



# From The Baobab Tree

Volume 2, Issue 2

May 2, 1998

## Welcome To New Members

Antoinette Livramento  
 George W. Smith, Jr.  
 William Reed, Jr.  
 Terry Eubanks  
 Leola Williams  
 Movita Cavalier  
 Marcheta Mines  
 Antoinette Jaycox  
 Eunice Shaw  
 Melvin Stewart  
 Eric Thomas  
 Ramona Williams  
 Karen A. Anderson  
 Cassandra Parker-Floyd  
 Rhonda R. Harris

## List of AAGSNC

### Life Members

### Continues to Grow!

Reverend Adolph Kelly  
 Thom Allison  
 Shirley Evans  
 Charles T. Brown

## THANK YOU

To members Charlesetta Braggs-Ford and George W. Smith, Jr. for their donations to help with mailing expenses

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Or visit our web site at:

<http://www.afamgen.com/aagsnc>

## To My Surprise

By Shirley Evans

Like many Black Americans, I saw the TV mini-series, based on 'Roots' by Alex Haley. However, if someone had told me ten years ago that I would be interested in genealogy, I would have said, "You're out of your ever-loving mind". But, to my surprise, I am out of my ever-loving mind.

After returning to California, a coworker, Suzanne Collins, mentioned that she was researching her family history. From her, I learned of the Mormon Family History Center in Oakland, the Federal Records Center (Archives) in San Bruno and Sutro Library in San Francisco. I was not impressed because I "knew" I would not be able to find anything on my family.

After weeks of hearing my coworker talk about her finds, in the winter of 1993, I took the plunge. I called my mom to find out the names of her grandparents, great-grandparents, their siblings, uncles and aunts, and their places of residence. Armed with the names of Solomon Goron, Phyllis Evans, Jack Rowe, Isabella Frazier, some of their siblings, Alachua and Marion County Florida, I was off to the Family History Center expecting nothing.

The Marion County Florida 1920 census was my first stop. Lo and behold, to my surprise, there on page 99, Fairfield precinct 31, sheet 6B, family number 134, was Phyllis Gordon, a widow with 6 of her children, a grandchild and an aunt. On that same page was her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Blount, with her 10 children and 2 grandchildren, and below Elizabeth was a nephew, Isaac Gordon, his wife and 4 children. Was I excited or what? Four generations, and at least 28 people on one page. Of course, there is the possibility that everyone on that page is related. This was the incentive that I needed.

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## 2ND QUARTER BIRTHDAYS



"HAPPY BIRTHDAY" to:

### April

- 7 - Charles T. Brown
- 8 - Thordie Ashley

### May

- 1 - Charlene Stewart
- 12 - Vernon Taylor
- 23 - Thom Allison
- 23 - Mildred Taylor

### June

- 6 - Movita Cavalier
- 12 - Sarah Robinson
- 17 - Jesse Warr
- 22 - Charlesetta Braggs Ford
- 24 - Katherine Allman
- 25 - Evelyn Mayfield

### BELATED

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY" TO:

### January

- 23 - Anita Debro
- 24 - Ramona Williams
- 25 - Minnette Murphy
- 25 - Melvin Stewart

### March

- 4 - Cassandra Parker-Floyd
- 12 - Antoinette Livramento

## My Surprise

By Shirley Evans (continued from page 1)

You know the old adage, "Seeing is believing". I saw, I believed, and I was very hopeful. On to page 111, Flemington precinct 3, sheet 11A, family number 223, where my grandfather, Hosie Gordon, his wife Annie Rowe, known as Mama Annie, and Alonza, cousin Patricia's dad, were listed. Of course, while cranking through Marion County, I found the father, and grandparents of my father, Warren Evans (2), who was named after his grandfather. Samuel Evans (2), named after an uncle, his widowed mother, Eliza Mason Manning and brother, James were shown on page 110, Flemington precinct 3, sheet 10B, family number 205. Hannah Williams, her parents, George W. Williams and Susie White, and hersiblings, George, Lawrence, Addie, Chester, Jossie and Prudence were on page 92, Geiger precinct 32, sheet 3B, Family number 59 59.

Ah, Marion County, 1920, how many names I recognize. But look, it's been over 2 hours. Mama Annie was from Alachua County. I have time to check that out.

Bingo! Alachua County, Archer Precinct 11, family number 64-Jack Rowe, widowed with grandson Arnold H. and niece Annie G. are shown. Family number 65 shows Orlando Rowe, his wife Annie, a niece and a nephew. Family number 67 shows Fred Rowe, widowed.

Whew, my first day, 4 hours, and the jewels I've located. Will I be able to come back tomorrow? I have to tell someone. I know- I'll call Tricia. And to think, what a pessimist I was.

To all doubting Thomases-there is a ton of information on our ancestors, just waiting to be found. Check it out. Surprise yourself.

