



## ROSTER OF MEMBERS

Allison, Thom (Life)  
Allman, Katherine  
Ashley, Thordie  
Barnes, Katherine Rutland  
Benson, Janet  
Bloom, Judy Marsh  
Bradshaw, Thomas & Mary  
Bragg, Robert H.  
Braggs-Ford, Charlesetta  
Brown, Charles T.  
Brown, Donald & Mary  
Bullock, Rayford  
Cash, Henderson L.  
Celestine, Cornell A.  
Crutchfield, Juliette  
Dashiell, Jr., Joseph  
Dashiell, Margo  
Debro, Joe & Anita  
Dunn, Barbara Shepherd  
Edwards, M. Howard  
Evans, Ralph  
Evans, Shirley A.  
Finch, Velma  
Golden, Samuel & Betty  
Grady, Cynthia  
Groebe Rodriguez, Jennifer  
Higgins, Ron W.  
Johnson, Edwin  
Kelly, Adolph (Life)  
Lewis, Latania  
Ligon, Terry J.  
Loche, Lee R.  
Mayfield, Evelyn  
Mazion, Mary  
McGee, Elzadie  
Murphy, Minnette  
Neal, Carole  
Neal, Jim  
Price, Electra Kimble  
Robinson, Charles & Sarah  
Rose, Virginia  
Singley, Samuel L.  
Smith, Kathryn B.  
Smith, Ranie George  
Smith, Sr., J. Alfred  
Stewart, Arthur & Charlene  
Stubblefield, Ruth

At last we have a name . . .



Baobab Tree

We finally found a name for our newsletter, thanks to member Kay Smith. Kay pointed out that the Baobab tree, one of the largest trees in the world, is one of the few trees found on the African savanna. Legend has it that, in a frivolous mood, the gods planted Baobabs upside down with their roots exposed to the sky. Other legends identify the Baobab tree as the one true Tree of Life. Given the fact that our organization is dedicated to the researching of family trees, it is fitting that our official publication is from the 'tree of life'.

## RESEARCHING YOUR ROOTS AT THE FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

Second article in a series by  
Electra Kimble Price

In preparation for research into your family history you should be able to have the answers to the following questions. If you do not have exact answers try to have approximate dates and places:

1. What side of the family are you going to research first?

2. Who are the five oldest relatives alive? About how old are they and where do they live?

3. Where were they born?

4. Be prepared to name (on both sides of the family) your father or guardian, grandparents and great grand parents.

5. Figure out what relatives were alive in 1920 and in what states they were residing. Make a list. The latest Federal Population Census Schedule that you will be able to search is 1920. The Privacy Act requires that a little over 70 years must pass before it [the census data] is available for public use. It is important to do a census history on your family by starting with 1920 and working backward to the 1790 [census]. The first enumeration began on the first Monday in August in 1790 and every 10 years after that.

6. Are there death certificates put away from which you can extract information? Take time to examine the information given. Determine if the name, marital status, and race of the deceased and the county of death fits with the information that you knew or thought you knew. The place of death, the place of usual residence and sometimes a street address. With this information you can check a city directory. Begin with the year of death, and go back year by year until you no longer find them listed. Check all the people with the same surname and other connected surnames.

City directories usually have a separate listing for each person of working age, even when they live at the same address. The city directory should give a place of employment for each person who is employed. The death certificate also

# From The Baobab Tree

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## ROSTER OF MEMBERS

Tarver, Charlene  
Taylor, Mildred Y.  
Willis, Pat S.  
Woodruff, Peggy

## MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California will be held on Saturday 10/18/97 1:00 p.m - 3:00 p.m. at the DIMOND BRANCH LIBRARY 3565 Fruitvale Ave Oakland, CA 94602 Telephone 482-7844

All members are strongly encouraged to attend this important meeting as Election of Officers will take place.

Nominations will come from the Nominating Committee and from the floor. Nominating Committee Members:

Sam Golden  
Reverend Kelly  
Charles Brown

### Officers to be elected:

President  
1st Vice President  
2nd Vice President  
3rd Vice President  
Treasurer  
Recording Secretary  
Corresponding Secretary

## RESEARCHING YOUR ROOTS

gives the occupation and sometimes the place of employment. You could look that up in the directory and find out more about the employment.

