



The African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc. (AAGSNC) was founded in Oakland, CA in 1996, under the leadership of Kathryn Burgess Smith.

AAGSNC FOUNDING MEMBERS:

- Kathryn Burgess Smith
- Charlotte Briggs-Ford
- Bank G. Smith
- Jeanette Braxton Secret
- Electra Kimble Price
- Rayford Bullock
- Charles T. Brown

OBJECTIVES of the AAGSNC:

- To promote interest in genealogy, biography and related history among African Americans.
- 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.

It's Your History ... Isn't it Time You Told Your Story?

MEETINGS

Meetings are held the third Saturday of every month, at 1:30 pm, at the Oakland Public Library, Diamond branch, located at 3566 Fruitvale Ave, Oakland, CA. There are no meetings during the Summer hiatus (July and August). Guests and visitors are always welcome to attend these open meetings. The AAGSNC Board of Directors meets immediately following the regular membership meetings (from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm) and members are welcome to attend.

JOURNAL

The Baobab Tree is published quarterly (in March, June, September, and December) by the AAGSNC and is provided free to all members. Additional copies and past issues may be purchased for \$10.00 per copy.

- Membership categories are:
 - Regular \$25
 - Youth (16 and younger) \$15
 - Family \$35
 - Organization \$45
 - Life Membership - Individual \$200
 - Life Membership - Family \$300

- The AAGSNC accepts no responsibility for statements of fact or opinion made by contributors. Deadlines for submission of material for publication in From the Baobab Tree are: February 5 for the March issue, May 6 for the June issue, August 6 for the September issue, and November 5 for the December issue.

- Correspondence on editorial matters, submission requests, or permission to reprint articles may be obtained, at no cost, by written request to the editor (newsletter@aagsnc.org).

African American Genealogical Society
of Northern California

PO Box 27485
Oakland, CA 94602-0985
(877) 884-2843



The Baobab Tree

Quarterly Journal of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc. • Founded 1996

ANCESTORS GUIDED AAGSNC MEMBER TO THE "HISTORY DETECTIVES"

By George Geder

John Stevenson

b. 1834 Maryland
d. 1914 Cazenovia, Madison, NY

-- By the time you read this, a feature on the PBS program *History Detectives* about John Stevenson will have aired --



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go "gaga." There were my father's 1903 music encyclopedia, one of those floor model Philco radios (probably just needed a tube replaced), some silver/aluminum record albums (Dad was a musician), and countless other family historical artifacts that she considered junk. It was said that roaches 'skipped' Pearl's house and went on to the next.

When I was growing up, we lived in an apartment complex in Binghamton, New York (Broome County). Every summer the management would offer paint to the tenants. Every summer I would paint my room and let the contractors paint the rest of the house. Our home was a clean home for sure. However, I'm getting away from the story.

In that album was a photo of my father as a boy. He was four years old, dating the picture as 1907. I know this because another picture of Dad, wearing the same outfit, had his age written on it. That was one of the very few photographs that had any description. For the last 30 years I have been trying to identify my ancestors in this photo album. In this particular photograph are my grandmother, Beulah Stevenson Geder; my grandfather, Emmett Moore Geder; and a seated man on whose lap my father is resting. I could say that he's my great grandfather but I'm not sure. He looks to be a little too old. Yet, he looks to be too young to be my great great



Beulah Stevenson Geder, William Emmett Geder (child), John Stevenson (seated) and Emmett Moore Geder

I became interested in genealogy after my father passed in 1977. At that time I inherited a photo album that included tin-types, turn of the century (1900) postcards, and other pictures of ancestors about which I knew nothing. This also was the first time I laid eyes on this treasure. I understood why this album was hidden all those years. My mother, Pearle Flanck Geder, was a clean freak. She lived for spring cleaning. As a child, I witnessed her throwing things out that, today, would make the appraisers on the *Antiques Roadshow*

SOME BACKGROUND

I became interested in genealogy after my father passed in 1977. At that time I inherited a photo album that included tin-types, turn of the century (1900) postcards, and other pictures of ancestors about which I knew nothing. This also was the first time I laid eyes on this treasure. I understood why this album was hidden all those years. My mother, Pearle Flanck Geder, was a clean freak. She lived for spring cleaning. As a child, I witnessed her throwing things out that, today, would make the appraisers on the *Antiques Roadshow*



CONTENTS

"Ancestors Guided AAGSNC Member to History Detectives" by George Geder 1

Society News 3

"Memories of Gum Springs School," by Ms. Melynn Gillette 7

"Follow-up, My Not-Scottish-Bruces" by Lisa B. Lee 10

Faster California Vital Records 12

What's New at the Oakland Family History Center 14

Letter From the Editor 15

Index of Surnames 15

Summit Registration Form..... Insert

The Baobab Tree is published quarterly in Oakland, CA and mailed to every black genealogy society in North America, and most genealogical libraries and archives in the United States. Your published works will be read by thousands of people, possibly one of your relatives.

As always, we welcome our members to submit their stories, accomplishments, questions, suggestions, letters, photos, etc., for possible inclusion in a future edition. We reserve the right to edit submissions and not all submissions will be published.

Submissions: newsletter@aagsnc.org or via postal mail to our PO Box 27485, Oakland, CA 94602-0985.



EDITOR'S NOTE



You're Either Growing Or You're Dying

A few months ago, I was shocked and saddened to read that one of my favorite Canadian genealogical societies had decided to

disband. Money wasn't the problem, as they had tons of money in the bank. But the core group of volunteers, this handful of dedicated people who did 95% of all the work, had simply rotated through the various officer positions for years, and they simply were tired. Burned out. To lose a society like the Wellington County branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society would have been a tremendous loss.

