

From the



Baobab Tree

Volume V Issue II

May 1, 2001

## **The 2001 West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy**

*By Juliet Crutchfield*

The African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc. (AAGSNC) held the First Annual West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy, Saturday, March 31, 2001 at the We the People Conference Center, near Jack London Square in Oakland. Participants numbered well over 225 enthusiast individuals. West Coast Summit co-sponsors were the California African American Genealogical Society, the Black Genealogy Research Group, the African American Genealogy Society of Sacramento, and the San Diego African American Genealogy Research Group.

Sincere thanks go to those AAGSNC members who helped behind the scenes to make this event such a success. Special appreciation goes to Ranie Smith, AAGSNC President and Lisa B. Lee, Conference Coordinator.

The Summit's highlight was Dr. Dee Parmer Woodtor's keynote speech. Dr. Woodtor is the author of *Finding a Place Called Home: A Guide to African American Genealogy and Historical Identity*. This work won the Black Caucus of the American Library Association 2000 Literary Award. Her topic was "An Introduction to Slave Genealogy and Courthouse Records."

Dr. Woodtor explained that it is necessary to complete a whole community study, rather than solely focusing on ancestors. She urged those in attendance to lay a solid research foundation with oral history and family interviews. She emphasized the important link between African American genealogy and historical preservation. Dr. Woodtor told workshop

participants to rely on intuition and creativity. She encouraged the audience to examine vital, census, tax, probate, property, will, plantation, military, slave sale, Civil War, and Reconstruction records, along with family documents, letters, photos, memorabilia, tract books, planter migration patterns, slave owner genealogies, and county newspapers. She directed researchers to study state archive Web sites; locate state, county, and local historical area guides on African Americans; and complete ancestor biographical profiles.

In alphabetical order, other conference high points included presentations by Ron Batiste, Sherry Covington, Denise Griggs, Paul E. Lee, Margaret A. Lewis, and Barbara Tyson. Sherry Covington and Barbara Tyson spoke of Mississippi connections. Margaret Lewis talked about the importance of placing ancestors in timelines and offered several Web sites to assist researchers in doing so. Denise Griggs made the audience sigh as she described in detail the 1940 African American nightclub fire in Natchez, Mississippi where many lost their lives. Ron Batiste explained the importance of documentation and evidence in completing creditable genealogical research. Paul D. Lee clarified how genealogical techniques enhance historical study. He explored Southern African American migration to Kansas and Oklahoma during the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the creation of black governed towns and settlements.

The First Annual West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy was an enormous success. Many participants left the conference with a wealth of new information and expressed a desire to see this event repeated in the future.

(See photos on pages 3 & 4).

## President's Message

From The President

At mid-year a bit of reflection, but with an eye to the future, seems to be in order. AAGSNC is transforming. Starting with no more than six original members, a little over five years ago, the present membership has swelled to well over one hundred twenty. Momentum continues grow as our monthly programs and special events attract an ever-increasing number of people. In the near future more structure will be added to our organization and program format. For instance, Board of Director meetings will be held monthly on the first Saturday of each month. Portions of the monthly program meeting will be devoted to providing assistance to members. Shelf and event space has been secured at AMMLO (African American Museum and Library of Oakland). Events and programs have been tentatively scheduled for the entire 2002 program year. We intend to have another major event, much on the same scale as the Tony Burroughs' lecture held in February 2000. "Stay tuned" as we continue to move forward and transform.

Genealogy is reported to be the fastest growing "hobby" in the United States. It is apparent that African Americans are in the mainstream of mining the numerous reference deposits of genealogical research. This presents us, as a Society, with a grand opportunity to further build upon our "objectives and purposes" as paraphrased below.