If you know the religion you can check the city directory or the telephone book for the church. This may lead to church records. The death certificate will also tell you the name of the institution where the person died, another possible source of information. The cause of illness could reveal some hereditary factors of prime importance. Accidents, suicides or homicides may result in a newspaper article. The attending physician may give you information.

The certificate usually has the location of the cemetery and the funeral home. Another source of information. The Social Security numbers have been included in the past 3 decades. Using the SS# you can get a copy of the deceased's application form. It gives full name, date and place of birth, as well as parents' full names including the mother's maiden name.

Always analyze the relationship of the informant to the deceased. If you don't know the relationship, find out. It will probably lead you to a genealogical connection. If you find a birth date and place on the certificate then you have a lead to an official birth certificate. Each bit of data that you find gives you clues and leads to other sources that will help you add to your family history.

## FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

contributed by  
Carole Neal

Persons sharing the same PARENT are SIBLINGS. Persons sharing the same Grandparent are FIRST cousins.

Persons sharing the same Great Grandparent are SECOND cousins.

Persons sharing the same G-Great Grandparent are THIRD cousins, and etc., etc., etc...

Notice the "G's":  
ONE "G" = FIRST cousin.  
TWO "G's" = SECOND cousin.

A CHILD of your cousin is your cousin ONCE removed.

A GRANDCHILD of your cousin is your cousin TWICE Removed.

A GREAT GRANDCHILD of your cousin is your cousin THREE TIMES Removed.

## WORLD WAR I DRAFT REGISTRATION CARDS

All males between the ages of 18 and 45 were required to register for the draft. In 1917 and 1918, three dates were designated for this purpose. These registration cards are a valuable genealogy resource as they generally provide the following information for each individual. This is information that was given by the person himself so it's more likely to be correct: name, permanent home address, age in years, date of birth, occupation, employer's name and place of employment, name of nearest relative (name of spouse, if married), and the person's signature. If the person signed his own name, as opposed to making an "X" as his mark, that is confirmation that he could read and write.

The cards for 1917 had the lower left corner cut off to identify Black registrants. This was not done for the 1918 cards.

The originals of these cards are kept at the National Archives in East Point, Georgia (outside Atlanta). However, the Family History Library has microfilm copies which can be ordered from the main branch in Salt Lake City, Utah.

## REFERENCE BOOKS

"A to Zax, A Comprehensive Dictionary for Genealogists and Historians" by Barbara Jean Evans. Hearthside Press, Alexandria, Virginia, (703) 960-0086. \$14.95 plus postage.

"Black Genealogy" by Charles L. Blockson. Black Classic Press, P.O. Box 13414, Baltimore, Maryland 21203

"Family Pride - The Complete Guide to Tracing African-American Genealogy" by Donna Beasley. Macmillan, a Simon & Schuster Macmillan Company, 1633 Broadway, New New, NY 10019

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## ORGANIZATION MAILING EXPENSE

To assist with the cost of mailings, each member is requested to bring a book of stamps to the next meeting. Operational funds currently come only from dues. Fundraising activities are postponed until after the organization has been granted 501C(3) status.

"From the Baobab Tree" is the official publication of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California. "From the Baobab Tree" is published monthly.

### Newsletter Editors

Ranie Smith  
Thom Allison

Send inquiries, corrections  
or request to:

P.O. Box 1692  
Union City, CA 94587

or e-mail  
[newsletter@aagsnc.org](mailto:newsletter@aagsnc.org)

## REFERENCE BOOKS continued. . .

"The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy" by Val D. Greenwood (ISBN 0-8063-1267-X)

"African American Genealogical Sourcebook" by [edited by] Paula K. Byers (1995) - Gale Research, Inc., 835 Penobscot Bldg, Detroit, MI 48226-4094, ISBN 0-8103-9226-7.

## SOUL FOOD

Sumptuous Sunday dinners have always been part of the African American family experience. Mother's, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, children, cousins, and anyone else considered family, come to the table - literally - to join in hearty meals. And it's during dinner time where problems are often raised and sometimes even solved.