Way back in the 1960s they took it upon themselves to go out and transcribe and repair headstones from long-abandoned negro cemeteries. Had it not been for their committed work, these fleeting records (of my ancestors) would have been forever lost.

Years ago, the AAGSNC was a vibrant organization eager to try new things, attract new members and work toward our shared goal of spreading the gospel of genealogy to the masses. We participated in dozens of community events all over the Bay Area, made plans to redo our website, and took on a number of challenging tasks with varying degrees of success. Despite our problems, we continued to work

together to help introduce others to the joys of genealogy.

But that was a long time ago.

In the past two years, I don't think our Board of Directors has had a single meeting, and repeated requests that they have one have fallen on deaf ears.

Like most other volunteer organizations, the AAGSNC is bound to work within the boundaries of our Bylaws, and it is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to lead the society and make sometimes difficult decisions regarding programs, finances, personnel, you name it. Without their guidance, many of our goals simply cannot be acted upon. Our President, Ms. Melynn Gillette, has done a phenomenal job, but she's served in this office far longer than she'd ever intended, however, she's reluctant to resign until a replacement is named. Since the Board of Directors has no scheduled meetings this year, there's no chance that a change in officers, or any other goals, can happen.

We've been without a webmaster for over two years, and though we formed a website committee who spent quite a bit of time working on the new look and content of our website, with no board meeting, no action could be taken to send out bids for a new webmaster, get a new web host or anything else.

Like nearly every other genealogical society

on the planet, our membership continues to decline as each new genealogical website comes online. Many people don't see a need to join a local society, but as we all know, without help, many newbie genealogists, who rely solely on the internet for answers, will only get so far, run into a brick wall and will simply give up. Helping people make it over these brick walls is one of the things that we do best, but if we don't update our website, if we don't get more members involved in serving as officers or volunteering on various committees, we'll be stuck with the same handful of people who have always done it ... and will burn them out, one by one.

Genealogy matters

This is important stuff, but we're not doing what needs to be done to help ourselves and others make that connection to the ancestors.

I submit to you that the AAGSNC is dying and it's time to consider that the society's useful life is coming to an end. The energy that once sustained us is at an all-time low and without a radical change, the society will die a slow, painful death. Perhaps it's time that we also consider disbanding the AAGSNC. It seems like it would be the humane thing to do.

I welcome your comments. newsletter@aagsnc.org

INDEX OF SURNAMES IN THIS ISSUE

Name	Page	Name	Page	Name	Page
Anderson	2	Craddock	11	Hawley	6
Antoine	16	Currier	5	Helms	7-9
Bah	5	Daniel	7-9	Henderson	9
Batiste	2	DeBartolo	9	Hilton	2
Bocage	16	DeBerry	16	Howe	5
Braggs	16	Edwards	16	Hurts	16
Braxton	16	Elbert	16	Ives	5
Brown	16	Ford	16	Ivory	7, 9
Bruce	10, 11	Freeman	16	Jeter	6
Bullock	16	Gedder	1, 2, 4, 6	Johnson	16
Burdick	4, 6	Gillette	2, 7, 16	Jordan	9
Burgess	16	Gobert	2	Kimble	16
Butler	7, 9	gobert	16	Law	9
Carmack	9	Greenhagen	4	Lee	2, 10, 12, 14
Corum	4	Hancock	1, 6	Lewis	2
		Hatcher	9	Lloyd	10
				Roen	2

7th Annual

West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy

Don't Miss!

"Celebrating Generations — Past, Present and Future"

September 14-16, 2007 • Doubletree Guest Suites Phoenix, AZ

It's Not Too Late to REGISTER

- Early registration - \$65.00 (postmarked by August 24, 2007)
 - Late registration - \$80.00. Luncheon and syllabus not guaranteed with late registration.
- Conference Information and Registration Form:
(<http://www.bfghs.net/summit2007.htm>)

• FRIDAY, SEPT. 14TH 6:00 - 9:00 PM
Registration and Social Hour

• SATURDAY, SEPT. 15TH

8:20 - 9:00 AM, Opening Remarks

9:20 - 10:35 AM - Session I

- *So They Won't Talk: Gathering Your Family History Through*

Interviewing, by Charlotte Marie Bocage

- *Writing Family History: A Gift for Generations to Come*, by Duane Roen

- *Coal Dust in Your Veins: Bringing Your Coal Mining Ancestors to the Surface*, by Tim Pinnick

- *Four Times the Fun: Four Timelines Which Can Help You Track Your Ancestors*, by Ron Batiste

10:45 - 12:00 AM - Session II

- *How to Find Your Family History & Cultural Roots: An Online Guide*, by Dr. Andy Anderson

- *Portable Genealogy & Disaster Prevention*, by Sandra Y. Hilton

- *Naming Patterns: Deciphering If It Is the Right Man, Wrong Name*, by Margaret Lewis

- *DNA Testing and Establishing the Paper Trail*, by Daniela Moneta

12:00 - 2:45 PM, Luncheon & Keynote

Dr. Matthew C. Whitaker, Ariz State University, Phoenix

3:05 - 4:20 PM - Session III

- *The Search for my Native American Identity: The Montauks, Narragansett and Nehanite of New England*, by Eric Smith

- *Search and Reward Notices — Hidden Information About Former Slaves*, by Lisa B. Lee

- *Priscilla's Homecomings*, by Joyce Reese McCollum

- *Out of Africa I Have Called My First Family: DNA Research and Race*

Redemption, by Professor Gershosh Williams

4:20 - 4:45 PM - Summit Wrap up

WHAT'S NEW AT THE OAKLAND FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

- Lisa B. Lee, PLCGS

The Family History Centers (FHC) no longer have unlimited access to Ancestry.com (though you will find a few computers that have access), the Oakland FHC has gone to great lengths to provide patrons with other useful online genealogical resources.

