, producer and activist, Dominique DiPrima, along with voices unique to Los Angeles.<sup>1</sup>

On November 22, CAAGS President Dr. Edna Briggs, joined “*First Things First*” for Freedmen Friday as a Los Angeles voice on air to discuss genealogy, lineage and finding our ancestral roots in America. Dr. Briggs discussed how she began her journey in the genealogy world while visiting her hometown for a high school reunion in Jefferson County, Arkansas. Her mother had a farmhouse that she rented out and the tenant came by to pay the rent. The tenant paid the rent, then said “tell your mom there’s a new address for your house and your grandfather’s house.” Dr. Briggs immediately thought about the problems that would arise in the future from her grandchildren not being able to find the house where she was born. From that moment on, she knew there was a need to ensure her family’s history was correct.

In the discussion, as it relates to reparations eligibility, Dr. Briggs also pointed out a good place to search for information on male enslaved ancestors that escaped, are military records. Additionally, those that escaped often kept in touch with family that remained on the plantation by communicating through letters; being another document type to include in your search. Dr. Briggs wanted those that are having a difficult time searching for all types of family records, to not give up and to tap into your “FAN Club” – Friends Associates & Neighbors. If you are having difficulty gathering information from immediate family, it is a great idea to ask friends of the family, neighbors that lived next door, or any associates that may have known your relatives. This network and joining a group such as CAAGS, could be the key to breaking through your genealogy brick wall.

*\*To view this interview, please see the link located in the YouTube Channel section.*



Genealogy, Lineage and Finding Our Ancestral Roots in America w/Dr. Edna Briggs

KBLA 1580  
15.6K subscribers

Subscribed

28



Share



Download



<sup>1</sup> KBLA. First Things First With Dominique DiPrima. (2024). <https://kbla1580.com/first-things-first-with-dominique-diprima/>

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## **National Roots Day**

National Roots Day is celebrated on December 23<sup>rd</sup> as a day to share family memories and understand where our ancestors came from. It is a day to pay homage to those that sacrificed for our existence and ultimate continuation of the bloodline. It celebrates the impulse to dig deeper into our ancestry. The origin of this day is unknown but has been around for over 40 years.<sup>1</sup>

This day can be celebrated in various ways. Some activities include creating a family tree, sharing family stories, organizing photos, conducting research through an ancestry service or simply reflecting on how our ancestors contributed to who we are today. The day can also be celebrated with Christmas and Kwanzaa family traditions. In addition, it is a great time to gather detailed information from family members that are visiting for the holidays. Currently, National Roots Day is not yet a widely known holiday but has potential to become a celebratory day to all as genealogy becomes more popular.

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## **The 1870 Brick Wall**

DNA testing paired with tracing ancestral roots has gained popularity over the years. People are showing a genuine interest in finding as well as documenting their family history. Those in the beginning stages of tracing their roots should be aware of roadblocks that will arise. The African American community faces challenges in genealogical research more so at a particular point in time. The 1870 census is this point in time, being the first census conducted after the Civil War and after the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment. It is widely known as the first census that included all African Americans by name. It is also referred to as the genealogy “brick wall” because for most African Americans, it becomes difficult to trace family members beyond this document. However, there are clues that can guide individuals in finding their ancestors. Answering the following questions can assist in breaking through the 1870 Brick Wall.

- Are they employed in a household where the head of the household or other members share the same surname?
- Is their occupation similar to the type of work they were required to perform during slavery?
- Does the individual own property?
- Does it state that the person cannot read or write?
- Are there households nearby with a common surname?
- If you look at the total population of the county. Are the number of free Blacks from the 1870 census comparable to the number of enslaved persons in the 1860 census?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Today. History of National Roots Day (2024). <https://nationaltoday.com/national-roots-day/#history>

<sup>2</sup> New York Public Library. African American Genealogy: The 1870 Census. (2024). <https://libguides.nypl.org/c.php?g=1020741&p=7427945#:~:text=The%201870%20census%20is%20sometimes,discover%20family%20members%20pre%2D1870.>

