

P3 RESEARCH TRIPS AND VOLUNTEERING
Heading back to the old country for a reunion or research trip? Planning ahead can ensure that you'll gather findings galore.

P4 HELPING OUR SOCIETY FLOURISH
Dedicated volunteers help keep AAGSNC alive and thriving. Learn more about our committees and chairpersons.

P10 THE BAOBAB TREE GOES DIGITAL
Hard copy or digital format? State your preference by submitting a form online or by mail.

P12 SACRAMENTO FAMILY HISTORY SEMINAR A SUCCESS
Researchers from Sacramento and beyond gather for a seventh year to learn more about genealogy.

the Baobab Tree

Journal of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc.

Spring/Summer 2012

ISSN 1543-4125

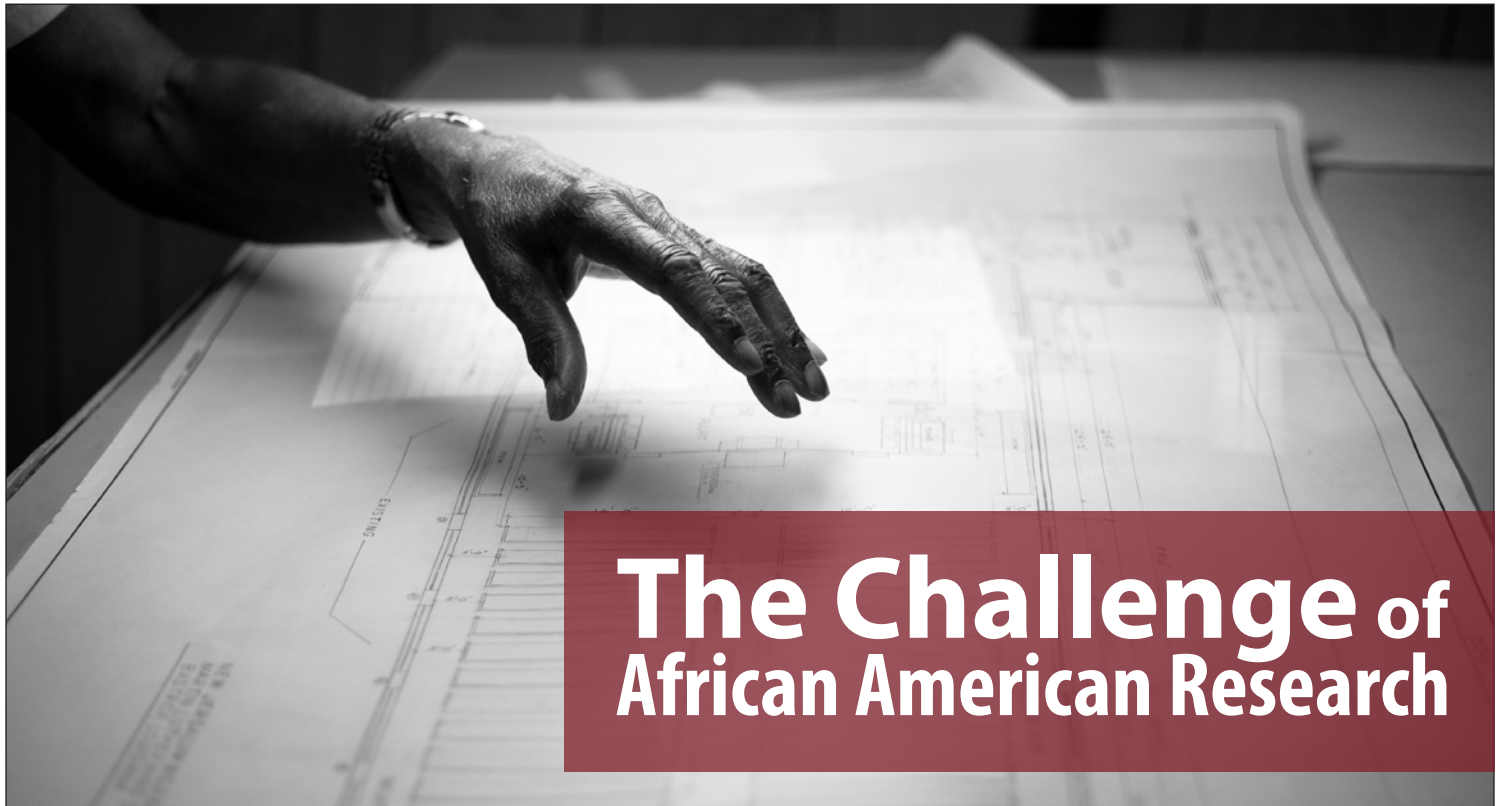


Photo credit: Nicola Smith

The Challenge of African American Research

by Curt Witcher

Contributor; President, National Genealogical Society

Conducting successful African American genealogical research can be a challenging adventure. In recent years, the challenge has been lessened and the adventure heightened by the growing body of publications relating to this ethnic group. Special-interest groups and genealogical societies nationwide are publishing key

guides, new bibliographies, and important how-to books. Before delving into published sources, however, it is always important to pause long enough

to organize one's own personal papers and review standard research methodology.

CONT. ON PAGE 16

There are a number of excellent sites which assist a researcher in locating historical data, help identify individuals who are working on particular family lines, and provide a means for networking.



Board of Directors

W.E. "Bill" Melson (01/2013)
Dr. Lois Freeman (01/2014)
Dera Williams (01/2013)
Lenora Gobert (01/2014)
Carol A. Miller (01/2015)

Officers

President - M. Howard Edwards
Vice-President - Carol A. Miller
Recording Secretary - Dera Williams
Corresponding Secretary - Vacant
Treasurer - Melvyn Gillette
Historian - Francis Richardson

Committee Chairs

Programs - Jackie Stewart
Membership - Upperton Hurts
Fundraising - Marion Owens
Publicity - Alvis Ward
Journal - Annette Madden
Website - Geraldine DeBerry
Historian - Francis Richardson
Outreach & Education - Nicka Smith

African American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC)

P.O. Box 27485, OAKLAND, CA 94602
(877) 884-2843

It's Your History...

Isn't it time you told **your**
story?

The African-American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated in its commitment to national and international African-ancestry family history research. The society provides a unique approach to education, research skills, and support to anyone interested in genealogy.

Objectives

- To promote interest in genealogy, biography, and related history in African ancestry research
- To supplement and enrich the education of African-Americans through the collection, preservation, and maintenance of African-American genealogical materials
- To promote the accumulation and preservation of African-American genealogical and related historical materials and make such materials available to all
- To promote and maintain ethical standards in genealogical research and publications

Membership and it's benefits

Any person interested in furthering the objectives of AAGSNC is eligible for membership upon submission and acceptance of a completed application form and payment of dues.

Membership categories are as follows:

- Regular Membership: Age 17 and Over
- Family Membership
- Youth Membership: Age 16 and Under
- Organization Membership: Association, Library, Society, Non-Profit Group
- Lifetime Regular Membership: Age 17 and Over
- Lifetime Family Membership

Monthly Meetings - AAGSNC holds monthly meetings that include guest speakers, workshops, seminars, and networking with other members. Meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month (except July and August) from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Dimond Branch of the Oakland Public Library, 3565 Fruitvale Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602-2326.

Field Trips and Research Support - Members can attend regularly scheduled trips to the local Family History Center and receive assistance with their research projects. Participation in organized research trips to the Salt Lake City Family History Library and taking part in events with other historical and genealogical organizations are included in our program.

Members Only Section of Our Website - Compiled Databases, *The Baobab Tree* archive, meeting presentations (PDFs, video, and podcasts), Ancestral Charts, and more.

To join, please visit www.aagsnc.org



The Branch

Words from the Society President and Journal Editor

Inside this issue

Research trips and volunteering expand your genealogical experience



Photo courtesy of M. Howard Edwards

by **M. Howard Edwards**
President, AAGSNC

Going Home

It is summer time, vacation time, reunion time, family time, travel time, reconnection time, and family history research time. Many will be returning to “the old country” to fill gaps in their family history or to start a new chapter, or to embark on the research journey for the first time. Others are traveling just to have a good time. No matter the prime motivator, any trip should incorporate some family research if just to protect oneself from the rust that inevitably

creeps into any techniques that are neglected. As an absolute minimum, interview the old folks still around.

If one has ever done an interview, they know that a single interview visit is rarely sufficient, and this one visit may only be adequate to set up the climate for the next one, so leave enough time for another visit. This might be the last if not the only opportunity. Do not postpone this key activity of the research. Call in advance to let your subject know you are coming and what you want them to help you accomplish.

CONT. ON PAGE 17

So much that’s new



Photo courtesy of Annette Madden

by **Annette Madden**
Editor, *The Baobab Tree*

This is the time of year when everything is growing, and that includes *The Baobab Tree*. First there is the

new layout format thanks to our new layout editor, Nicka Smith. Kudos! We hope you like it and we will appreciate your feedback.

Secondly, we’re debuting two new columns in this issue. “Genealogy 101” offers everyone from the novice to the veteran “how to” tips that AAGSNC members have gleaned from many years of family history research. “Tech Talk” will help you harness digital-age tools as

you cull through centuries past and share with present generations of your family. Volunteers are the lifeblood of any organization and to that end we have included a write up about the various committees of AAGSNC and ways you can contribute.