1. Promoting individual and collective conscious raising and enlightenment
2. Promoting genealogy, biographies, and related history
3. African American education enrichment through preservation of genealogical materials
4. Make available and preserve African American genealogical materials
5. Maintain ethical standards in genealogical research and publishing
6. Provide a positive historical legacy for African American youth

Eventually, our State Research Groups are slated to assume more of a leadership role in promoting Society "objectives and purposes". Our membership is abundant with talent. Please share your talents and knowledge by proactively volunteering for a leadership or other support role. This is your organization. It is only as good or responsive, as the membership desires. Make your voice heard by sharing your ideas. You can communicate with officers or Research Group leaders through the web site: [www.aagsnc.org](http://www.aagsnc.org) or telephone 510-496-2740, Ext. 4144.

*Ranie G. Smith*

## Editors Message

***I have greatly enjoyed editing and publishing the AAGSNC Newsletter for the past three years. However, this issue marks the end of my involvement with the newsletter. Lisa Lee will be taking over publication of the newsletter beginning with the third quarter 2001 edition, due on August 7, 2001.***

***Lisa Lee is the best possible choice that could have been made for the new AAGSNC Newsletter Editor. She will bring energy, innovation and a badly needed fresh perspective to the job. Under her guidance, I know a far superior newsletter than has been seen during my tenure will be published.***

***I wish her good luck and hope that she will enjoy the full cooperation of the membership in contributing content and volunteering the labor necessary to put out the newsletter every quarter.***

*Thom Allison*



Trudy Bradfield Taliaferro speaking on "Is there a Buffalo Soldier story in your family". During West Coast Summit



Margaret Lewis, of SDAAGRGR speaking on "Migration Patterns" at the West Coast Summit



Dr. Dee Parmer Woodtor, West Coast Summit Keynote Speaker and author of *Finding a Place Called Home: A Guide to African American Genealogy and Historical Identity*



Electra Kimble Price (left) presents award to Kathryn (Kay) Smith honoring her as the original founder of AAGSNC



Left: Members of SDAAGRG in attendance at the West Coast Summit Seated, from left to right Margaret Lewis, Milton ?, and ? Standing, from Left to Right Charles Johnson and Jeanne ?

Right: Dr. Denise Griggs speaking on "Mississippi Connections" during the West Coast Summit



Left: Trudy Bradfield Taliaferro (back to camera) pointing out details of historical family photographs during her discussion "Is there a Buffalo Soldier story in your family?" At the West Coast Summit

## Membership Corner

### **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS** (Since April 1, 2001)

Shirley Jones, Rosemary Antoine, Stacey Lafaye  
Graggs, Paula Easton, Lorean Ewur, Charles  
Perry, Dorothy Shavies, James Martinez

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To submit articles for consideration to From the Baobab Tree. Email them to [newsletter@aagsnc.org](mailto:newsletter@aagsnc.org) or snail mail to the post office box shown above. Articles should be accompanied by a statement from the author authorizing AAGSNC to print and/or post the article on our website. AAGSNC reserves the right to determine what articles are Published in this newsletter or posted on the website. Material submitted for publication or posting on the web site will not be returned.

### **MEETINGS**

The African American Genealogical Society of Northern California meets every third Saturday of at the  
**Oakland Public Library,**  
**Diamond Branch,**  
**3565 Fruitvale Ave., Oakland, CA.**  
*Meeting time is 1:30 pm. until 3:30 pm.*

The next meeting will be held on:

**May 19, 2001**

### **2001 AAGSNC Newsletter** **Publication Schedule**

<b><u>Quarter</u></b>	<b><u>Deadline for Articles</u></b>	<b><u>Publication Date</u></b>
1st	January 25	February 6
2nd	April 26	May 1
3rd	July 26	August 7
4th	October 25	November 6

### **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

(for the second quarter 2001)

#### ***April:***

Charles Brown - Apr 7, Roger Hall - Apr 10, Carol Lee Simms - Apr 20, Annette Madden - Apr 16, Mary Wilkes - Apr 6, Mae Threadgill - Apr 25