# 18 Important Free Websites for Genealogy Research

- ✓ FamilySearch
- ✓ US Census Bureau
- ✓ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
- ✓ Library of Congress (LOC)
- ✓ New York Public Library (NYPL)
- ✓ USGenWeb Project
- ✓ Research Guides for Ship Passenger Lists & Immigrations Records
- ✓ Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana
- ✓ Freedman's Bureau
- ✓ Access Genealogy
- ✓ JewishGen
- ✓ BillionGraves
- ✓ Find A Grave
- ✓ Legacy.com
- ✓ Afrigeneas.org
- ✓ Rootsweb
- ✓ Cyndi's List
- ✓ Society of American Archivists <sup>1</sup>



Figure 1: Girls from Bechuanaland, South Africa, 1890s, 19th Century istock illustration

## The Origin of Kwanzaa

The celebration of Kwanzaa was started by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966, while he was the professor and chairman of Black Studies at California State University in Long Beach. Kwanzaa's name comes from the Swahili phrase, "matunda ya kwanza", which means "first fruits" or "first fruits of the harvest". An additional 'a' was added to the word, which made it long enough to accommodate one letter for each of the seven children present at an early celebration.

One of Dr. Karenga's main purposes for Kwanzaa was to reaffirm and restore African heritage and culture. Kwanzaa celebrates history, values, family, community and culture ideas and concepts of the holiday are expressed in one of the most widely spoken languages in Africa – Swahili. Kwanzaa is comprised of seven core principles (Nguzo Saba), representing drawn from values found throughout Africa and represents the seven days. The Principles are: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith).<sup>2</sup> Although Kwanzaa is primarily an African American holiday celebrated December 26 – January 1, it has also come to be celebrated outside the United States, particularly in Caribbean and other countries where there are large numbers of descendants of Africans.



<sup>1</sup> NGS. Free Genealogy Websites. (2024) <https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/free-resources/websites/>

<sup>2</sup> National Museum of African American History and Culture. Kwanzaa. First Fruits. (2024) <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/kwanzaa>



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## YouTube Channel

First Things First w/Dominique DiPrima-Dr. Edna F. Briggs  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTBvWDCSINc&t=920s>

What Is Kwanzaa and How Is It Celebrated?  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKLvaqI9Xvg>

The Truth About AncestryDNA's Ethnicity Estimates  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pM3NwKRP7Mc>

Black - Central Ave Los Angeles, CA  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJFC7AKtLY4>

Man unknowingly buys former plantation house  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPk2F3rxetk>

How many generations back is 3% ethnicity in your DNA?  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hbE4Vihf4g>

## Legacy Family Tree

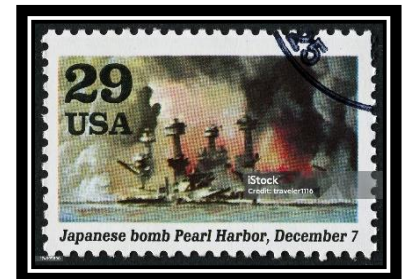
Upcoming Webinars  
<https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars/>

Webinar Library  
<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar-library/>

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## Quick Facts

**December 7, 1941** – Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, California's production of goods and services shifted to support the war. The state made a massive contribution to shipbuilding, aircraft production, and producing almost 20% of the United States' total wartime supplies. The state became a hub for wartime production and drew people from all over to work in its factories. California's role helped to lift the state out of the Great Depression, increasing its population by 53% between 1940 and 1950.<sup>1</sup>



**December 27, 1970** – American political activist, University of California professor, and author, Angela Davis was an active member in the Communist Party and the Black Panther Party. She advocated for black prisoners in the 1960s and '70s and grew particularly attached to a young revolutionary, George Jackson, one of the so-called Soledad Brothers. Jackson's brother Jonathan was among the four persons killed, including the trial judge—in an abortive escape and kidnapping attempt from the Hall of Justice in Marin County, California. Suspected of involvement, Davis was sought for arrest and became one of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's most wanted criminals. Arrested October 1970 in New York City, she was returned to California to face charges of kidnapping, murder, and conspiracy.<sup>2</sup> On December 27, 1970, fourteen Soviet scientists asked President Richard Nixon "to safeguard the life of Angela Davis and give her an opportunity of continuing her scientific work," during her forthcoming trial. The government's quick response was due to the high regard in which the scientists were held by professional colleagues in America. This was the first time Soviets were invited to observe American judicial proceedings. She was later acquitted of all charges by an all-white jury.