The Baobab Tree is now digital. All issues will be available through the “Members Only” section of our website. But we’re not abandoning those who prefer print. Send us the request form in this issue (page 10) or voice your preference online at <http://goo.gl/teiFp> and we’ll keep mailing them to you. Finally, Charlene Brown is no longer able to continue as co-editor and layout person for the journal. We thank her for her service and wish her well.

- RESEARCH TRIPS AND VOLUNTEERING EXPAND YOUR GENEALOGICAL EXPERIENCE..... 3
- SO MUCH THAT’S NEW..... 3
- HELPING OUR SOCIETY FLOURISH..... 4
- TECH TALK..... 6
- GENEALOGY 101..... 7
- JULIA LOCKERT BAKER’S ROAD TO DISCOVERY..... 8
- THE ROLE OF SERENDIPITY..... 9
- WHY OBITUARIES MATTER..... 11
- SACRAMENTO SEMINAR A SUCCESS..... 12
- RED TAILS GET NOD AT CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE..... 14
- AAGNSC MEMBER AMONG AIRMEN HONORED..... 14
- SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP + FAMILY CONNECTION = RESEARCH SUCCESS..... 15
- SHARING STRATEGIES FOR GENEALOGICAL SUCCESS..... 19
- BAY AREA RESOURCES..... 20
- BAOBAB WRITER’S GUIDELINES..... 22

Helping our society flourish

Committees are the lifeblood of our organization. If you are interested in joining one of our committees or have any questions, please contact the appropriate committee chair. As my mother says, "Many hands make light work"...and lots more fun! — Annette Madden, Editor, The Baobab Tree

Executive Committee

Chairperson: M. Howard Edwards, president@aagsnc.org

The President convenes the Executive Committee to carry out the day to day business operations of the Society. It is composed of the Officers and Standing Committee chairpersons and currently meets before each regular society meeting at noon. The committee serves as a planning body and advisory group to the President and is responsible for developing an annual budget for the approval of the Board of Directors and implementing the programs of the Society.

All members are invited to attend the Executive Committee meetings.

Program Committee

Chairperson: Jackie Stewart, programs@aagsnc.org

The role of the Program Committee is to develop a monthly program for each meeting throughout the year. Programs are created and developed through membership input.

Committee Responsibilities:

1. Collecting ideas and suggestions for programs
2. Developing program questionnaire
3. Securing program presenters for each meeting
4. Preparing meeting program calendar for the year

The Program Committee is open for additional members. The yearly program calendar is published in each issue of *The Baobab Tree*. We welcome new ideas and volunteer speakers.

Membership Committee

Chairperson: Upperton Hurts, membership1@aagsnc.org

The Membership Committee solicits, records, and maintains the membership records of the Society. It also collects and records the membership fees for all categories of members.

The committee publishes a New Member Beginners Guide, which was put together by our members. All new members should receive one when they join. If you have joined AAGSNC in 2012 and did not receive one, please email the Membership Committee at: membership1@aagsnc.org. If we can help you in any way with your membership, please let us know.

Fund Raising Committee

Chairperson: Marion Owens, fundraising@aagsnc.org

Develops activities throughout the year that will generate income for the Society.

Ways you can contribute:

1. Collaborate with members, volunteers, and outside resources to benefit AAGSNC financially to continue our work.
2. Help to facilitate, develop, and create events, and ideas with a purpose toward incoming contributions.
3. T.E.A.M. (Together everyone achieves more)— Gather support and volunteers to create and unity to implement the target goals.

It is necessary to have a process for teaching our youth to continue the journey of exemplifying the AAGSNC's mission through membership and volunteering.

Publicity Committee

Chairperson: Alvis Ward, publicity@aagsnc.org

Insures that the Society and its activities receive suitable publicity.

If you have access to other outlets to get the word out, i.e. church or civic affiliations; access to one or more social sites you visit and share information; have an email account and

Volunteers are what make AAGSNC programs and events so successful. One of the ways members like Evangaline Howard, left, and John Spears, right, get involved is by volunteering at Black Family History Day at the Oakland Family History Center.



Photo Credit: AAGSNC

you can add our website link to your default email signature; talk about us at beauty shops, barber shops and everything in-between. If you're always on the move, this is your committee. If you simply like talking to others, we welcome you. You can join our committee at any monthly meeting by connecting with chair Alvis Ward or designee Diana Ross. You can also email your intent to publicity@aagsnc.org.

Throughout the year AAGSNC hosts and partner several events where we can use your attendance and ability to get the word out. If you know of an event where AAGSNC should consider having a presence, email us. All inquiries will be considered.

Journal Committee

Chairperson: Annette Madden,
journal@aagsnc.org

Will cause to be published to the membership and other interested parties a periodic journal chronicling the activities of the Society and its members.

The journal can use your help in several areas:

1. You can assist with the editing and copyediting of articles.
2. Interviewers/Writers: Members of the society and others have great stories to tell but may not be up to writing them themselves. You would interview them and write their story or help them write it.

In the interest of redundancy, we are also looking for someone to act as assistant editor and fill in for the editor as needed.

Outreach and Education Committee

Chairperson: Nicka Smith,
oande@aagsnc.org

This committee was established to respond to requests for and provide assistance to other organizations requesting assistance or presentations of techniques of African ancestry family history research. Membership can

contribute to the O and E Committee in the following ways:

1. Serve in our Speakers Bureau. You can present on beginning genealogy, how to research online, or a topic of your choice
2. Volunteer for one of our outreach efforts such as the Ancestral Project with youth, Destination: Pedigree member workshops, or Black Family History Day
3. Be a host, presenter, or interviewee during an upcoming Destination: Pedigree webinar or podcast

Website Committee

Chairperson: Geraldyn DeBerry,
webmaster@aagsnc.org

Established to re-engineer the existing website and establish procedures for its management and use.

Membership can contribute to the Website in the following ways:

1. **Log into Members Only** section of our website to access *The Baobab Tree*, view past meeting presentation PDFs, submit your surnames to the Surname Directory, and access proprietary content generated by AAGSNC.
2. **Visit our blog** to learn of new additions in online research, listen to podcasts or interviews, register for our upcoming webinars.
3. Submit your obituaries for inclusion in our Obituary Project. For requirements, please email us.
4. Send your friends and colleagues to www.aagsnc.org for resources on how to get started with genealogy research.

Membership Milestones

New Members

Veronese Anderson	Janice Jones
Deitra Atkins	Carolyn Ledbetter
Mia Belk	Rashinda Lee
Patrick Blanks	Lois Lindsey
Carolyn Colbert	Marion Owens
Dianna Doucette	Madeline Richardson
Donna Hegler	Janice Sellers
Barbara Holloway	James Wheaton
Bobbie James	Hallie Williams
Irene Jones	Denice Wood

10 Years of Membership

Gwendolyn Booze	The Hurts Family
Thelma Elbert	Beatrice M. White
Lois Freeman	Marilyn E.P. White
Lenora Gobert	Tolbert Young
Clyde Grimes	

2012 Calendar of Events

July and August

No Meetings

September 15

Braggin' & Lyin' (What I Did This Summer) and Social Media

October 13

Black Family History Day

October 20

Breaking Through Brick Walls and DNA Presentation

November 17

Slave Research and Immigration

December 15

Christmas Party and Black Elephant Sale

For more info on our events and meetings, please visit www.AAGSNC.org

Tech Talk

Discover how RSS Feeds make finding and keeping up with new data online easy as pie.

by Nicka Smith

Chair, Outreach and Education Committee, AAGSNC

Have you ever had a website that you liked to use for research, but you had to go back to it all the time to see if any new documents had been added to it? Using an RSS feed solves this problem by having the website owner send you updates whenever they're posted.

What is an RSS Feed?

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. An RSS feed is a link for a website that displays only that site's updates so you don't have to keep going back to the website to see what's been added. A feed link removes all of the design elements of the website, but retains the links and photos within it. You can't actually search a database through an RSS feed; RSS simply notifies you when there's an update or new posting, and gives you a direct link to the new information.

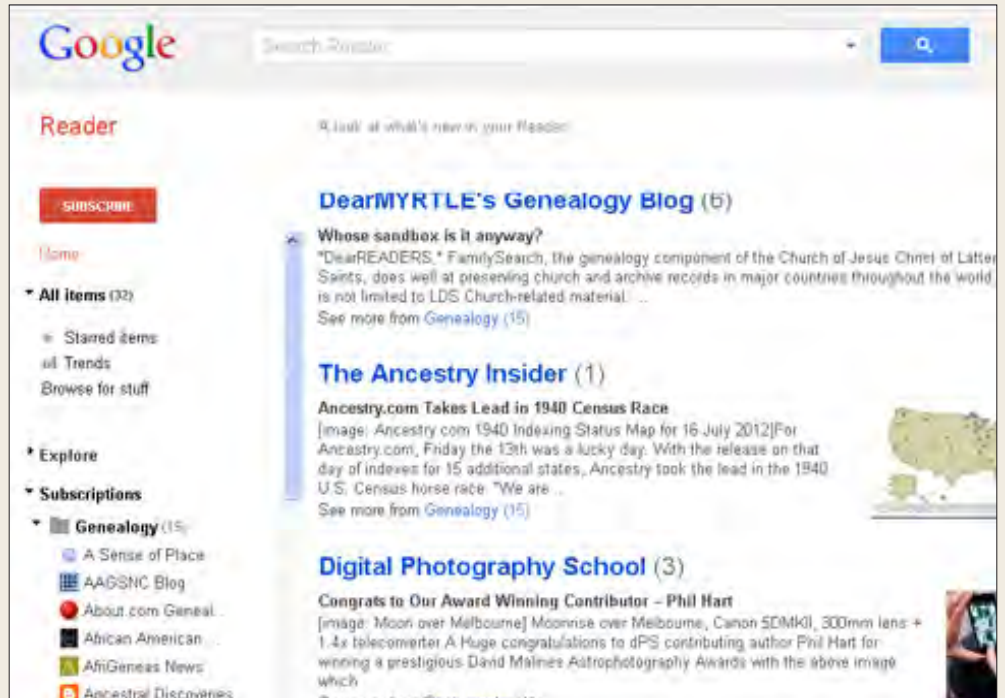
An orange icon like the one below in your web browser or elsewhere on a website indicates that the site offers a feed. You can get feeds for comments on a particular page, updates to a calendar or listing of events, blog (web log) postings, or, as mentioned previously, updates to searchable collections.