Two of the most notable additions to their collection are **Vital Records** and **HeritageQuest**.

World Vital Records (www.worldvitalrecords.com) offers archived newsletters on genealogy research topics including how to order vital public records, the use of genealogy timelines, and other useful topics. However, this website is extremely slow and though it claims to have information on all 50 states, it has no link for the District of Columbia. Curious.

historical researchers, with coverage dating back to the late 1700s. Researchers can use HeritageQuest Online to find their ancestors, trace their paths across America, and learn what life was like in the areas where they settled.

HeritageQuest Online includes all of the images, and extensive indexing, from the 1790 - 1930 U.S. federal censuses. It offers more than 20,000 book titles, including nearly 8,000 family histories and over 12,000 local histories. Additionally, there are more than 250 primary-source documents such as tax lists, city directories, probate records, and more.

Many other distinctive and invaluable sources of information can be found within HeritageQuest Online:

- **Periodical Source Index (PERSI)**, a widely recognized resource guide, updated annually, that covers more than 6,300 genealogy and history periodicals written in English and French (Canada) since 1800.

SOCIETY NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS

• AUG 9 - SEPT 21

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Smithsonian Institution and StoryCorps Grit are seeking black folks in the Bay Area to share and record their stories in a nationwide effort to collect 2,000 black family stories. Special emphasis will be on the stories of WWII veterans and the men and women involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

Since April 2005, StoryCorps has been in 54 cities in 38 states recording stories of everyday Americans. The griot initiative focuses on the lives of black folks. A griot (pronounced GREE-oh) is a person in West Africa responsible for storytelling and the oral passage of family histories.

Selected recordings will be aired on NPR's "Morning Edition" and "News and Notes."

The mobile recording Griot booth will be in Oakland from August 9 thru September 21. Reservations must be made by calling (800) 850-4406 or online at www.storycorps-griot.net. Participants will receive a recording of their stories.

• SEPT 14-16

The Black Family Genealogy and History Society (Phoenix, AZ) is hosting this year's **West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy**. You still have time to register for this event, which will feature Dr. Matthew C. Whitaker, an award-winning scholar, teacher and activist, whose latest book, *Race Work: The Rise of Civil Rights in the Urban West* tells the story of Lincoln and Eleanor Ragsdale who worked to desegregate Phoenix, AZ, and the impact this had on the rest of the nation.

FAYE YOUNG RECOVERING WELL

Faye Young, the wife of AAGSNC member Tolbert Young, is slowly recovering from surgery she had several months ago for a brain tumor. She was progressing well,

learned to walk and talk again, but suffered a setback in July from a bacterial infection. A resident of Tracy, CA, she's now living in a rehabilitation hospital in Modesto and is in good spirits and getting stronger every day.

Please send Faye your best wishes via her husband, Tolbert Young, whose email address is: toltreb@pacbell.net.

AAGSNC MEETINGS

Held at the Oakland Library, Dimond Branch (3565 Fruitvale Avenue) from 1:30pm - 4:00 pm. Guests welcome!

• September 14-15

West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy - Phoenix, AZ (7th Annual) See page 14 for Summit information.

• October 20

Finding Vital Records, including the SSDI and BMD (birth, marriage and death records).

• November 17

Local records you may have overlooked, e.g., state censuses, licensing files, school records, courthouse records.

• December 15

Annual "Black Elephant" Sale and Holiday Potluck

WHAT'S NEW @ ANCESTRY.COM

Ancestry.com, the largest subscription-based collection of genealogical databases has added some new collections that may be of interest to you.

• CALIFORNIA MARRIAGE INDEX, 1960-1985

This statewide index of over 4 million marriages performed in the state includes the names and ages of the bride and groom and the county and date of the marriage.

• CALIFORNIA DIVORCE INDEX, 1966-1984

This statewide index of over 3 million divorces filed in California includes the names of the spouses and divorce date and city or county.

• ANCESTRY MAGAZINE GOES DIGITAL

New and current subscribers to ancestry.com now have free access to a digital version of their bi-monthly magazine. The magazine can be viewed at: www.ancestrydigital.com/ancestry.

• U. S. INDIAN CENSUS SCHEDULES, 1885-1940

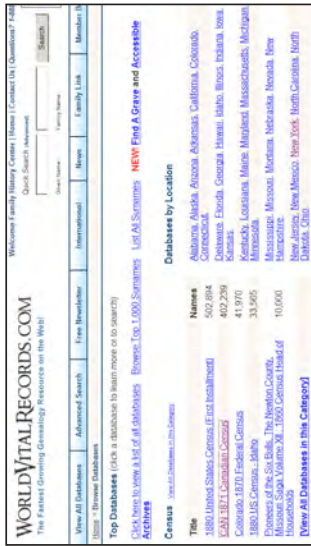
This database contains an index to the Indian census rolls from a variety of Native American nations. Information contained within: Name (Native and/or English), gender, age, birth date, relationship to head of family, marital status, tribe name, agency name, reservation name, degree of Native blood (some census years, not all). This is not a census for every reservation or group of Native Americans for every year. Only persons who maintained a formal affiliation with a tribe under federal supervision are listed on these census rolls. Like most of the other ancestry.com census databases, the images have been digitized and are viewable online. Hundreds of nations are included in this database.

