



# AAHGSNC News

Newsletter of the Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society of No. CA September 1996

## Quarterly Newsletter

### Table of Contents

President's Message	Page 1
Events Calendar	Page 4
Resources and Tools	Page 3
Research	Page 2,3
Notes	Page 3
Queries	Page 5
Program Schedule	Page 3

### President's Message

I am happy to report that we are still going forward with the process of becoming a non-profit organization. Some are probably questioning the expense and amount of time needed to make this happen? Why not just form a "club" and get around the expense and red tape?

Some assumptions, made by myself and others, during the planning phase to form the first African American genealogical research association (Northern California), was based on what we thought and still think are basic needs: namely, information sharing, teaching, and credibility, etc. Sure, there are individuals doing great research and have "mastered" techniques/skills needed to use all available genealogical research tools. Individual research efforts satisfy a single need. From my viewpoint there is more to be gained from being a member of a society with the same focus.

African Americans share a common past spanning the history of the United States. Maya Angelou, during a recent television interview with Lauren Hutton (Turner Communications, 8/28/96), offered this observation of (African American) American history: as a society that demands

instant gratification. Events that do not occur within our life spans have little or no consequence. She continued that without paying attention to history we will probably be subject to past injustices.

From my viewpoint, one of the most important reasons for African American genealogical research is direction; a way to help provide "missing pieces of the puzzle"; to better determine where we as a people we want to go.

If the information we collect is simply stored away as part of our personal records, then part of the reason for doing so, beyond individual curiosity, is lost.

Our organization, though now small, offers the best opportunity for not only taking care of our personal research efforts, but also to a greater extent, provide an affiliation with other African American genealogical associations with the same focus: education, research, and publication of African American genealogical histories.

Our current status meets the requirement for being called a club. We meet regularly with the same general purpose. But, there is more. "Society", included as part of the organization name, has more acceptability than the label, club. Society means that we are individuals organized for a particular purpose. The perception demands credibility, and therefore, more of a public presence, both locally and nationally.

Let us reaffirm our purpose, harness our talents, and move forward. Inside you will find a listing of programs now being

pursued or in the planning stages. You are encouraged to join a committee, actively participate, recruit others and share the heritage.

Happy Researching !!!!!

Charlesetta Ford  
President

## Going On a Research Trip?

Here are a few tips that might prevent frustration on your research trip:

The most important thing you can do to increase the possibility of having a fruitful research trip is to prepare adequately.

Do as much research at home as possible. Don't waste time on a trip searching through material that is available locally. Visit local libraries, archives, etc. Use library loan services, where available. Write to county court houses and other institutions for information.

Update your research files to avoid searching for information you already have.

- family group sheets
- ancestry charts
- census summaries
- research logs
- Study the geography and political history of the research area.
- Get a description of the material available at the repository to be visited. Many state archives publish complete inventories of the material that are available to researchers/ A series of state genealogical research books by George K.. Schweitzer itemizes the

records available at the county court houses at most southern states.

- Get information about the rules and regulations of the institution to be visited. Understanding the rules about smoking, cameras, usage fees, brief cases, hours of operation, etc. can help you avoid problems.

The second important thing is to take along everything you will need.

- Research tools: pens, pencils, eraser, makers, paper clips, tape.
- Additional aids: tape recorder, magnifying glass, paper and blank forms, etc.

Sections reprinted from *The Capital Letter*, vol. 11 #1 (Feb. 1994) - Newsletter of the AAHGS-James Dent Walker Chapter. Edwin B. Washington, editor

## Terminology Unique to African American Research

While on you research quest don't be surprised to encounter terminology not common to other genealogical research.

- Manumission Records - Formal papers stating the freedom of a slave.
- Freeman's Bureau - An organization established by the Federal Government before the end of the Civil War, for the purpose of assisting newly emancipated slaves to adjust to freedom.
- Griot - An African family historian. Each family had one, who committed the family's history to memory. In preparation for death, the Griot would pass his historical stories to a younger man, who would become the next Griot.
- Miscegenation - The mixing of races
- Mulatto - offspring of black and white parents

- Quadroon - offspring of Mulatto and white parents.
- Octoroon - offspring of Quadroon and white parents
- Cascos - offspring of Mulatto and Mulatto parents
- Sambo - offspring of Mulatto and black parents
- Mango - offspring of Sambo and black parents
- Mustiffee - offspring of Octoroon and white parents
- Mustifino - offspring of Mustiffee and white parents
- Slave Schedules - records taken by the U. S. Census verifying the existence of slaveholders and number of slaves owned.

## Common Genealogical Definitions

(Some common terms that may encountered during research trips)

- Archives reference to the storage of older records
- Artificer soldier mechanic who does repairs
- Ascendant - ancestor
- Assignee - the person to whom a privilege or some property is signed over to by the court
- Assignor - the person who signs over a right or property to another
- Assistant Marshall - the census taker prior to 1880
- Banns - publication or posting of the announcement of a coming marriage. a period of time before the actual marriage to allow advance notice to those that might have reason to protest. In most success Sundays
- Baptizavi - I baptized
- Bequest - legacy: usually a gill of real estate by will
- Bond - a written promise by a borrower to pay a lender a fixed dollar sum of

interest for a prescribed period of time and to repay the principal on a stated date

- Boniface - innkeeper
- Borough - a self-governing incorporated town, larger than a village
- Bounty Land - public land given by the government to induce young men to join the military
- Brother - a male sibling. can also be used to show close friendship
- Bundling - to sleep in the same bed while fully clothed, a practice commonly by engaged couples in early New England

(Source: PRODIGY - Web Browser: Genealogy Dictionary - <http://www.electriciti.com/~dotts/diction.html>)

## Notes

### Program Committee by E-Mail

The second committee meeting held by a AAHGSNC committee was conducted via E-Mail with excellent participation and feedback. Electra Price, Chairperson for the Program Committee, initiated this communication forum primarily because of member time constraints associated with driving long distances for meetings.