How Do I Get the RSS Feed Link?

Get the RSS feed link by clicking on the orange icon in your browser. That will give you a new browser window with a link that looks something like <http://www.aagsnc.org/blog/feed/> or <http://feeds.feedburner.com/FamilySearchBlog>. You could also click a link that says "Subscribe to our RSS feed." The new window that opens will have the RSS feed link in your browser as well.

Where Do I Read My Feeds?

You'll need to use an RSS Feed Reader to access feeds. I suggest that beginners use [Google Reader](#), which works with your existing Google account. If you



Using Google Reader is an easy way to keep track of all the RSS feeds you've subscribed to. Visit <http://www.google.com/reader> to create an account.

don't have a Google account, you'll need to create one to access Google Reader.

Once logged in to Google Reader, click the "Subscribe" button. Next, plug the link provided by the website into the box that appears, and click "Add." You'll see a screen that says "You have subscribed to..." and you're done! After that, anytime the website owner makes an update for that particular section of their website, an update will appear in your Google Reader. You just have to remember to log in to view them.

How Do I Get Additional Feeds?

To add more feeds, just follow the process outlined above in "Where Do I Read My Feeds?"

Still Need help?

Visit the Members Only section of the AAGSNC website and go to the Presentations area. At the end of the

PDF for the May 2011 AAGSNC Meeting Presentation about Web 2.0, you'll find screenshots of the step-by-step process of adding RSS feeds. You can also email me at the email address below.



Seeing this symbol online means that a website provides an RSS feed.



Nicka Smith is the chair of the Outreach and Education Committee for the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC). She's been researching her family since 1999. Email her at oande@aagsnc.org

Genealogy 101

Having a sound set of genealogical fundamentals can help you get further quicker and easier

by **Annette Madden**
Editor, *The Baobab Tree*

Genealogy is the study of family lineages. Your goal is to connect generations to each other in such a way that you have the correct ancestors on your family tree. Not only will you be collecting basic facts about your family history, you will also be adding interesting details—bringing a list of names, dates and places to life. An excellent goal for beginners is to trace their family back to 1870. The year 1870 is important because it was the first year that blacks that were formerly enslaved were listed in the census by name, making it easy to identify family members.

As with any new task, at first it may seem overwhelming. You are unsure of how to begin, what is important and where to go for assistance. The terms seem incomprehensible and there appears to be too much paperwork. The purpose of this column is to provide you, the beginner, with more than an outline of the process. Members of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California have pooled their knowledge in an effort to share basic information, research methods, standards, procedures and tools to help make your endeavor successful. The following tips for beginners are presented in a step-by-step format with examples and suggestions to enhance your practical skills as well as increase your understanding of the field.

Follow these steps in the order given. Read the information, write down your answers to the questions and fill out the forms. You do not have to complete each item, but you should try to complete as many as possible. As so as you feel comfortable, move on to the next one. There is no time limit on completing your research. Work at your own pace. Happy Researching!

Step One: Setting Personal Goals

Decide why you want to do a genealogical search. Is it to plan a family reunion, discover famous relatives, to look for birth parent(s) or to write a book?

How much time and resources are you willing to invest? Compiling a list of names for a family reunion may take a few months and the expenses will only include the cost of paper, envelopes and postage. However, writing a book about your family's history will take several years, involve travel and cost a great deal of money.

Write down exactly what you wish to accomplish. List all the resources you have on hand. List other family members who could assist you. Then make a list of the resources and items you will need to locate. Review the two lists and determine how much money, resources and time you can comfortably invest in your project. Devise an action plan to meet your goals based on your goals and resources.

Attempt to use good research skills. One key to becoming a successful genealogist is always to follow two basic guidelines that are “The Golden Rules of Genealogy”

1. Never assume that any fact is correct—always check. You will interview relatives to learn about family members, stories and traditions and then you must verify their data.

2. Never leave any stone untouched—check all available resources to obtain as much information as possible. You may find the most important clue where you least expect it.

This information was taken from the Beginner's Guide to Genealogy compiled by AAGSNC and given to all new members. Next time, Getting Organized will be featured.

Annette Madden has been researching her family history since 2000 with great success. She has traced her history back to the late 1700s, has met many cousins she never knew she had and was instrumental in organizing a reunion of parts of her family that had not been together since the 1880s. She is a member of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California and is currently the co-editor of that organization's quarterly journal, *The Baobab Tree*. Email her at journal@aagsnc.org



Photo Credit: AAGSNC
Discovering the facts needed to determine the last slaveholder of your ancestors is something that is more than possible when you decide to begin tracing your genealogy.

Julia Lockert Baker's road to discovery

Sharing information and making connections are key to furthering research goals

Interviewed by Annette Madden
Editor, *The Baobab Tree*

Julia Lockert Baker did a presentation at the Feb. 2012 AAGSNC monthly meeting about her genealogical research. This interview was conducted shortly after that presentation.

Q: How long have you been researching your family history?

A: I'd say on and off for ten years or longer. I've been actively researching for only about three years.

Q: How did you get interested in genealogy?

A: When I was about 14 years old, I was on vacation with my parents in Tennessee, an annual occasion, going "down home" in the summer. Our people are from the Clarksville and Nashville areas on both sides of my family. On the way to Nashville to visit relatives, I noticed a small highway sign pointing to Lockertville. As this was our last name I became curious about it and began collecting bits and pieces of family information. I found that the spelling of our last name was unusual as I would check telephone directories to see how many were in the towns we were visiting. Usually there would only be one or two. Most of them were concentrated in Tennessee. This was long before "Roots" so not much interest was shown toward the subject. The seed was planted but as a teenager, I had other pursuits more pressing. (Laughs)

Q: What are the surnames and locations you are researching?



Looking dapper and sophisticated are the Lockert brothers (l-r) Willie Tyler, Edie Burt, and Aeolian Edward.

A: The surnames for me are: Lockert, Hester, Washington, Level(l), Thomas, and Crusman. Areas are Tennessee, Kentucky, and Indiana.

My focus has been on Tennessee, looking for the connection between the European and African-American Lockerts. Also the focus of my research was trying to discover more

Aeolian E. Lockert was a pioneer as he was among an early group of African Americans who attended Michigan State University.

information about my grandmother Julia Sallie Level(l) Lockert as none of the grandchildren knew much about her. I am the only family member who is her namesake. That made me even more dedicated to learning about her. Much more info has been related to my grandfather Henry Lockert's side of the family.

Q: What are some of the most interesting things you have found out? Any particularly fascinating people?

A: Recently, my great-great grandfather Emanuel Washington's story has proven most interesting. First, I've learned he was the cook on his plantation. This I learned from reading my cousin John F. Baker's book "The Washingtons of Wessyngton Plantation". (See opposite page) I thought this was unusual as I believed that most of the cooking on plantations was done by women. He was also famous in the area for his corn bread recipe which is also in the book. I haven't made it yet, but I plan to make a batch soon.

My uncle Aeolian E. Lockert, my father's brother, was a pioneer as he was among an early group of African-Americans who attended Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. He was in the class of 1926. He and his wife Ophelia were also pioneers in Nashville as the first Negro principal of a high school and librarian respectively in the city of Nashville.

CONT. ON PAGE 17

The role of serendipity

Chance meetings and experiences collide to make a personal file robust



Photos courtesy of W.E. "Bill" Nelson

As most of us who do genealogy have found out, serendipity sometimes is as important as good solid research. Julia Lockert Baker's research has been furthered on more than one occasion by fortuitous happenstance.

A childhood friend of Julia's, Marie Orgain Purvies of Clarksville, Tennessee, attended a presentation by John F. Baker about his book, *"The Washingtons of Wessyngton Plantation."* Marie recognized Julia's grandmother's name, Willie Agnes, on the genealogy chart John had displayed. She told John she knew Julia and explained her connection to Willie Agnes. Mr. Baker asked Marie to have Julia contact him, which she did. He gave her the gift of her entire genealogy on her mother's side and the joy of finding a new cousin. Their great-grandfathers were brothers, both sons of Emanuel and Henny Washington.

After her presentation, Julia also received the message below.



Top: Hadley school students, teacher, and administrator pose for a school picture.

Bottom: (l-r): Mrs. Melson, Odum, Thompson, Booker, Crain, Hayes, Professor Lockert and Mrs. Cartwright.