NARA TO DIGITIZE ITS COLLECTION?

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has given notice that it proposes to enter into an agreement with the Genealogical Society of Utah (doing business as FamilySearch.org) to digitize and further expand public access to archival holdings in NARA's custody. Public comments are desired and must be received by September 4, 2007.

This agreement will benefit researchers by having free access to digitized images and indices in NARA's research rooms nationwide and, in many cases, free access online from any computer via the internet.

For a complete text of this agreement and to place your own comment with NARA: www.archives.gov/comment/partnership.html.



Heritage Quest combines digital, searchable images of U.S. federal census records with the digitized version of the popular UMI® (University Microfilms) Genealogy & Local History collection and other valuable content. This online database is an essential collection of unique material for both genealogical and

- **Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files**, which identifies more than 80,000 American military, naval, and marine officers and enlisted men.

- **The Freedman's Bank Records** is a

grandfather. I know, not a very scientific approach. Remember, I never asked, so I have no helpful passed-down information on these people.

Enter the *History Detectives*. In November 2006, my buddy and co-owner of In Digital Photographic Services, Curtis Corum, relayed a call I received from an April Marks. She is part of the production team at Lion Television that produces the hit PBS show, *History Detectives*. Wow, do they want us to photograph something for them in Oakland? Earlier in the year, my wife, Cynthia, and I had relocated to Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Do they want us to photograph something here? I recall that one of their hosts, Dr.

Tukuftu Zuberi was a keynote speaker at the AAGNSC seminar 'Rooted in History' held in San Francisco back in February 2005. Unfortunately, I couldn't get the time off of work to attend. So, I was quite puzzled by this call.

In a phone conversation, Ms. Marks explained that they received a group photo of Civil War

veterans from a collector. In the photo were two African Americans amidst the all-white soldiers. The collector was curious about this, given the tenor of the times surrounding the picture. This group was known as the Knowlton GAR or Grand Army of the Republic, and they were out of Cazenovia, New York. The collector, Angelo Scarlato, contacted the *History Detectives* folks to see if they could identify the two black men.

The *History Detectives* investigation took them to upstate New York, Madison county. With the help of librarians and genealogists, they surmised that three African Americans from the area enlisted or volunteered in the Civil War. They first identified the flag bearer in the photograph. One down and one to go -- with two

names. Someone commented that a guy inquired about African Americans in Cazenovia on the Rootsweb.com Madison County message board a couple of years ago, and maybe he could help. That guy was yours truly. So, that's how and why they contacted me.

In December, I sent April Marks a copy of the photograph that included my Cazenovia ancestors. Then nothing. A week goes by, then another and another. Oh well, perhaps there's no connection. However, my curiosity was piqued BIG TIME!



Knowlton Grand Army of the Republic

On January 3rd 2007, I ask my AfrGeneas.com family in Bennie J. McKrae Jr's Military forum to decipher a document from the 1890 Veterans Schedule I'd found on Ancestry.com. It was about John Stevenson. With the help of Art Thomas, Richard Thomas and Bennie I was not only able to confirm that this particular document was about my 2nd great grandfather, but I learned that he was in the 29th Connecticut Infantry that was one of four "Colored" regiments that kept their state moniker rather than the USCT designation.

Mr. Scarlato and I were also communicating. He sent me some supporting information. I reacquainted myself with the folks on the Rootsweb.com Madison county message board and they were happy to tell me what they

knew. I met, through this board, Donna D. Burdick, Research Chair, Madison Co. Freedom Trail Commission & Smithfield Town Historian (Madison County) -- Home of the Gerrit Smith Estate National Historic Landmark. Listen, you don't tell the Kid that you may have something on one of my ancestors, and you'll get back to me. Left to my own devices, I'll shake the planet like a rug!

Donna Burdick was primarily interested in the flag bearer, Albert O. Robbins, however, in an exchange of e-mails she began helping me put some meat on the skeleton of a research I had on John

Stevenson. We began to check out and analyze census records. New York state had censuses in 1855, 1865, 1875, and 1892.

Now I must be fair to April Marks. She did say, back in December, that they were further researching this angle and that she was playing it close to the vest by stating that she couldn't tell me anything more than what I knew at the time. On January 21st, out of courtesy and out of patience, I sent her this e-mail:

Hello April,

Since our last conversation, I have learned more about my 2nd great grandfather, John Stephenson. Please check out the thread on AfrGeneas.com. [URL omitted by editor]

There's now considerable evidence that the 'John' you're researching is, indeed, my John. I've since been in contact with Donna Burdick, and she has been helpful in flushing out John Stephenson's story. I'm also awaiting a response from Sue Greenhagen in this matter.

I'm so thrilled to put a story to one of my ancestors! Can you tell me anything further about John?

*George Grader
"Guided by the Ancestors"*

Sue Greenhagen is one of the librarians and researchers in Cazenovia. I never got a response from Sue.