[Shirley Evans is a member of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California. She can be reached via e-mail at: saevns4@juno.com]

## HELPFUL WEBSITES

Compiled by Carole Neal



<http://www.rootsweb.com/~newbie/GEN-NEWBIE-L Homepage>

<http://www.ancestry.com/home/myrtle/StateLessons.htm>.

Dear Myrtle's U.S. Genealogy Lessons. Each Thursday there is a lesson for a different state.

<http://www.neh.fed.us/html/usnp.html>

UNITED STATES NEWSPAPER PROGRAM. A cooperative national effort among the states and the federal government to locate, catalog, and preserve on microfilm newspapers published in the United States from the eighteenth century to the present.

<http://www.aros.net/~drwaff/slcfh1.htm>

Family History Library, Salt Lake City

## AAGSNC on the World Wide Web

By Jim Neal

On February 1, 1998, the AAGSNC Home Page on the Internet opened its doors to the public. Members and visitors can browse the site by using this address:

<http://www.afamgen.com/aagsnc>.

This onramp to the Internet provides several tools that could assist you in your genealogical research.

- **Members Online** – This section provides space for members to post their surname list, name and e-mail contact information on the web. The e-mail address is required so that interested researchers may contact you. Optionally, you can add a link to your personal genealogy home page. Members who do not have access to

the Internet can still take advantage of this feature, if they have an e-mail address. Free e-mail is available through Juno (800-654-JUNO). Although it is free, there is a charge to have the diskette shipped to you. Juno encourages you to get a copy from a friend.

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## AAGSNC on the World Wide Web

By Jim Neal  
(continued from page 2)

- **Message Board** – Members may post their own genealogy queries on The Genealogy Web Book Message Board. You can increase the chances of an interested researcher finding your query if you start posting it on any genealogy web site that allows you to do so.
- **Family Reunions** – Members may announce upcoming family reunions in this section. That long lost cousin who is not on the reunion mailing list might find your announcement on the web.
- **Online Library** – All visitors will find papers and articles authored by AAGSNC members and other contributors. Other items included are links to genealogical resources we have found useful and collected for your convenience. You will also find back issues of this newsletter, a book reference section, and guides on how to get started.

- **Calendar of Events** – Members and visitors will find a calendar of AAGSNC monthly meetings, upcoming events, and other activities.

The web site publicizes our organization to the world. Already, we have had visitors from a large number of States as well as many foreign countries. The site is listed with the major online search engines and directory services, such as Alta Vista, Yahoo, Infoseek, Excite, etc. Members are encouraged to submit comments and suggestions on how we can improve on the site, and make it an even better tool to support our genealogical endeavors.

To submit your information for publishing on the web site, send e-mail to **baobab-tree@rocketmail.com**. Please use "Members Online" as the subject for *all* e-mail that includes information to be published. To post your own genealogy queries on the Message Board, simply click on the Messages link while visiting the site.

The web site is best viewed with the latest versions of Internet Ex-

plorer or Netscape Navigator. Both can be downloaded free.



## Statue of Liberty

Contributed by Thom Allison

Did you know that the Statue of Liberty was originally a Black woman, but, as memory serves, it was because the model was Black.

In a book called "The Journey of The Songhai People", according to Dr. Jim Haskins, a member of the National Education Advisory Committee

of the Liberty-Ellis Island Committee, professor of English at the University of Florida, and prolific Black author, points out that's what stimulated the original idea for that 151 foot statue in the harbor.

He says that what stimulated the idea for the creation of the

statue initially was the part that Black soldiers played in the ending of Black African Bondage in the United States. It was created in the mind of the French historian Edouard de Laboulaye, chairman of the French Anti-Slavery Society, who, together with sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, proposed to the French govern-

## Statue of Liberty (continued from page 3)

ment that the people of France present to the people of the United States through the American Abolitionist Society, the gift of a Statue of Liberty in recognition of the fact that Black soldiers won the Civil War in the United States.

It was widely known then that it was Black soldiers who played the pivotal role in winning the war, and this gift would be a tribute to their prowess. Suzanne Nakasian, director of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island Foundations' National Ethnic Campaign said that the Black Americans' direct connection to Lady Liberty is unknown to the majority of Americans, BLACK or WHITE.

When the statue was presented to the U.S. Minister to France in 1884, it is said that he remonstrated that the dominant view of the broken shackles would be offensive to a U.S. South, because the statue was a reminder of Blacks winning their freedom. It was a reminder to a beaten South of

the ones who caused their defeat, their despised former captives.

### Documents of Proof:

- 1) You may go and see the original model of the Statue of Liberty, with the broken chains at her feet and in her left hand. Go to the Museum of the City of N.Y., Fifth Ave. and 103rd Street (212)534-1672 or call the same number and dial ext.208 and speak to Peter Simmons and he can send you some documentation.
- 2) Check with the N.Y Times magazine, part II\_May 18, 1986. Read the article by Laboulaye.
- 3) The dark original face of the Statue of Liberty can be seen in the N.Y Post, June 17, 1986, also the Post stated the reason for the broken chains at her feet.
- 4) Finally, you may check with the French Mission or the French Embassy at the UN or in Washington, DC and

ask for some original French material on the Statue of Liberty, including the Bartholdi original model. You can call in September (202) 944-6060 or 6400.