#### ***May:***

Thom Allison - May 23, Dwight Bethely - May 31, Charlene Stewart - May 1, Mildred Y. Taylor - May 23, Vernon Taylor - May 12, Khamisi M. Mwaniki - May 31, James A. Abiron - May 4, Wilhelmina Stewart - May 10, Lou W. Robinson - May 7, James Aaron Jordan - May 12, Charles Perry - May 23, Paula Easton - May 29, Lorean Ewur - May 16

#### ***June:***

Charlsetta Braggs-Ford - June 22, Katherine Allman - Jun 24, Karen Francisco - June 26, Lilafay Hunter - Jun 29, Evelyn Mayfield - Jun 25, Sarah Robinson - Jun 12, Yvonne Vincent - June 30, Jesse Warr - June 17, Star Maria Vanlandingham - Jun 3, Patricia A. Bayonne-Johnson - Jun 4, Sheryl Smith - Jun 2, Dena Ann Jordan - Jun 17, Terry J. Ligon - Jun 30, June Baptiste - Jun 22

### **Interesting Web Site**

Check out Heritage Quest on-line Magazine at [http://www.heritagequest.com/html/lhg1\\_010315.html](http://www.heritagequest.com/html/lhg1_010315.html). Heritage quest contains new and historical information of interest to African American Genealogists. In addition one will find links to other Genealogy sites of interest to African American Genealogists. There are also books and other genealogy related paraphernalia for sale through the site. The editor, Mr. Tom Kemp, (TomK@HeritageQuest.com) is interested in hearing from the African American Community on how he can continue to make the site of interest. *While you are on the internet, be sure to visit the award winning AAGSNC website at <http://www.aagsnc.org>. This is the official web site of AAGSNC and contains late breaking news and information to AAGSNC members and to all African Americans interested in genealogy.*

### AAGSNC On-Line Store

The AAGSNC Store online is now open for business. Items currently available for purchase include books and genealogy software. African artwork and AAGSNC t-shirts will be added soon. Look for additional products to be added in the future.

By making your purchases through the AAGSNC Store you will be supporting the non-profit mission and goals of the Society. For example, if you purchase through our store the new book **BLACK ROOTS: A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO TRACING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY TREE** by Tony Burroughs, AAGSNC will earn a commission.

Use your credit card to make online purchases. Visit the AAGSNC Store Now! <http://www.aagsnc.org/store/>  
About Security . . .

Credit card processing for Affiliate program items (books, software, etc.) is handled by the respective merchants (Amazon.com, Genealogy.com, etc.). All merchants use secure encryption keys to transmit information.

The AAGSNC Store uses the PayPal secure credit card processing service for items sold directly by AAGSNC (Artwork, t-shirts, etc.). Only Visa and MasterCard are accepted. You can view PayPal's security statement here:

<http://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=p/gen/security-outside>

### AAGSNC On-Line Dues Payment

AAGSNC Members can also pay their annual membership dues on line. Check out the "Register on-line" button on the AAGSNC web site or follow this link <http://www.aagsnc.org/membership/index.htm> Perspective members may also use this link to apply for membership on line and pay the required dues.

### Suggested Genealogy Resources for AAMLO

The African American Museum and Library at Oakland will be shelving resources for genealogical research. You are invited to add your suggestions of books, tapes, CDs, microfilm and microfiche by visiting this page on our web site: [http://www.aagsnc.org/aagsdata/aags\\_search.html](http://www.aagsnc.org/aagsdata/aags_search.html) AAGSNC will sort the list and offer a list of recommendations to AAMLO. Watch our web page for further information.

Electra Kimble Price

### FROM THE WEBMASTER

#### **AAGSNC Mailing Lists**

AAGSNC maintains four mailing lists. Three of the lists are restricted to use by AAGSNC members. A fourth list is available to the general public. The mailing lists are described below along with examples of their use.