Sunday dinners serve as the backdrop for the new feature film "Soul Food," starring Vanessa Williams, Vivica Fox and Nia Long. The film also serves as the first film project from Edmonds Entertainment, headed by Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds and his wife Tracey.

"Soul Food" is about a middle class African American family living in Chicago. The story centers around the complicated relationship between three sisters, Teri, Maxine and Byrd, played by Vanessa Williams, Vivica Fox and Nia Long respectively. The film casts Michael Beach, Jeffrey Sams and Mekhi Phifer as the embattled sisters' husbands.

While all of the relationships are strained, it's up to the matriarch, Mama Joe, played by Irma P. Hall, to keep things together. When Mama Joe suffers from debilitating health problems the family starts coming apart at the seams. And it's up to Maxine's son, Ahmad, played by Brandon Hammond, to keep Mama Joe's 40-year tradition of Sunday dinners going strong, which ultimately means keeping the family together.

"Soul Food's" Maxine gives Vivica Fox a chance to showcase a side of her that audiences don't ever see. Instead of playing the sexy character, this time Vivica plays a happily married homemaker with two children and a third one on the way. Vivica says she welcomed the new role - even if it meant putting on a few pounds. "I was pregnant in the film and I ate and gained about 7 pounds," says Fox "And when I got back my trainer was like, 'So the movie was good, ha? Like in 'Independence Day' and even 'Set It Off,' I was the one that had on the shorts and was the sex symbol. [And when the role came along] I was like, 'Cool in one movie I can be pregnant, kick back, take the extensions

Though Maxine has a great marriage and loving children, when she and her oldest sister Teri, played by Vanessa Williams, get together sparks fly. Teri, a successful lawyer, can't wait to down Maxine's homemaker lifestyle. While Maxine constantly reminds Teri that she can't cook nor keep her husband happy.

And then there's the youngest sister, Byrd, an insecure, newlywed beauty shop owner, played by Nia Long. Eventually, Teri's condescending attitude seems to convince Byrd that Maxine is the happiest sibling. While this may sound like a dis to career-minded black women, Vivica says:

"I think for once it's great to see in a black film a loving marriage," says Fox. "I thought that was a welcome change. Women at the screening were like, 'Oh, I'll be so happy to find a guy like Kenny.' And I think that maybe the guys will see that it's okay to settle down and have kids. You can still have a great relationship. Me and Kenny we're like best friends and we loved each other. And I thought that was a welcome change to see."

"Soul Food," opens this weekend in theater's nationwide. HEAR the rest of this story and music from the soundtrack on this weekend's hour-long RadioScope.

## EURreview

Though "Soul Food" is quite predictable, it's a very engaging and telling portrait of a group of people rarely seen on the silver screen — the black middle class. Standout performances by Vivica Fox and Brandon Hammond definitely make the movie worth seeing, And of course the sound-track, mainly produced and written by the film's co-executive producer, Babyface, soars.

We don't want to give away too much of the film so get out and see this very entertaining and enjoyable drama THIS weekend - (remember the opening weekend is what counts).

Reprinted from the Electronic Urban Report (EUR) <http://www.EURweb.com>

out of my hair, dye my hair black and just be normal. And I appreciated that."

In addition to Vivica playing against type, her onscreen husband, Jeffrey Sams, follows in her footsteps, by playing the sweet tow truck owner, Kenny. Sams, who had tongues wagging as Whitney Houston's sexy lover in "Waiting To Exhale," found it easy to play Kenny.

"He's the peacemaker," says Sams. "He's the guy who isn't very wealthy but he has enough to get by. He's in love with his wife and family. He's like the in-law that sits back, watches everything and asks all the right questions. He's the levelheaded one and has the shoulder for people to cry on."

## WEB SITE

We apologize for our web site not being operational. Unfortunately, we have experienced technical problems with our web server and cannot connect to the World Wide Web at this time. We are working on the problem and will have the site up and running as soon as we can. We will announce the correct URL to the web site at the next meeting.