Marriage - \$13
Death - \$12

<http://www.ccr.sacounty.net/>

SAN FRANCISCO
San Francisco Assessor-Recorder
City Hall, Room 109
1 Polk Street
San Francisco, CA 94102-4698

Marriage - \$13
Marriage 1906-1975 available on microfilm, you do your own search, \$.50/copy
1976-present, on computer
<https://www.dph.sf.ca.us/dphvital/dphvital.htm>

San Francisco Dept of Health:
101 Grove Street, Room 105
San Francisco, 94102

Birth - \$14
Death - \$12

SAN JOAQUIN
Pacific State Bank Building
6 South El Dorado Street, 2nd Floor
PO Box 1968
Stockton, CA 95202

Birth - \$14
Marriage - \$13
Death - \$12

<http://www.sjgov.org/Recorder/vital.htm>

SAN MATEO
555 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

Birth - \$17
Marriage - \$13
Death - \$12

<http://www.smcare.org/records/death.asp>



SANTA CLARA
70 West Hedding Street
East Wing, First Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

Birth - \$17
Marriage - \$13
Death - \$12

<http://www.sccgov.org/portal/site/icc>

SANTA CRUZ
701 Ocean Street, #230
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Birth - \$17

Marriage - \$13
Death - \$12
<http://www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/rcd/>

SOLANO
County Courthouse
675 Texas Street
Fairfield, CA 94533

Birth - \$19
Marriage - \$15
Death - \$14
<http://www.co.solano.ca.us/SubSection/SubSection.asp?NavID=206>

SONOMA
2300 County Center Drive, Ste B-177
Santa Rosa, CA 94503

Birth - \$17
Marriage - \$13
Death - \$12

http://www.sonoma-county.org/Clerk/HTML_Documents/BDMCerts/Frameset_BDMCerts.htm

FASTER CALIFORNIA VITAL RECORDS

- Lisa B. Lee, PLCCS

If you're in need of a vital record from anywhere in the State of California, you've probably visited the website for the California Department of Health Services (<http://www.dhs.ca.gov>) only to find that the expected wait time is approximately six months. You can download the forms and send in your money and wait ... and wait ... and wait.

OR, you can request the records directly from the county in which the event occurred. In all cases, this is not only faster, but in many cases, it's the same price to request the document from the county recorder as it is from the State Dept. of Health.

CONFUSION ABOUNDS

Okay, this whole thing about identity theft has prompted a tightening of access to some records, but confusion abounds about what the law actually states.

With regard to birth and death certificates, you have two choices:

- CERTIFIED, or
- CERTIFIED INFORMATIONAL

In order to obtain a copy of a CERTIFIED document, you have to prove that you are legally entitled to receive the copy, meaning that you're a parent or legal guardian, are entitled due to a court order, a member of the immediate family (child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or domestic partner), or that you're a member of law enforcement, an attorney, employee of a funeral home, etc. Not only do you have to prove that you're entitled, but you also must have this request form notarized.

However, **anybody** else can request a CERTIFIED INFORMATIONAL copy, which contains exactly all of the same information as the Certified, yet it is stamped "Informational. Not a Valid Document to Establish Identity" across the document. The only thing you need to prove is your identity (e.g., driver's license), and notarization is not necessary.

But not all county recorders understand this distinction and some have made it very difficult to request an INFORMATIONAL document even though the law clearly states that they are not limited to just family members (and the others listed above).

SKIP THE MIDDLE-MAN

Going directly to the county recorder means that you can walk-in, wait a few minutes, and walk out with your document. You can

also order these documents via snail mail and several will allow you to order them online (additional fees apply).

FEES

The State of California's Dept. of Health charges the following for vital records, and there's no difference in fee for a CERTIFIED vs a CERTIFIED INFORMATIONAL copy:

Birth - \$14

Marriage - \$13

Death - \$12

Compared to some of the local county recorders in Northern California:

ALAMEDA

1106 Madison Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Birth - \$19

Marriage - \$15

Death - \$14

<http://www.ac.gov.org/auditor/clerk/index.htm>

CONTRA COSTA

555 Escobar Street
Martinez, CA 94553

Birth - \$20

Marriage - \$16

Death - \$15

<http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/elect/clerk/index.html>

MARIN

Civic Center
Hall of Justice
San Rafael, CA 94903

Birth - Not available

Marriage - Not available

Death - \$12

<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/AR/VitalStatistics/index.asp>

NAPA

1195 Third Street, Room 110
Napa, CA 94559

Birth - \$17

Marriage - \$13

Death - \$12

<http://www.co.napa.ca.us/LIVING/Living.asp?LID=373>

SACRAMENTO

720 Ninth Street, Room 101
Sacramento, CA 95814

Birth - \$17

antique furniture throughout. No elevators. Ouch to the crew. Built in 1835, I bet I'm looking at the same woodwork and details that my ancestors gazed upon.

The following morning, Cynthia and I walked around town before we were to be called for the filming. It was more pretty and quaint than the night before.

The buildings along the main street have a late 19th century look. We learn that Cazenovia is now an artsy-tourist kind of place. After our latte, we entered an artists co-op and purchased a quilted landscape piece by the artist who, coincidentally, we had been chatting with. "Wow, of all the artwork in here, you chose one of my pieces!"

The cell phone rang and we were instructed to go to the house where we would do the filming. A beautiful house, a mini-mansion by our standards. We filmed our first segment in the kitchen (pretending that it was our kitchen in Santa Fe) and discussed and compared the image of John Stevenson in my photo with the character in question in the post Civil War picture.

Then they sent me upstairs to chill and wait until they needed me again. At this point, in the dining room (are you following this?), they were filming Angelo Scarlato -- the man who's post-Civil War picture and inquiry this *History Detectives* story is actually all about. Now mind you, Angelo and I were unaware of each other's existence at this point.