Julia,

I just reviewed your article in the 2002 (*The Baobab Tree*) journal and verified we are talking about the same man. I always knew him as Professor Lockert. One of the pictures I will send you has his name as A.E. Lockert. I went to his school and had at least two classes [with] him. The school had two classrooms with a cafeteria off to the middle. I remember you could raise the blackboards separating the two rooms to make one large room. The building was probably constructed in the early 1940's by E.I. Dupont since Old Hickory was a company town. All lodgings and recreation facilities were owned and provided to employees by DuPont until they got out

of the housing business in the mid-50's. This was a county school and Old Hickory's second school for blacks. The older one existed in the 1930's... The name of the school was Hadley Elementary School with grades 1 through 7. After integration, it became a community center and now it is used by a nonprofit art society. I remember Professor Lockert as being a disciplinarian with a black leather strap in his rear pocket. I saw him use it, but didn't give him the opportunity to use it on me. I lived within 150 feet of the school and my mother worked there at one point...

- W.E. "Bill" Nelson

This is Your Last Hardcopy Issue Of *The Baobab Tree*...

unless you complete and mail the request below. You can also visit <http://goo.gl/teiFp> to submit your preference. *The Baobab Tree* will become a digital publication with the next issue. It will still have the same wonderful content, the same advertisements, and the same frequency of publication you are accustomed to enjoying.

As of this writing, most back issues of the journal are available as digital files in the **Members Only** section of our web site (www.aagsnc.org). As each new edition becomes available, it will be added to the collection and a notification will be sent by email to the membership list and posted in the AAGSNC Membership Yahoo Group site. Those that have opted to continue to receive the printed copy will be mailed their issue at the same time.

New members will be given the option of receiving the publication digitally or by mail.

If a member elects to change his or her mind later, the member should contact the Journal Committee by mail: *The Baobab Tree*, c/o AAGSNC, P.O. Box 27485, Oakland, CA 94602-0985, or by email: journal@aagsnc.org Requests will be honored at any time.

Those that prefer to continue to receive the printed version of the journal will need to complete and mail the request below (or a photocopy if you prefer to not damage your issue). Emailed requests will also be honored. Please be sure to include the information below in your email.

The Baobab Tree
c/o AAGSNC, P.O. Box 27485, Oakland, CA 94602-0985
journal@aagsnc.org

Please continue mailing a hard copy of my issues of *The Baobab Tree*.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Date _____



Why obituaries matter

Information gleaned from an obituary can make a tremendous difference

by **W.E. "Bill" Melson**
Chairman, AAGSNC Board

Obituaries can be a gold mine when researching relatives records. They can be found in funeral programs, newspapers, and digital media. They can be a great source for researchers looking for information on specific individuals, leads to other family members, or other places to research based on where current or past family members lived. The genealogical gold you may find in an obituary includes:

Name: Full names for both women and men. For women, the maiden name could be in parenthesis. If the person was known by a nickname, it might also be included.

Birth Date and Place: The full birth date as well as the town, county, and state of birth may be included, especially if the deceased was born in a different state or country. Other geographic information may also be included. Though it's rare, you may sometimes find the cause of death.

Parents: This may include mother's maiden name. If the person was adopted, the obituary might include the names of both biological and adoptive parents. Stepparents may also be included.

Life Highlights: Obituaries normally cover events and activities that were important to the individual, such as political activities, service or religious affiliations, occupations, military service, fraternal organizations, clubs or other associations of note.

Children: All children, both living and deceased are listed, including first names and names of spouses. Finding daughters is one of the hardest things to do in genealogical research; including husbands' names in parentheses makes for a very genealogically useful obituary.

Grandchildren: Their names are often included, depending on how many there are and the space available. Their spouses are not always mentioned. If there are great-grandchildren, only the number is usually mentioned due to limited space.

Locations of relatives: Obituaries generally note where family members live. Including family information is preferable, although space and cost limitations may dictate otherwise in a newspaper obituary.

Photos: One or more pictures of the deceased may be included in the obituary or funeral program, which could be helpful to those who did not have an opportunity to meet the deceased in person. This could also be the last remaining picture in the family records.

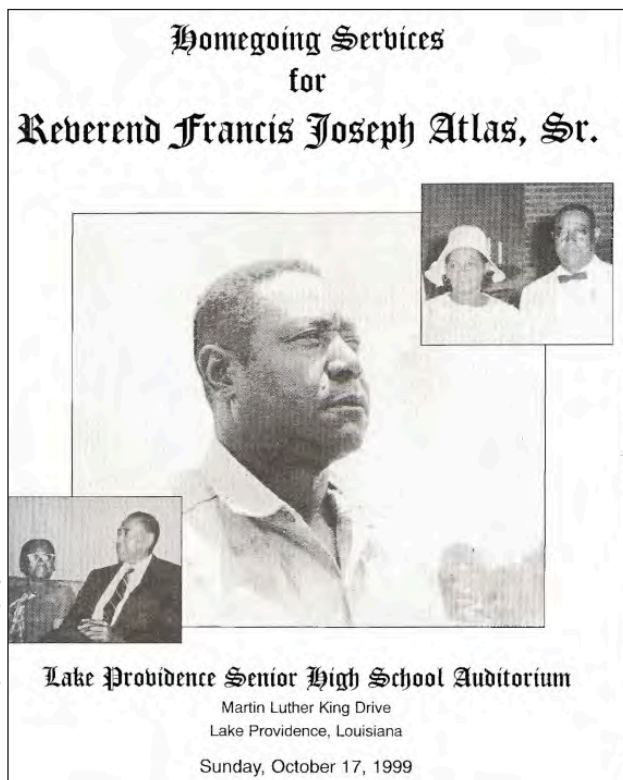
Information gleaned from an obituary can make a tremendous difference in your research, and might even knock down some brick walls.



Photo courtesy of W.E. "Bill" Melson

W.E. "Bill" Melson started doing genealogy in 2000 and has traced several of his ancestral lines to their last slave owners. Email him at BillMelson@aol.com

Homegoing Services
for
Reverend Francis Joseph Atlas, Sr.



Lake Providence Senior High School Auditorium
Martin Luther King Drive
Lake Providence, Louisiana
Sunday, October 17, 1999

Obituary

CHRISTINE ANDREA SINGLETON, was born, November 7, 1965, in Chicago, Illinois. She was the fourth of four children born to Joyce M. Singleton-Sinquefield and James C. Singleton. She was affectionately known as "Chris" to all who knew her.

At the age of nine, Chris accepted Christ and was baptized by the late Reverend J.J. Taylor of the St. Paul M.B. Church. In 1988, Chris united with Center of Hope Ministries under the pastorate of Reverend Regina S. Hillman-Durr.

Chris attended Clara Barton Elementary and Visitation High Schools.

Left: An obituary or funeral program can feature a number of photos of the deceased, as evidenced here.

Above: Details, such as date of birth, names of parents, church membership, and school affiliations can also be included in an obituary.

SACRAMENTO SEMINAR A SUCCESS

On March 10, 2012, AAGSNC members joined in presenting the seventh annual African American Family History Seminar at the Mormon Church's (LDS) Family History Center in Sacramento. The seminar included 23 different genealogy-related classes with something for everyone, from beginners to advanced genealogists.

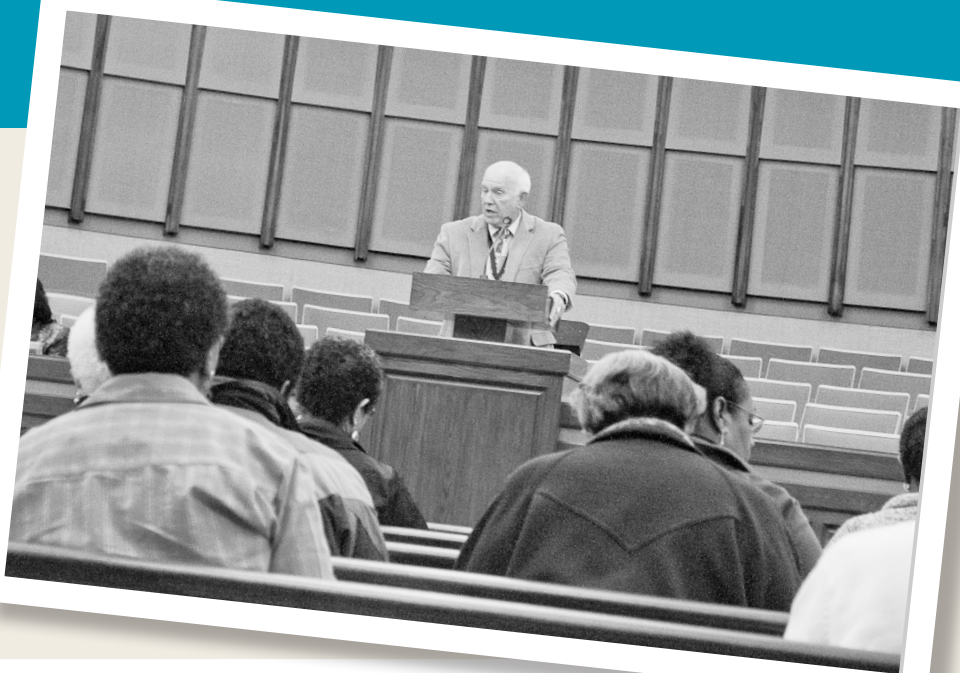


Photo Credits: AAGSNC

by Linda Bradley
Member, AAGSNC

This page, top: Ed Lucky, co-director of the Sacramento Family History Center, gave the welcome address.

This page, bottom: AAGSNC member and seminar presenter Lynette Williams, right, pauses with an event attendee and her child.