### A MUST FOR YOUR LIBRARY

“WHERE TO WRITE FOR VITAL RECORDS”  
Births, deaths, marriages and divorces.

Send \$2.25 to:  
Government Printing Office  
Marathon Plaza, Room 141S  
303-2nd. Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

### TWO NEW REFERENCES AT SUTRO LIBRARY

Contributed by Kay Smith

Indices Publishing announces two new guides to San Francisco's Sutro Library.

City Directories at Sutro Library, by Elizabeth Kot and Shirley Thomson, is a guide to Sutro's collection of nearly 10,000 city directories for North America. This reference includes call numbers for books, microfilm and microfiche.

Compared to census records, directories began earlier, were published more frequently, and are widely available for years since 1920. They contain historical and personal information available nowhere else.

Massachusetts Vital records- 3000+ collections- listed by record type and by date, from settlement to near present. From Abington to Yarmoth, vital records here include out-of-town marriages, intentions, births and deaths by family, out-of-town deaths and state-wide indices.

It includes the massive Holbrook compilation. Sources and their call numbers, whether hard copy, microfilm or microfiche are given.

City Directories at Sutro Library is priced at \$16.50 (CA residents add \$1.20 sales tax)

Massachusetts Vital Records at Sutro Library is priced at \$12 (CA residents add 87 cents sales tax).

Both books are available from Indices Publishing, 228 Sandy Neck Way, Vallejo, CA 94591-7850. Please add \$1.50 postage and handling for each book ordered.

## From the President's Desk

by Ranie G. Smith

We are now entering the second quarter of the year and this presents an opportunity to reflect on all of the outstanding events, and a look somewhat forward. From a historical standpoint, we have installed our second administrative body. Also, we are entering our third year as an organization that is gaining local and national recognition as a very viable genealogical resource. This recognition speaks more directly to the vision of the original organizers, more specifically, Kay Smith and the group assembled from that idea.

This is truly becoming a more exciting experience as I review what is and has been happening in the organization. I just want to mention a few events and programs that come quickly to mind that emphasize how vitality of the organization. First, our programs have been outstanding and extremely creative. Here's a quick overview of previous events that have been packed with information and fun. Rev. Adolph Kelly's recent presentation involved researching entries made in family bibles. He demonstrated that one seemingly insignificant Bible entry can lead to a wealth of family history. Another was the panel discussion reviewing the group's November, 1997 field trip to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, UT. Also, the monthly "Just Us" meetings whereby the Family History Center, Oakland, provides a resource specifically for African American genealogical research.

Our membership has remained steady and is showing a gradual increase as new members are welcomed, and more people renew. We have four lifetime members: Rev. Adolph Kelly, C.G., Thom Allison Shirley Evans and Charles T. Brown. Needless to say lifetime membership is encouraged.

Incorporation is proceeding, though a little behind schedule. We anticipate being incorporated before mid year. The fun really begins after that is accomplished, as then we will enlist the full participation entire membership. Trust me, your going to love it!!!

Thanks to the efforts of our First Vice President and Program Director, Electra Kimble Price, some of the programs in the works include, limited only by our resources, an African American Genealogical Conference; research group formation aimed at specific states, regions, etc. "How To" programs for beginners and busy people; "Intermediate African American Research"; "Organizing Research Materials"; "Family Reunion Planning", and the list goes on.

We are now into cyberspace with our recently inaugurated Website and e-mail address. If you like what you see on our Website and you can't help but like it, the credit goes to our Webmaster, Jim Neal.

The newsletter continues to be a most reliable vehicle for community outreach and the distribution of organization news. It has really developed under the guidance of our Editor, Thom Allison.

Your organization is supported by a group of truly dedicated and hard working people who conduct the day to day business of the organization.

Here's looking forward, with your help, to a more viable organization with more programs aimed at assisting your individual research efforts; and in doing so reveal the true picture of the African American Experience.



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Mailing  
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 Goes  
 Here

**n i s s e**

**"TO MY SURPRISE"** An article by Shirley Evans on how she became involved in Genealogical Research

Do you have reunion announcements, family queries, genealogical society announcements?

Please feel free to send your genealogical announcements to our newsgroup - soc.genealogy.african Usenet newsgroup soc.genealogy.african  
[news:soc.genealogy.african](mailto:news:soc.genealogy.african) is available for many of your African Diaspora genealogical queries and disclosures.

Please post your valuable family in-

quiry here. We have an excellent full and insightful FAQ that can be downloaded and printed out at

<http://members.aol.com/memery/fag>.

This is a MUST to have if you are serious about tracing African American Roots.

And most importantly, you can post to the group at URL  
<mailto:soc-genealogy-african@rootsweb.com>.

If there are any problems, give me a

holler!!!

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