They summoned me to come downstairs and wait in one of the parlors (did I mention mini-mansion?). They told Angelo not only did they identify the two African Americans in his picture, they found a living descendant of one of them. On cue they ushered me in to meet Angelo Scarlato. I think I can honestly say for the two of us that the moment of our meeting transcended the show and the

reasons we were in Cazenovia, New York. There was a spiritual arc from the taking of that original picture of the Civil War veterans in the Knowlton Grand Army of the Republic to the acknowledgment of its significance in February of 2007. What I'm trying to say is that the moment was more than the sum of its parts.

The next day we were scheduled to fly back home, but Elyse Luray and "da ghang" had one more thing up their sleeves. We got in the van at 7:30am; way too early for our 1:00 p.m. flight. We drove to a grocery store. The crew debated who was going into the store. A subplot developed. They want to get Elyse out of the driver's seat (she not the greatest driver in the world, in the winter, with snow banks all around). She came out of the store with flowers. The next thing I know we were driving up to a cemetery, the Cazenovia Evergreen Cemetery where John Stevenson and his family are interred. The first major headline you see as you enter is none other than ... you guessed it. I was totally undone, blown away. The flowers.

John Stevenson, with the help of a Civil War memorabilia collector named Angelo Scarlato, a television show called "The History Detectives" and a number of librarians and researchers from Cazenovia, New York to Washington, DC, we have brought your story to life. You were born in Maryland through Pennsylvania to New York, and then went to Connecticut to fight for the freedom of your people and a better future for your descendants. I, George Anthony Geder, am your 2nd great grandson and I will never let your story fade ever again. Your blood runs through me. I am proud.

The Trail of Coincidences.

Since the filming, we have made acquaintances with a number of people associated with this project.

Char McCargo Bah was the Professional



Cazenovia Gothic Cottage

remembered place of breathless charm. When that below zero wind chill factor hit us as we got out of the van, we forgot all about the cuteness of this joint, and hurried into the Lincklaen House Inn. We took off our gloves and scarves, looked around, and found ourselves in the middle of ornate 19th century elegance with beautiful



I, George Anthony Geder, am your 2nd great grandson and I will never let your story fade ever again.

Guided by the Ancestors



I was born into the Geder family, considered one of the "old" families of Binghamton, New York, in 1951. I have learned that my Jeter/Geder folks migrated from Virginia to Towanda, PA after the Civil War then to New York at the dawn of the 20th century. It wasn't until the passing of my father, William Emmett Geder, in 1977 that I became aware that we had a family history, thanks to a photo album of my ancestors that he kept hidden. In 1984, a cousin gave me a transcription of births, marriages, and deaths in the family Bible that she was finally ready to share! That's when I knew our family had a past and I began my genealogy research in earnest. In 2003, my Uncle George Hancock (my mother, Pearl Hancock-Geder's, favorite brother) introduced me to a gang of South Carolina Hancock cousins I didn't know existed. Will the surprises - and the research - ever cease?

George and his lovely wife, Cynthia, have been members of the AAGSNC since 2001 — Ed.

Strode Street
Jones Street
Adams Street
Washington Street
Monroe Street

been able to document the family all the way back to The Hermitage (Nashville, TN) where a white Captain Craddock took a slave as his wife and had three children. Quite honestly, that story sounded a bit far-fetched, but I didn't mention my apprehensions.

I live in Trestle Glen (formerly known as Turtle Gulch ... I found that out in the Oakland History Room, too), which is only 1.4 miles from David Bruce's house in the old Brooklyn Township. I couldn't believe my luck. Having searched for years thinking that my Bruces originated in Scotland, only to find out that they came to New York via Virginia, and with my own roots going back to Michigan, yet both of these branches converged in Oakland, CA, little more than one mile apart.

As it turns out, David Bruce got to California the same way lots of other young black men did back in the 1920s ... he was a Pullman Porter.

The "Affidavit of Death" I'd gotten for Harold Bruce consisted of a copy of his death certificate and a document which stated that his widow, Elizabeth Bruce, was entitled to receive the property they'd held as joint tenants. It cost me \$3.00 to get a photocopy of these documents, which were printed from microfilm while I waited.

The death certificate showed that Harold Bruce had lived in Crocker Highlands, which is just up the hill, walking distance from my house. In fact, my son, David, graduated from Crocker Highlands School two years ago.

So, if you found out that a cousin had lived less than a mile from your home, what would you do? Exactly -- I got in my car and drove by, to see if the house looked like any black folks still lived there, since Crocker Highlands is a predominantly white area. My "drive-by" didn't really tell me anything, so I went online and looked up his phone number, which, still works. I spoke with Harold Bruce's sister, Carole, who was delighted to hear from me and told me that her son, Javert (pronounced zha - VAIR), is their family researcher. I spoke with Javert and he told me that they'd



suspected that this cousin, Henry (Bruce?), is probably already dead. I checked my family file and I did have one Henry Bruce, born abt. 1905 in Virginia, whom I suspected was related to William, but I have no more information about him, at the moment.