AAGSNC members on the program included *The Baobab Tree* editor Annette Madden as the keynote speaker, offering a presentation on the 1940 census, which was released on April 2 for public use. Additional topics ranged from “Beginning Your African American Family History Project” to “The Use of

Multi-Media in Telling Your Family’s Story.” AAGSNC Member Barbara Tyson provided an extensive display of African American books and member Terry Ligon conducted and recorded oral interviews, some of which can be viewed on YouTube.

The idea for a Sacramento African American seminar began in 2005 after a telecast there of the “Roots Simulated” Black History program held at the LDS Regional Family History Center in Oakland. Afterward, Dennis Holland, former LDS Sacramento Regional Program Director, asked Sacramento AAGSNC members Eric Thomas, Barbara Tyson, Jackie Chauhan, and Linda Bradley if they were interested in having an African American seminar in Sacramento. Everyone agreed and worked together as a committee to put on Sacramento’s first seminar in March 2006. This is the first year the seminar was planned and organized entirely by African American committee members, including Barbara Tyson and Kathy Knight; Linda Bradley, Program; Karen Burney, Advertising; Jackie Chauhan, Syllabus; and Lynette Williams, Food.



Opposite Page Top: Participants praised the broad range of genealogy classes at the African American Family History Seminar.

Opposite Page Left: Keynote Speaker Annette Madden of AAGSNC speaks about the 1940 Census.

Opposite Page Right: Seminar attendees discuss their learnings from the days classes.

“ Our goal next year is to provide even more presenters and topics. ”
- Linda Bradley, Sacramento African American Seminar Committee

Red tails get nod at California legislature

by Sharon Styles
Member, AAGSNC

Members of the original Tuskegee Airmen were honored for their military service by the California Legislative Black Caucus on Feb. 7, 2012 at The California Museum in Sacramento.

Edith Roberts, 92, told the crowd of nearly 200, Sacramento had a large number of Tuskegee Airmen because of McClellan AFB, Mather AFB, Beale AFB, and the Sacramento Army Depot. Once they were discharged or retired many remained in the area.



Original Tuskegee Airmen (seated) with members of auxiliary groups at the Feb. 7, 2012 event at The California Museum in Sacramento.

“The older I get the more I recognize black history is not just for black people,” said Assemblyman Steven C. Bradford. “I’m honored to recognize their efforts and urge everyone to see *Red Tails*.” Senator Curren D. Price, Jr., presented a plaque to each of the Airmen and the families of those deceased. Price said this national recognition is long overdue.

The honorees included: Master Sgt. Judge Albert, First Lieutenant Milford Craig, Master Sgt. George Hudson, Jr., Tech Sgt. Boyd Taylor, Sr. Master Sgt. George Porter, and Chief Master Sgt. Lenard Yates. Posthumous honorees were Major Herman “Ace” Lawson, Chief Master Sgt. Calvin Hobbs, Major James Harrison, Capt. Alvin Johnson, Col. James B. Smith, Senior Master Sgt. Robert “Bicycle” Wilson, Cadet Dr. Robert Matthews and Col George S. “Spanky” Roberts. The Sacramento Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen is named for Col. Roberts.

Chief Master Sgt. Lenard Yates, 87, said “I’m the junior of this bunch.” When asked if the film was accurate, Yates said “Yes, except for a few little things. They got the canopy wrong.” The canopy is the transparent enclosure over the cockpit. “*Tuskegee, Journey to Flight, A Historical Retrospective of an American Experience*” was developed by the California African American Museum in association with The California Museum. The exhibit, which features uniforms, photos, letters, telegrams and other items belonging to the airmen, is presented by the California Legislative Black Caucus and runs through August 5, 2012.

AAGNSC member among airmen honored

by Annette Madden
Editor, *The Baobab Tree*

On March 17, 2012, five Tuskegee Airmen were honored at an event held on the USS Hornet in Alameda, CA. Among them was AAGSNC member Clyde Grimes who served in intelligence for the unit. George Lucas’ film “*Red Tails*” has brought renewed attention and recognition to the first all-black fighter unit.

At the beginning of World War II, the armed forces were still segregated. (Segregation in the armed services was not ended until 1948) At the time, many whites believed that blacks lacked the intelligence to be pilots. The Tuskegee Airmen proved them wrong.

Their formation was the culmination of a decades-long fight begun in World War I by blacks to become aviators. Finally, in April 1939, Congress passed a bill appropriating funds to train African American pilots. Training was done through the Civilian Pilot Training Program and was based at Tuskegee Institute (now University) in Tuskegee, AL. After continued pressure, the War Department and the Army Air Corps activated the first all-black flying unit, the 99th Pursuit Squadron, on March 19, 1941. The 99th later became part of the 477th Bombardment Group. The other Tuskegee unit was the 332nd Fighter Group

The statistics help reveal their story. This is a partial list:

- 992 pilots were trained from 1941 to 1946
- 450 were deployed overseas, and 150 Airmen lost their lives
- They flew 15,533 combat sorties, destroyed 112 German aircraft in the air and another 150 on the ground
- 950 railcars, trucks and other motor vehicles destroyed. One destroyer was put out of action.

CONT. ON PAGE 23

Society membership + family connection = research success

by Carole Neal
Member, AAGSNC

The article featuring AAGSNC founding member Electra Kimble Price that ran in February 2012 in the *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper was reprinted in its entirety in the First Quarter 2012 issue of *The Genie*, the journal of the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association based in Shreveport, LA. *The Genie* is indexed in PERSI, the PERiodical Source Index, a very valuable genealogical database.

In February I forwarded that news article to family members letting them know Electra is the person who, back in 1997, helped me to get started with my research. I included in that email distribution Willie Griffin, my third cousin on my Neal side. Cousin Willie is a past president of the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Society and is the current editor of *The Genie*. I had no idea he would run that newspaper article in the journal, but I am glad he did especially since Arkansas is a primary area of research for Electra. The reprint was the lead featured article and also included the information that Electra is a founding member of AAGSNC, was recognized at the February 2010 Black Family History Day at the Family History Center, and mentions the AAGSNC blog which recaps that event and the photos taken that day.

Cousin Willie and I connected by happenstance. For one of the monthly meetings I attended early on in my AAGSNC membership, Jim Neal (no relation – or at least we have not yet found a family connection) was the speaker. One of the things I came away with from Jim's presentation was the importance of joining a genealogy society in the local area where you are researching. As a result, I joined three

societies in Louisiana: the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, the Louisiana Genealogical & Historical Society in Baton Rouge, and a third society in northern Louisiana that no longer exists. The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association permits its members to submit an ancestor chart to be published in *The Genie*. I submitted my chart. For my paternal side, at that time, it was only a 2-1/2 generation chart.

A short time later I received a letter in the mail with a return name and address that I did not recognize. On reading the letter, I learned of this new family connection. Cousin Willie had seen my ancestor chart in the journal and immediately recognized the family connection. His great-grandmother, Marlinda (Marlindy) (Neal) Grissom, and my great-grandfather, Stephen Neal, were sister and brother. The name Grissom later somehow morphed into

Cousin Willie provided data that helped me go back two additional generations from where I began my research.

Griffin. At the time we first connected, cousin Willie had been researching for 30 years. He shared how he had traveled on occasion to Winnsboro, Franklin, LA to conduct oral interviews with family members as one of the ways he collected information. He provided data that helped me go back two additional generations for my primary paternal lines: Neal, Ward, Davis, and Williams. We have remained in contact ever since.

Recently, our connection came in handy. Annie (Seals) Johnson ("Aunt Tute"), one of my mother's two surviving sisters at the time, died on March 23, 2012. She lived in Homer, Claiborne, LA. December 26, 2011 she celebrated her

92nd birthday. I was unable to travel to Louisiana for her funeral service. A few days after the service took place, I received an envelope containing a copy of the funeral program in the mail. Cousin Willie had mailed it to me! I had no idea he and his wife had attended the funeral. As it turns out, he knows a second cousin on my Seals side, Lenward Seals, Jr., from when they attended Grambling University. I scanned the program and shared it by email attachment with other family members who were not able to attend the service.

Naturally, being a student of genealogy, in my email I had to mention a few corrections to the printed obituary, as well as add a bit of additional family history. Based on my records and information, Aunt Tute was born in 1919 (not 1920 as was listed on the program). After my mother died, my sister Cynthia found among Mama's belongings a list she (Mama) had prepared of the date of births (and deaths) for her parents, some of her grandparents, herself and her siblings, as well as her children and grandchildren. Cynthia passed that list on to me. Plus, I'd always known that Aunt Tute was the same age as my paternal uncle, Eleazer Neal, Jr. They both were born in 1919, he in September of that year and she the day after Christmas.

Listed on the funeral program as a speaker is Roy Mardis, a Seals cousin. His grandmother was Delia (Seals) Mardis Brown, an older sister of my grandfather John Lloyd Seals.

Six siblings preceded Aunt Tute in death and they were listed in the obituary: Adelia (died at birth), Johnnie Mae Seals (died at age 27 in Detroit, 1942), Ernestine (Seals) Liston, Fannye (Seals) Neal, W.T. Seals, and Timothy L. Seals, Sr. Surviving Aunt Tute were Elouise (Seals) Love ("Aunt Takie") and Samuel Seals, Sr. My mother's first name was Fannye.