#### **[AAGSNC-Research@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AAGSNC-Research@yahoogroups.com) (Members Only)**

This list is composed of **all AAGSNC members who voluntarily add their name**. All members can post or respond to messages.

#### **Examples of use:**

- Genealogy research questions/comments.
- Genealogy technology questions/comments.
- Any questions to AAGSNC.

#### **[AAGSNC-Membership@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AAGSNC-Membership@yahoogroups.com) (Members Only)**

This list is composed of **all AAGSNC members who have provided the membership committee with their e-mail address**. All members are automatically added to this list after membership applications are approved. This is the Society's Official Mailing List and we ask that you please keep your name on the list and up-to-date. Only Officers, Committee Chairs, and Volunteers on Special Projects can post messages to the list. This list is in the announcement format only, meaning the general membership cannot post a response to messages posted to the list.

#### **Examples of use:**

- Special messages to the membership from the President.
- Special comments or announcements from the 1st VP or Program Chairperson.
- Special bulletins from the Webmaster.
- Special comments from a Volunteer assigned to a special project.
- Notice of monthly meeting.

#### **[AAGSNC-Staff@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AAGSNC-Staff@yahoogroups.com) (Staff Members Only)**

This list is composed of **staff members only who conduct the daily and routine business of the Society**. Only staff members can post to the list.

#### **Examples of use:**

- Invite all staff members to a staff meeting.
- Coordinate various tasks with staff.
- Get a quick show of hands where time is of the essence.
- Discuss any business matter that can be handled by e-mail.

#### **[AAGSNC-Friends@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AAGSNC-Friends@yahoogroups.com) (General Public)**

The purpose of this list is to provide those who are not AAGSNC members with up-to-date information about our programs and events. Any member of the general public who might be interested in becoming a member should subscribe to this list. Anticipate and average of one or two postings per month.

For more information about subscribing to one of our lists, please visit our web page at: <http://www.aagsnc.org/maillist.htm>

It is unnecessary to visit Yahoo! to use a list. To post to a list that you are authorized to use, simply add it to your e-mail address book and use it as you would any other e-mail address. However, if you wish, you may visit this page to manage your subscription: <http://groups.yahoo.com/mygroups>

**To update your e-mail or mailing address, please send e-mail to: [membership@aagsnc.org](mailto:membership@aagsnc.org)**

Jim Neal  
Webmaster



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

African-American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC)

A Non-Profit Organization

E-mail: baobabtree@aagsnc.org

Web site: http://www.aagsnc.org

[Please Type or Print]

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTHDATE (for birthday club information only): [Month] \_\_\_\_\_ [Day] \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY AND ANNUAL FEE SCHEDULE

- REGULAR (Single, 17 & over) \$20/year
  - FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (spouse) \$30/year
  - YOUTH MEMBERSHIP (16 & under) \$10/year
  - ORGANIZATION \$40/year
  - LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$200
  - LIFE MEMBERSHIP (spouse) \$300
- New Member                       Renewal

Total Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_ for calendar year [January-December of current year]

**Payable to: African American Genealogical Society of Northern California  
P. O. Box 27485, Oakland, CA 94602-0985**

LIST YOUR AREAS OF FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

SURNAME	STATE
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

I volunteer to help with (check all that apply):

- Fundraising Committee     Program Committee     Newsletter Committee
- Membership Committee     Study Group     Website Committee
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
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Mailing Address Line 1  
Mailing Address Line 2  
Mailing Address Line 3  
Mailing Address Line 4  
Mailing Address Line 5



**AAGSNC**

***In Quest of Ancestors***



**Meeting: Florida/Georgia Study Group**  
**Peggy Woodruff, Group Leader**

**Location:** Eastmont Branch Library, Community Room-Eastmont Mall  
7200 Bancroft Ave., Ste. 211  
Oakland, Ca. 94605  
(510) 615-5726

**Time:** Saturday, May 19, 2001  
10 a.m. - 12 noon