I'm intrigued because I know of one famous black Bruce from Washington, D.C., former Senator Blanche Kelso Bruce, who was born in Farmville, VA, supposedly the son of his slave-owning father (Lemuel Bruce) and an inside slave, Polly. Supposedly, Blanche (originally known as "Branch") was taught to read and write by his father and eventually

Ever hopeful to find out additional information about my Bruce line (where

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES COUNTY OF ALameda	
DECEASED NAME HAROLD BRUCE	SEX M
RACE WHITE	AGE 71
DATE OF BIRTH 04-15-1916	DATE OF DEATH 04-15-1987
PLACE OF BIRTH ALABAMA	PLACE OF DEATH OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA
OCCUPATION PULLMAN PORTER	CAUSE OF DEATH HEART DISEASE - CHOLESTEROL
MANNER OF DEATH NATURAL	NUMBER OF SURVIVORS 2
MARITAL STATUS MARRIED	MARITAL HISTORY MARRIED TO ELIZABETH BRUCE 1945-1987
USUAL RESIDENCE 1608-14TH STREET OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA	PLACE OF INTERMENT OAKLAND CEMETERY OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 51-10-4716-30-77	COUNTY OF DECEASED ALameda
PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE HAROLD BRUCE 1608-14TH STREET OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA	SIGNATURE OF PHYSICIAN [Signature]
FUNERAL HOME [Blank]	SIGNATURE OF FUNERAL HOME [Blank]

moved to Mississippi where he became the first black elected to a full-term as U.S. Senator (Mississippi). Blanche Bruce died in Washington, D.C. in 1898. I haven't been able to find a link between my Bruce line and the Blanche Bruce line, but it's a possible line that I'll have to consider. I'll keep you posted.



Harold Vincent Bruce

in Virginia they were born, the names of William Bruce's parents and/or siblings, when they came to New York, whether they were freed or escaped slavery, etc.), Carole mentioned that she had a half-sister, Marguerite, from Harold Bruce's first marriage, who lives in the Los Angeles area and who probably knows more about the Bruce line.

Marguerite was gracious and it was delightful to speak with her, but she didn't remember much of the details about the Bruce line of the family, but she said that the Bruces were related to one of Virginia's "first families." She mentioned, though, that she had a cousin, Henry, who lived in Washington, D.C. (the same place where William Bruce died) who'd done a genealogy of the Bruces years ago. She



Genealogist/Historian *History Detectives* contacted at the National Archives. She is a contributor to the *AfriGeneas.com* forums and over the years we have exchanged notes there.

Charles (Ben) Hawley is a descendant of the 29th Connecticut Colored Regiment of which John Stevenson was a member. He has founded a non-profit organization called, what else, the Descendants of the 29th Connecticut Colored Volunteer Regiment. We were introduced by *AfriGeneas.com* Military forum manager Bennie J. McRae Jr. Naturally, I've become a proud "certified" member. But that's not all, Mr Hawley is a Civil War re-enactor and his group was filmed by *History Detectives* to be included in the show. How amazing a coincidence is that?

But that's not all, folks. The flag bearer in the picture, Albert Robbins, was friends with my 2nd great grandfather. In fact, one of his sons married one of John's daughters. Are you sitting down? I was informed by Donna Burdick that there are living descendants of Albert Robbins. Could I be on the cusp of finding new cousins? Stay tuned for that one.

George Geder

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OTX-WEST also provides free computers to non-profit organizations.

MY NOT-SO-SCOTTISH-BRUCES A Follow-up Report

- Lisa B. Lee, PLCCS

In the Winter 2007 edition of *The Baobab*, I wrote about my quest to discover the ancestral roots of my supposed Scottish great great grandfather, William Bruce, only to find out that he wasn't Scottish at all, rather a black man from Virginia, whose story had been "enhanced" by my ever-so-creative storyteller father, Dr. C. Bruce Lee.

Since then, I've made an even more startling discovery about my Bruce ancestors, one that I wouldn't have imagined in a gazillion years.

MANNA FROM HEAVEN

In the search for William Bruce, I'd found out that his son, William Alexander Bruce, had been an Episcopal Minister at several churches and last served at the Holy Trinity Church in Nashville, TN. I'd contacted the secretary at Holy Trinity but all he could tell me was that Father Bruce had been the rector there for many years and that there was an elderly church member who remembered Fr. Bruce from when she was a child.

However, in June, the church secretary, Dennis Lloyd, sent me the following email:

Dear Ms. Lee,
I know it has been months, and you may have given up hope of ever hearing from me. I apologize, but you may find the delay to have been worthwhile.

I did talk to Miss Martha Ruddock, who was born in 1919 and has attended Holy Trinity her entire life. She does indeed remember Fr. Bruce, particularly as a man of prayer. She reported that his calm and loving spirit really held the church together through some rough times.

I have attached a document that I think you will be most pleased with.

worker and died in Oakland in 1977.

Curious about Brooklyn Township, I visited the Oakland History Room at the main branch of the Oakland Public Library and found a hanging folder packed full of information about Brooklyn, CA. I found a newspaper, *The Brooklyn Home Journal* and a separate regular section within the *Oakland Tribune*, known as *The Knaves*, which chronicled the formation of and subsequent annexation of the town of Brooklyn, CA.

The town of Brooklyn, CA was officially incorporated by an Act of the California Legislature which passed on April 4, 1870. Brooklyn included all of the area south of MacArthur Blvd to the north, Fruitvale Avenue to the east, Lake Merritt to the West and the Estuary (then known as the Brooklyn Basin) to the south. Who knew?