CONT. ON PAGE 18

The challenge of African American research

continued from cover

Putting It All in Context

Important in any genealogical investigation as a part of sound research methodology, but particularly key when researching African American ancestors, is the process of framing one's research within the proper context. Some veteran researchers simply call this process "contexting." Contexting involves (1) understanding what is transpiring in the nation, state, county, and city for the particular time period being researched; (2) knowing the migration, naming, prejudice, and settlement patterns of the particular family and ethnic group being investigated; (3) understanding the religious, benevolent, political, and other special organizations which might have been extant in the geographic area and may have interacted with the ethnic group in question; and (4) being cognizant of the implications laws, codes, and regulations may have had on the creation, maintenance, and location of pertinent historical records.

The revised edition of *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy* (Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 1997) includes a very useful chapter entitled "Tracking African American Family History." The chapter provides genealogists with an excellent foundation for researching this ethnic group, detailing various types of records, the types of information they contain, and where one can locate them. The chapter also has a generous number of notes and concludes with a bibliography.

African American Military History

There are many important resources for the researcher of African American family history. One of these is the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society. Joining this society is a wise move for the family historian interested in this ethnic group. Another helpful resource is a massive tome dealing with the African American military experience entitled *Black Soldiers—Black Sailors—Black Ink: Research Guide on African-Americans in U. S. Military History, 1526—1900*, compiled by Thomas Truxtun Moebs (Chesapeake

Bay, VA: Moebs Publishing Co., 1994). Nearly 1,700 pages, this work is largely a bibliography of sources, arranged in several major sections to assist the researcher in accessing specific materials. The first section is a bibliography of writings by African Americans, followed by an annotated chronology. The next two sections contain a subject bibliography with author cross-references, and a listing of unit histories from 1729 to 1900. Ten appendixes round out the publication, covering more than four hundred pages. United States Colored Troops regimental records, Congressional Medal of Honor winners, Confederate publications, and portraits of veterans can be found in these appendixes.

Framing one's research within the proper context is an important part of sound research methodology.

What makes this work particularly useful is its comprehensiveness. While many genealogists initially prefer publications which provide family names with associated vital events and family data, comprehensive bibliographies, properly used, certainly can be worth one's research time. Such bibliographies provide the researcher with a vast collection of resources crucial to establishing the proper context in which to conduct research, as well as citations to records that can be searched for more family-specific data. Citation analysis, the process of looking through the citations, notes, and bibliographies of published materials for further leads and resources, is a less-frequently-used but quite worthwhile endeavor for family historians. This process assists one in finding as much supporting documentation as possible while working to acquire the maximum amount of primary source materials.

Black Heritage Sites

At the recent American Library Association annual meeting, an

important work for African American researchers, *Black Heritage Sites: An African American Odyssey and Finder's Guide*, by Nancy C. Curtis, Ph.D. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1996), received the prestigious Denali Press Award. This award is given to reference works of outstanding quality and significance that furnish information about ethnic and minority groups in the United States. This compilation, arranged by general geographic region within the country, yields much detail about a significant number of historic sites. The material is very useful for building a context within which to conduct area-specific research, and also supplies some potentially useful family data. Each section contains endnotes, as well as a bibliography of works consulted by the author.

African Americans in the Confederacy

As with other areas of genealogical research, periodical literature plays a vital part in African American family history. There are a significant number of African American historical and genealogical societies which publish newsletters and quarterlies. There are also special issues of local, regional, and state genealogical periodicals focusing on African American records and research methodology, as well as numerous articles in geographically-based magazines. One of these special issues is unique—volume fourteen of the *Journal of Confederate History* series (Atlanta, GA: Southern Heritage Press, 1995). This particular volume has a series title which accurately describes the nearly two hundred pages of text: "Forgotten Confederates: An Anthology about Black Southerners." And what an anthology it is!

The work contains a number of heavily footnoted articles on the role of African Americans in the Confederacy. A number of these notes may very well lead to sources of data that are vital for particular family history research. Other articles contain abstracts and lists from compiled military records, extensive biographical sketches,

CONT. ON PAGE 22

President's Column

continued from page 3

Sometimes it takes seniors a little time to wrap their minds around the early events of their lives and those of their kinfolk. If you can send them a list of questions you plan to ask in advance, I can assure you they will appreciate it (if they have any intention of cooperating with you at all). Take an audio or video recorder with you and a digital camera. These will help you record documents, photographs, and stories you will encounter. There are many books on interviewing techniques at the library if you are uncomfortable developing the "right" questions to ask. Just be sure you make that first visit!

Contact the local historical and/or genealogical societies if you have more obscure issues to resolve in your research. Let them know when you plan to arrive and what you want to find out. Almost always such a contact will assure an introduction to someone interested in helping. If you have accumulated documentation, take copies with you. Our ancestors are not hiding and are where they always were. They're just waiting for us to find them.

Join And Volunteer!

Here at mid-year I am once again reminded of the staggeringly important contributions of our members to the society and to the public. This is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization, and the work of our members would confound the most hardened capitalist. I encourage you to volunteer at your local society, and in addition, join the local historical and/or genealogical society where you are doing research. These organizations would appreciate the modest revenue, and as a member you may gain entré to resources that are not available to you as a guest. At your local organization, though welcome, your dues are rarely adequate to keep the organization afloat. Serving on the board of directors, acting as an officer, writing newsletter articles, or moderating the web site are all activities that are fun for many, and make the organization successful. That is the real contribution. Make the organization successful; after you have joined, volunteer.

Julia Lockert Baker's road to discovery

continued from page 8

I found information about him on Google.com.

Q: What records/methods have you used?

A; First, collecting bits and piece of family history from my mother and listening to conversations my parents and uncles engaged in. Often names of relatives far and near would be related in their stories. I was surprised how much I could recall. I also posted on Genforum in the beginning and most recently did some research at the Family History Center during AAGSNC's Black Family History Day. I've also been fortunate to have others pass along information when they knew I was searching. I've been to several other genealogy sites online, among them Cyndi's List, Ancestry.com, and RootsWeb.com. My most rewarding experience was a complete surprise when I learned that a cousin who had been unknown to me (John F. Baker) was a genealogist and had completed an entire research of one side of my family, from my Grandmother Willie Agnes Washington Hester. I was truly blessed.

Q: Have you taken any research trips?

A: No, I have not been on any research trips. I'm hoping to visit Wessyngton Plantation where my grandmother grew up, as it still exists as a historical site in Tennessee. My grandfather's name is on a marker in the African American cemetery there. Cousin John F. Baker conducts tours of the plantation.

Q: What have you learned or gained personally from your research?

A: I believe I first gained a sense of from whence I come. I felt that my family was very small. And although both my grandparents on my mother's side were well respected by both blacks and whites in their community, and even though I was so proud to be their granddaughter,

I sometimes wondered about their history. My grandfather Erie Hester bought his land, 26 acres, from a white man. He had a third grade education, but was also a master builder. He built his home with the tools he forged in his own blacksmith shed. I grew up with pride knowing some of this history. They were active in their church and community as was my mother, Ruby, and my uncle John William. Learning that we came from a larger foundation of equally smart respected ancestors only enhanced my pride in my roots. I believe I was able to have the life I'm living because I always knew that my ancestors

known and unknown were praying for me on my life journey. I know I come from strong roots. No one can take these facts away from me and I truly believe this knowledge makes all the difference in the world as to what type of person or human being one turns out to be.



Julia Lockert Baker
Washington Descendant

I've also learned that on both sides of my family that my ancestors were educators, visionaries, and true citizens of their communities. Many of them paved the way not only for their own descendants but other African Americans, within the confines of the times in which they lived. Who knows what they could have accomplished had they been truly free and equal?

Julia Lockert Baker is an Oakland resident via Tennessee and Michigan. She is married to Antwon L. Baker and mother to a son, Jai Lanar Baker.

Baker is a retired teacher, formerly with Oakland Unified School District, Early Childhood Education Department for 28 yrs and 32yrs in the field specializing in Multicultural studies.

She is active in various community organizations due to her beliefs of "giving back" to her community. She is secretary of the Rainbow Neighborhood Prevention Council and a Golden Life member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a public service sorority/organization.