Meeting topics included: group structure (Program Committee), Field Trips, Program topics, Program Content, Community Education and Outreach. Details of each topic will be discussed in later newsletter topics.

### Electra Kimble Price

Takin' about doing real research. See the accompanying article from the Oakland Tribune, September 11, 1996 issue.

Overall, this proved to be a very successful communications method, which hopefully will be adopted by other committees.

## Web Site/On Line Possibilities

In early August we had we were contacted by Angela Johnson of NetNoir. The company is developing a web site dealing specifically with African American genealogy and reunion issues. Web site launching is scheduled for September. The company's expectation is to develop a talk/chat on line forum addressing African American issues. Interested? NetNoir can be contacted at 415-536-6700 (Angela Johnson)

## **Resources and Tools**

According to one of our very experienced genealogist researchers no self respecting researcher should be without basic research reference manuals - the "how to" books basic to African American genealogical research. Following is a listing of what are considered "basic" reference manuals:

*African American Genealogical Sourcebook*  
Edited by Paula K. Byers  
Gale Research, Inc.

*Slave Ancestral Research, It's Something Else*  
Mary L. Jackson Fears  
issues, particularly; field trips and program  
Heritage Books, Inc.

*Black Genealogy*  
Charles L. Blockson  
Black Classics

*Black History*  
A Guide To Civilian Records in the National Archives  
Compiled by Debra L. Newman  
National Archives Trust Fund Board

General Services Administration

*The Genealogist's Companion & Sourcebook*  
Emily Croom

*Ethnic Genealogy*  
A Research Guide  
Forward by Alex Haley  
Greenwood Press

## **Events Calendar**

### AAHGSNC Monthly Meeting Schedule

#### Location/Dates

Oakland Public Library  
Golden Gate Branch  
5606 San Pablo Avenue  
Oakland, CA

October 19, 1997  
January 25, 1997  
April 19, 1997  
June 21, 1997  
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

## Programs

October 19, 1996  
Time: 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
**Ron Higgins**, President of the California African American Genealogical Association will present an overview of his Southern California based organization  
**Margot and Joseph Dashiell**, siblings will present their family research project: "*In Business For Ourselves - From Slavery to Freedom*".

## Future Programs - Tentative

Ed Butler, West Coast Sales Representative-Prodigy: "*On Line Computer Research*"

## Future Programs - Cont.

Raymond Pitts -presentation of Dunlap family research - "What Can Be Done With What You Have"

## AAHGSNC Board of Directors (Pending Ratification)

Charlesetta Ford President	Rev. Adolf Kelly Treasurer
Electra Price 1st Vice President	Ray Ballard Recording Secretary - Parliamentarian
Donna Thomas 2nd Vice President	Terry Ligon Corresponding Secretary
Sam Golden 3rd Vice President	

### Editors Note

Your comments and suggestions regarding the newsletter are solicited. Also, members are requested to send articles on other topics that may be of interest to the membership

### Queries ?

A query is a request information, usually about a person or a family. **Your query should include vital information -- birth, marriage, and death, geographical locations and other relevant information.** Queries may be submitted in plain paper form. Queries will be published in the AAHGSNC Newsletter as a member service as space permits. Following are some queries captured during our April 1996 meeting. Note most are surname requests with geographical reference only. *Responses should be directed to the AAHGSNC newsletter address, unless otherwise directed below.*

Seeking any family information about:  
Burgess, Elam., Winfree, Ervin (Irvin),

Waugh - State of Virginia; Smith, Tortola, and Norman - British, Virgin Islands. Address response to Kathyryn Burgess-Smith.

Meriweather, Neal --Bakersfield/Delano, CA, 1920's to present; Luella, Pearl (Scott), Mary (Randle); George, Corine. Sallie Watkins - AR; Ola Wood - SC. Direct response to Charlesetta Braggs, 510-234-2552; e-mail c b ford 1@aol.com.

Culliver - AR; Jordan - MS. Direct response to Juliet E. Chrtchfield

Golden - MS, AR, AL, GA, VA. Huddelston - MS, TN, OK, TX. Direct response to Samel Golden.

Dillard, Hawkins - TX. Kelly, Kelley - LA, OK. Direct response to Rev. Adolph Kelly.

Dunn - IN, KY. Evans - OK, TX. Hendrix - AR, OK; Shepard, Tippen - TX. Direct response to Barbara Ann Dunn.

Breckinridge, Hall - KY. Gibbons - TX. Direct response to Bette Golden.

Sams, Oliver - GA. Harris - AL. Direct response to Thomas H. Harris.

Smith, Matthews, Burrow - GA. Direct response to James Smith.

Christian, Ligons, Liggins, Wilson, Taylor (Native American) - OK, TX, MO. Love - AL, MS, VA. Direct response to Terry Ligon.

Bellows, Celestin, Dugas, Jassime, LeBlanc, Lecour, Latrique, Monconduit, Morin-Moran, Meyer, Rachal, Simon - LA. Direct response to Cornell August Celestine.