<sup>1</sup> Dept. of California. Highlighting California's Contributions to WWII on 79th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor Attack. (2020) <https://calegion.org/highlighting-california-contributions-in-wwii-on-the-79th-anniversary-of-the-attack-on-pearl-harbor/>

<sup>2</sup> Britannica.com. Angela Davis, American Activist. (2024) <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Angela-Davis>

<sup>3</sup> Black American History. Fourteen Scientists. (2024) <https://blackamericanhistory.org/timeline/?q=california>

Visit us at [www.caags.org](http://www.caags.org) and follow us on Facebook, California African American Genealogical Society.

 **UPCOMING EVENTS.....**

December 4, 2024 – Christmas Reception,  
Angels Among Us-6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
Los Angeles Visitors' Center,  
1591 East Temple Way, Los Angeles, CA 90024  
RSVP TO: [ldsholidayreception@gmail.com](mailto:ldsholidayreception@gmail.com)

December 7, 2024 – CAAGS Holiday Celebration  
Dulan's Soul Food Kitchen, 12:00 pm – 3:00pm

December 12, 2024 – CAAGS Writers Group-  
Virtual, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

December 19, 2024 – Board Meeting-Virtual,  
7:00 pm

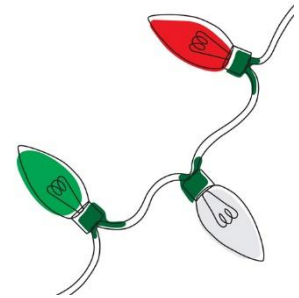
January 18, 2025 – CAAGS General Meeting-Hybrid,  
10:30 am (Reminder email is sent to members)

*\*Schedule subject to change. Questions? Call (323) 806-5634*

**CAAGS FINANCIAL SUMMARY**  
**Month Ending November 29, 2024**

<b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$6,303.51</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>1,115.00</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>(265.00)</b>
<b>PETTY CASH</b>	<b>127.16</b>
<b>ENDING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$7,319.83</b>

*\*Submitted by Jean Wright-Calhoun, CAAGS Treasurer, 12/2/2024*



**CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

**P.O. BOX 8442  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90008-0442  
(323) 806-5634**

**General Membership Meetings**

**Third Saturday monthly (except July & August)  
10:30 a.m.**

**Los Angeles Family Search Library  
1591 East Temple Way  
(Near 10741 Santa Monica Blvd.)  
Los Angeles, CA 90024**

## Please Consider Volunteering



### VACANT – Parliamentarian

#### Summary of Duties:

- ① Advise members on Constitution and By-Laws procedures.
- ② Review proposed Amendments to ensure no conflict exists with Constitution or By-Laws and make recommendations.
- ③ Preside over By-Laws Committee for review of Constitution and By-Laws changes.
- ④ Maintain the Society's Policy and Procedures Manual.



**HEADS-UP!!**

*Paper copy newsletters delivered by US Mail will increase to \$25 annually, beginning January 2025.  
This is the first increase in several years due to the rise in postage and mailing supplies.  
CAAGS members will continue to receive electronic copy newsletters delivered by email with membership.*

*Letter to the Editor...*

Please consider writing a review about any aspect of the content of this Newsletter and forward it to the Newsletter Editor [newsletter@CAAGS.org](mailto:newsletter@CAAGS.org) It will help to know if the effort to keep this publication going should be continued.

**2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ELECTED OFFICERS	APPOINTED OFFICERS
<p><b>Dr. Edna F. Briggs – President</b>  <b>Muriel Jones – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Education</b>  <b>Valerie Warrick-Durette- 2<sup>nd</sup> VP /Membership</b>  <b>Christina Ashe – Recording Secretary</b>  <b>Jean Wright-Calhoun – Treasurer</b>  <b>Marie Bryant – Corresponding Secretary</b>  <b>VACANT – Parliamentarian</b>  <b>Gloria Wallace – Immediate Past President</b></p>	<p><b>Carolyn Conway – Librarian</b>  <b>Steve Allen – Volunteer Coordinator</b>  <b>Dr. Edna F. Briggs – Historian/NGS Delegate</b>  <b>Web Site Admin – Vanessa McBride</b>  <b>Meshia Russell – Newsletter Editor</b>  <b>Monica Maurasse – Social Media Administrator</b></p>