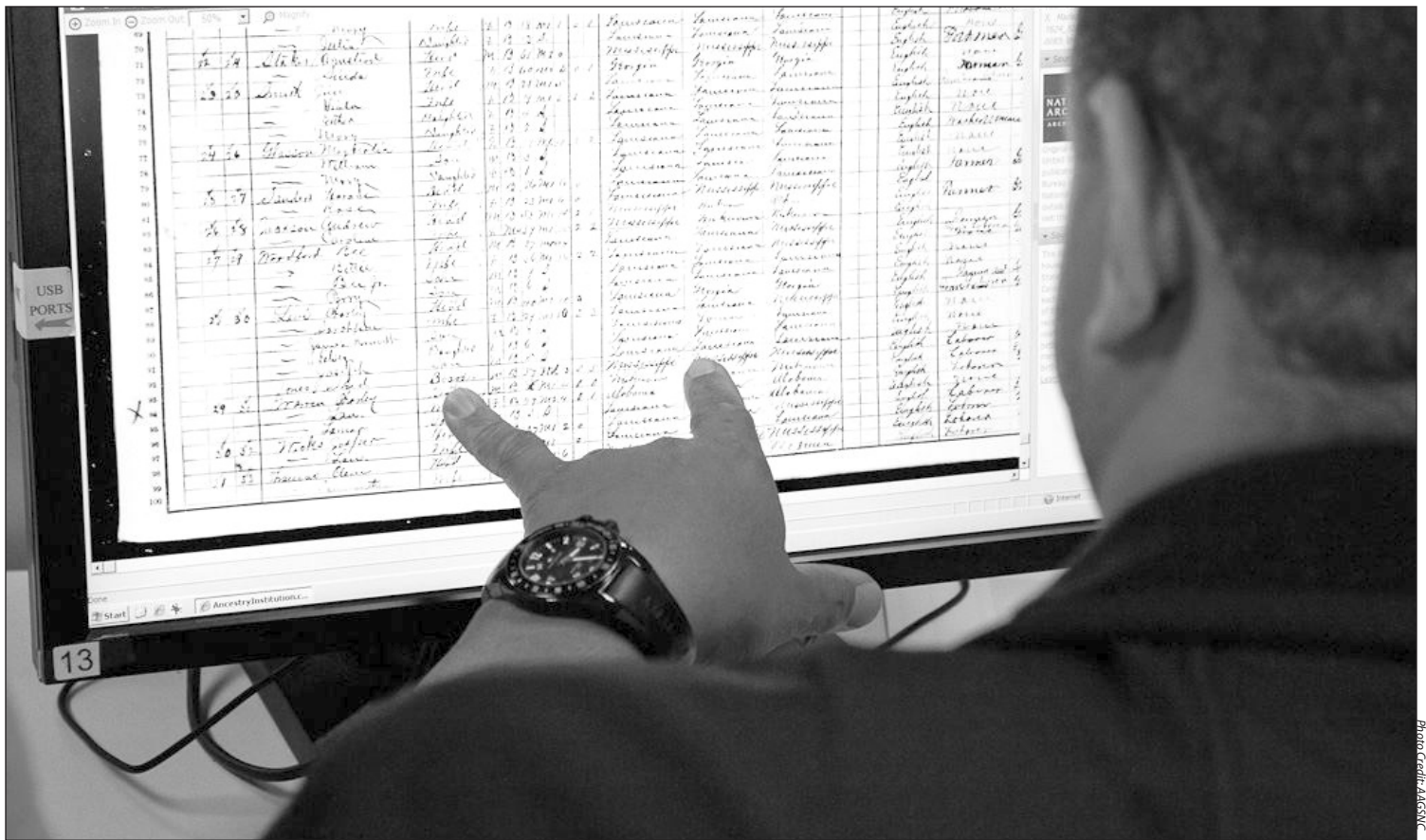


Photo Credit: AAGSNC

Society membership

continued from page 15

The program spelled the name with an “i” instead of a “y.” I shared that there were three persons in the Seals family with that first name, the first being my great-grandmother Fannie (Henderson) Seals, and that two of her granddaughters were named for her: my mother’s first cousin, Fannie (Seals) Payne, and my mother, Fannye (Seals) Neal. My great-grandparents, Abraham (“Abe”) and Fannie Seals, were married on February 11, 1866, in Claiborne Parish, LA. My parents, Solomon and Fannye Neal were married on February 11, 1946, in San Francisco, CA. One of great-grandmother Fannie’s namesakes was married exactly 80 years to the day after she and great-grandpa Abe were married. What a coincidence.

I learned of my great-grandparent’s marriage information early in my research through a lookup offer from someone at **RootsWeb**. There were two persons who offered; one came back

saying he did not find anything. The second person was more thorough and located the record. Great-grandmother Fannie’s name was spelled “Fany” and there were a few other misspellings on the document which was entirely in script. I eventually obtained a copy of the document and noted they both signed by marking their “X.”

A sad coincidence to this story is that my mother’s other surviving sister, Elouise (Seals) Love, 89, “Aunt Takie” passed away in Los Angeles one month to the day after Aunt Tute died April 23, 2012. They were three years apart in age.

Some of us first cousins now are working to have a one-day Seals Family gathering for descendants of my grandparents, John Lloyd and Pernilla (Jamison) Seals. It seems too often that the impetus for a family gathering or reunion tends to come after having gathered for a sad occasion such as a family member’s funeral.

Family connections. They’re even more important as new generations spring forth and older generations pass off the scene. Generations come and generations go. It is the circle of life. A family’s legacy, however, will continue in perpetuity.

“Thank you” to Electra for all that she has done and continues to do to ignite and inspire our passion as “roots finders,” researching and documenting our respective family histories.

Carole Neal has been researching her family history since 1997. She is a former Officer, past Membership Chair (two terms), and a life member of AAGSNC; a member of the National Genealogical Society, the Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society (AAHGS), the Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society, the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, and a past member of the California Genealogical Society. She is a family historian for her paternal and maternal sides and has planned family reunions for both. Email her at rootsfinder@att.net

Sharing strategies for genealogical success

College community learns the value of family history through presentation

by Sharon Styles and Linda Bradley
Members, AAGSNC

AAGSNC member Linda Bradley was the featured speaker for the African American Ancestry/Oral History Workshop at Sacramento City College Cultural Awareness Center on Feb. 9, 2012. Bradley's Powerpoint presentation included beginning genealogy and conducting oral interviews. In addition, AAGSNC member Sharon Styles provided a book display from her personal library and various handouts relating to African American genealogy.

Victoria Henderson, Coordinator of the Cultural Awareness Center, contacted the ladies with a request to give students information on how to begin tracing their roots, the procedure to obtain family history through conducting oral interviews, and how to record information collected.

Following the presentation Bradley and Styles spoke individually with students about how they too can enhance their own genealogy search for their family history and documentation. The presentation was so well received that Bradley and Styles have been invited back to conduct additional genealogy workshops.



Linda Bradley, right, with one of the workshop participants.

Sharon Styles has been a member of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California since 2010. Email her at sharon.kay@sbcglobal.net

Linda Bradley has been a member of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California since 2000. Email her at LBradlee2@aol.com

Right: Victoria Henderson, Coordinator, Cultural Awareness Center, Sacramento City College.



**This is Your Last Hardcopy
Issue Of *The Baobab Tree*.**

**Please refer to page 10 for details on how to
continue to receive this journal by mail.**

BAY AREA RESOURCES

Compiled by Annette Madden, Editor, *The Baobab Tree*

We genealogy addicts in the San Francisco Bay Area are very fortunate. Several excellent research centers are within an easy drive and hold many documents invaluable to our research. In this issue is information on the National Archives at San Francisco, the California State Library—Sutro, and the African American Museum and Library at Oakland (AAMLO). In this next issue will be information on the California Genealogical Society and Library.

.....

The National Archives at San Francisco

Leo J. Ryan Federal Building
1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno, CA 94066-2350
Phone: 650-238-3501, Fax: 650-238-3510
Email: sanbruno.archives@nara.gov,
Website: <http://www.archives.gov/pacific/san-francisco/>

Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Closed on all Federal holidays

This regional NARA office holds original records generated by Federal courts and agency field offices in northern and central California, Nevada (except Clark County), Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands dating from the 1850s to the early 2000s. They also have a large collection of National Archives microfilm, including all existing Federal population census schedules from 1790 to 1930.

Of particular interest to genealogists are the following records:

- Federal population censuses for all States, 1790-1930
- Indexes for the 1880, 1900, 1910, and 1920 censuses (*indexes are not available for all census years and all states*)
- Records documenting the removal of the Five Civilized tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek and Seminole) included in the Oklahoma Removal, including the Dawes Rolls.
- Passenger arrival records for the port of San Francisco
- Revolutionary war military service records
- Naturalization records

You can search the San Bruno facility's holdings online at their website.

There are self-service microfilm readers and reader-printers available without appointment. A two-hour limit is imposed if other researchers are waiting.

The following online services are available at the facility free of charge:

- The Archives Library's Online Public Access Catalog America: History & Life
- Ancestry
- ArchivesUSA
- Family Search
- Fold3 (formerly Footnote)
- GaleNet's Biography and Genealogy Master Index
- ProQuest/UMI Heritage Quest Online
- ProQuest Direct

The National Archives at San Francisco also offers workshops of interest to genealogists. Upcoming workshops are:

- Federal Land Records, August 17, 9am-1pm
- Freedmen Bureau Records, August 31, 9am-noon
- Preserving Your History, September 14, 9am-1pm

Fees are \$15 payable in advance. A minimum of 12 people must have registered by the week of the workshop or it will be cancelled. To register, contact: Rose Mary Kennedy, (650) 238-3485, sanbruno.archives@nara.gov

California State Library—Sutro

J. Paul Leonard Library, Room 610
1630 Holloway Drive
San Francisco, CA 94132-4030
Phone: 415-469-6100
Email: sutro@library.ca.gov
Website: <http://library.ca.gov/>

Hours: Monday - Friday, 10AM-5PM

The Sutro Library is the largest genealogical library west of Salt Lake City and contains materials from the entire United States. Included in their holdings are:

- Over 10,000 family histories
- United States local history collection
- City directories
- Telephone directories
- Microfilm of federal census records
- Indian census records
- Major genealogical periodicals
- California Death Index, 1940-1995
- California Marriage Index (Groom index only), 1960-1985
- Social Security Death Index
- Atlases, gazetteers, maps, guidebooks, etc.

Holdings can be checked online using MELVYL, the online catalog of the University of California's library system, at <http://melvyl.worldcat.org> or through the California State Library main catalog at <http://www.library.ca.gov/collections/>

The librarians are happy to answer simple research or other library-related questions and can be contacted in several ways during regular hours (see hours below).

If you are planning to visit the library, it is advisable to call ahead to make sure a large group is not expected there that day.

The Sutro Library has moved from its old location and will reopen August 1st.

African American Museum & Library at Oakland (AAMLO)

659 14th Street
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 637-0200
Website: <http://oaklandlibrary.org/locations/african-american-museum-library-oakland>



Bay area residents are lucky to have a regional branch of the National Archives and Records Administration located in their area. Among their many resources are records for the government established Freedmans Bureau which supported the formerly enslaved during the Reconstruction period.

Hours: Tues-Sat: 12:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Closed Sunday and Monday
The archives department is open from 12-4. Call (510) 637-0198 to make an appointment.

AAMLO's stated mission is the "discovery, preservation, interpretation and sharing of historical and cultural experiences of African Americans in California and the West for present and future generations." There are over 160 collections in its archives documenting the history of African Americans in Northern California and the Bay Area.

In its collections are:

- Diaries of prominent families, pioneers, churches, and social and political organizations
- Black newspapers including Freedom's Journal, the Liberator, California Voice, and Sun Reporter
- An oral history collection containing interviews with local civil rights activists, educators, writers, and musicians.
- The Eternal Voices video library documenting more than 80 years of African American East Bay history.
- A microfilm collection which includes primary research information on African American

enslavement, military service, and California census records from 1910 to 1930. More information about the collections can be found at the AAMLO website.

AAMLO has a non-circulating reference library consisting of approximately 12,000 volumes by or about African Americans including books on religion, the military, genealogy, and California history. The library offers access to local and out of state newspapers, and scholarly journals.

AAMLO also houses a museum on its second floor which hosts traveling and original exhibitions highlighting the art, history and culture of African Americans. Information on current and upcoming exhibits can be found at their website.

There are ten computers with Internet access available for public use. Library staff are available to assist with research questions.

Interested in submitting your work to the Baobab Tree? You don't have to be a professional writer! Just tell your story the best you can and be willing to work with the editors to polish it for publication.

Here are some helpful hints when preparing your submissions:

- Type all submissions. Times New Roman font, 12-point size is best.
- Write 1 to 3 pages. We always need some one-page stories; more than three pages is too long.
- We may edit. All submissions are subject to review by our journal committee and editors, and may be edited for clarity and to fit the space available.
- Send your bio along with your story; include your contact e-mail and phone number(s). Bio should be in narrative form if possible, not a resume; we will still edit as needed.
- Send your portrait. E-mail a JPEG photo of yourself along with your story or article. A good clear head-and-shoulders shot of you is best, in front of a solid color background that contrasts with your hair and skin tone. If you only have a shot of yourself with other people, we may be able to crop it (i.e. cut out the other folks).
- Photos, documents and other graphics are always welcome, in JPEG format. Make sure pictures are at least 150 dpi (dots per inch), sharp, clear and have enough contrast to show up well in black and white. All photos and documents must have credit and captions submitted in a separate document.
- Respect the deadlines you're given for submissions and corrections. If your material is late, it might have to be held for the next issue or drastically altered to fit the space.

E-mail us at journal@aagsnc.org

The challenge of African American research

continued from page 16

obituaries, veterans' narratives, and selected correspondence. The issue is completed with a bibliography of sources for the study of African American Confederates. A compilation such as this special issue challenges the researcher to investigate all possibilities and search for a wide range of records while engaging in Civil War-era African American genealogical research. It also challenges the researcher to seek facts and rigorous documentation rather than give credence to stereotypes and information found in undocumented general-history texts.

Internet Sources

The Internet can play a key role in assisting those engaged in African American research. There are a number of excellent sites which assist the researcher in locating historical data, help identify individuals who are working on particular family lines, and provide a means for networking. A number of these sites can be easily located by using one of the many Internet search engines, such as Yahoo! or Altavista, or by visiting some of the more popular genealogy sites, such as Cyndi's List, and looking for the ethnic or African American pages at the site.

The Afrigeneas Homepage is an excellent example of the type of information researchers can find when looking for African American genealogy sources on the Internet. The page is well organized and contains numerous links to important genealogical resources worldwide. From this home page, one can subscribe to the Afrigeneas mailing list, a place where queries can be asked and answered, significant research discoveries can be shared, and information about upcoming symposia, conferences, and seminars can be disseminated.

There are a host of other links on the Afrigeneas Homepage, including links to The Genealogy Home Page, ROOTS-L RESOURCE,

the African American Genealogy Group of Pennsylvania, the USGenWeb Project, the African-Native American Genealogy Page, underground railroad data, books and pamphlets on African Americans, a directory of genealogical libraries, and basic search strategies. As with an increasing number of sites, this site also links the genealogist to searchable data files, including the National Park Service's United States Colored Troops database.

One can also find a link to *The AfriGeneas News*. *The AfriGeneas News* is an online newsletter intended to be a center for sharing genealogical tips and resources from the African American online chats at America OnLine and from the Afrigeneas mailing list. Among its many informational items, this online newsletter contains a question-and-answer section called "From the Archives," a list of current commemorative events scheduled around the country (such as the 9th Cavalry cemetery dedication in Las Animas, New Mexico), links to genealogy books, and numerous valuable links from the main Afrigeneas Homepage, such as black studies on microfilm, Britannica black history, and explanations of important historical events. Researchers from novice to seasoned genealogist can find much assistance at this Internet site.

With these works—and the other sources certain to be found as one explores them—the genealogists interested in African American family history should enjoy much success.

Curt Witcher is the department manager for the Historical Genealogy Department of the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, IN. He is also the president of the National Genealogical Society.

This article previously published in 3rd quarter 2011 issue of *The Genie*, the quarterly journal of the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Society and is reprinted with their permission.



Tuskegee University was founded on July 4, 1881 as the Tuskegee Normal School for Colored Teachers. In 1941, it served as the location where the first squadron of black pilots were trained for combat in World War II.

Tuskegee airmen honored

continued from page 14

For their service they received:

- Three Distinguished Unit Citations
- At least one Silver Star
- 14 Bronze Stars
- 744 Air Medals
- Eight Purple Hearts

In 1945, the Chicago Defender printed a story, based on information provided by the 15th Air Force, that the 332nd had never lost a bomber they were escorting. Recent research by William Holton and Dr. Daniel Haulman

disputes that, but document that even if not true, their record was still exceptional having lost fewer bombers than any other escort unit in the 15th Air Force.

The Tuskegee Airmen have received many honors over the years and their service continues to be recognized almost 70 years later. Many of the survivors attend the annual Tuskegee Airmen Convention hosted by Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

The Baobab Tree is published four times a year and is provided free to all members of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC). Additional copies and past issues may be purchased for \$10.00 per copy.

All articles and manuscripts submitted for publication are evaluated and may be edited. Authors retain copyright. AAGSNC does not assume responsibility for errors of fact or interpretation.

Deadlines for submission of material for publication in The Baobab Tree are: Feb. 15 for the Spring issue, May 15 for the Summer issue, Aug. 15 for the Fall issue, and Nov. 15 for the Winter issue.

Correspondence on editorial matters, story submissions and requests for permission to reprint articles may be sent to journal@aagsnc.org.

Articles and manuscripts acceptable for publication include:

Manuscripts/Articles:

- African and African-American genealogy, cultural traditions, and philosophy
- Church histories
- Documentation of African oral traditions and African writings
- Documentation of African-American families
- Ancestry charts, family group records, personal family papers
- Miscellaneous topics of interest in researching African ancestors
- Resources and methods of research in Africa

Abstracts:

- Census transcriptions (federal, state, county & city)
- Church records (baptisms, burials, marriages, etc.)
- Court records
- Manumission and freedom certificates
- Missionary and benevolent society records
- Military and pension records
- Newspaper transcriptions
- Plantation family papers relating to slaves
- Tax lists naming free blacks or slaves
- Voter registration lists



African American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC)

P.O. Box 27485, OAKLAND, CA 94602-0985

Call Us

(877) 884-2843

Email Us

journal@aagsnc.org

Visit Our Website

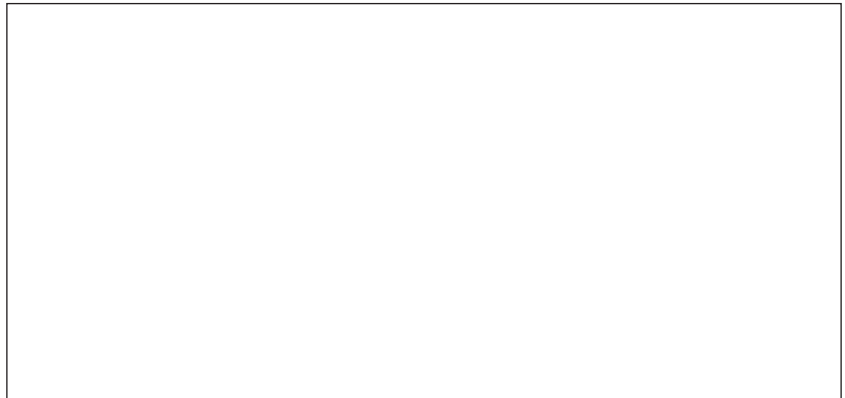
www.AAGSNC.org

Visit Our Blog

www.AAGSNC.org/blog

Become a Fan on Facebook

www.facebook.com/AAGSNC



Black Family History Day

FREE and open to the public

Participate in workshops and get one-on-one consultation for your genealogy research!

Saturday, October 13, 2012

1:00pm-5:00pm

Oakland Family History Center

4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland, CA

Register to participate and volunteer at
<http://aagsnc-bfhd-oct12.eventbrite.com/>



Photo Credit: AAGSNC