Brooklyn's life as a separate entity didn't last for long, though, as in 1872 by a vote of 186 to 73, the people of Brooklyn decided to be annexed into Oakland. At the time of the vote, Brooklyn's population was 2,750. The annexation of Brooklyn required many of its streets to be renamed, such as:

BROOKLYN NAME OAKLAND

NAME	OAKLAND
Bridge Street	First Ave
Lake Street	Second Ave
Chase Street	Third Ave
Patten Street	Fourth Ave



The area formerly known as Brooklyn, CA

MEMORIES OF GUM SPRINGS SCHOOL

- Ms. Melvyn Gillette



School started in Gum Springs (Arkansas) the day after Labor Day, in warm days, still in "barefoot season." It is possible that Mrs. Mollie Butler and Mrs. Savannah Helms, the two teachers during my

years of attendance there, were the only ones who began the school year wearing shoes. Mrs. Butler taught grades 1-4, and it's nearly a certainty that all of her students were barefoot after the first day of school. Since these were the days before automatic promotions, Mrs. Helms, who taught grades 5-8, had some pupils who were well into their teens so, being older, possibly wore shoes.

Barefoot season lasted all through September. I got new shoes for the beginning of the school year, wore them the first day of school, but didn't start wearing them regularly until the weather got cool. By the end of September, or later, depending on the weather, we'd come to school wearing shoes, and go home barefoot.

Our school was located just off the county road that ran from US Highway 67, past the county "Poor House", Kimbrough's store and St. Ruth Baptist Church, up the hill to what is now Hasley Road/County Hwy 17. A graded, but ungraveled road branched off that county road just in front of St. Ruth, the only African American church in Gum Springs at the time. This road ran between the church and the school and thence into Gum Springs African American community. The school population was about 40-45 students for all eight grades.

The school was a rectangular building,

painted white, with lots of windows on the north side, facing the church, and an additional window at each end of the building. There were two rooms, with front and back doors in each room, and a door between the two rooms. One room contained the closet where books and other supplies were stored. Wood stoves heated the school when I started school in 1946, but were later replaced by gas stoves. A baseball field was behind the school. A shallow creek ran along the back of the field, across the road towards the church, ran alongside and then behind the church and, finally, out to the county road.

There was a hand pump in the back yard for water. Two outhouses were there too, at the outer edges of the baseball field, and they and the pump also served the church. I know that we got electricity at our house after I started school because I remember doing homework by lamplight. But the school already had electricity by then as it was near the road along which electric lines ran.

I don't remember this, but my two Daniel aunts have told me that I, along with their children, Charles (Sonny) and Velma Daniel, started school "early" at the request of the teachers. This was because that fall's attendance was very low due to the number of children who were being kept out of school to pick cotton. So, perhaps I started school in 1945.

Most, if not all, of the students came to school knowing their ABCs and how to write their names, some likely could already read. Each class had its turn for reading, spelling, math, etc. One class would be at the teacher's desk while another was at the blackboards writing out their math problems or multiplication tables, and those at their seats were supposed to be quietly doing some work. Our desks were doubles, so there were always two pupils to a seat. I was a talker, and even worse, a giggler. My seatmate, Loretta Helms, and I could start a giggle-fest over the slightest thing.

The two classes ahead of mine had three students each, but my class was quite a larger. There was a baby boom in Gum Springs in 1940, starting in February and

continuing through December. These were my classmates when I started school. Since the starting age for school wasn't quite so strictly enforced at that time, we were joined by one more who was born in January 1941. One girl from that 1940 boom year was with us for a short time before moving away. There were also three students in our class who were older than we were. They were perhaps repeating a grade when we started, or they had started school late. My two cousins moved away in 1948, but there were still ten students in my 2nd grade class.

My 2nd grade year was an eventful one. Marilyn Ivory and I finished the 2nd grade "book" about two months into the school year, and were promoted to 3rd grade. I was excited that I had more than one book now, one of which was my first geography book. Of course we had to catch up with the three students who had started the year in 3rd grade. My sister, Rosetta Gillette, and Marilyn's sister, Eddie Ivory, were in the 4th grade when we started 2nd grade, so we were all still in the same classroom, but we were now just one grade behind them.

Spelling was often conducted with "speldowns." The particular class whose turn it was stood in a line along the wall, and you moved up or down the line depending on whether you got your word right. I remember one instance when I spelled my sister's class of three students down, though I have long since forgotten the word. All of her class missed it and I raised my hand, was called on, and got it right.

Most people brought lunch from home, but a few lived close enough to go home for lunch. My sister and I had a joint "lunch bucket" of the same type that our father took to work. We sometimes had salmon croquettes. And mackerel sandwiches, which I detested. But I had to eat it because on that day, it was mackerel or nothing. At recess and lunchtime, we played various types of games: baseball or basketball, Honey in the Bee Ball; (aka Hide and Seek), races, hopscotch, marbles, hockey-pokey, Annie-over, etc. Boys and girls of various ages played together to make up the two teams required to play baseball.



The basketball "court" was across the road and up the hill from the school. It was an outdoor dirt court. In those days, girls' teams played half-court with six players, three on offense and three on defense. Each group of three had to stay in its end of the court, with the defense passing the ball across the center line to the offense for scoring. My sister played on the Gum Springs girls' team and remembers playing in the tournament at the Clark County Armory in town.

Jumping rope was popular, using a big, heavy rope. And there was "Pop the Whip," where a line of children holding hands, ran down a hillside until the leader stopped and turned in a circle, forcing the line into a sweep. The farther out towards the end of the line you were, the faster you needed to run, with everybody moving faster and faster, trying to hang on. Younger kids near the end of the line were in danger of flying through the air. There was a perfect spot for this game just downhill from the basketball court. We'd start up near the basketball goals, run downhill toward the creek. Jacks were also popular with the girls, especially in bad weather, which meant staying inside at recess. Tic Tac Toe was also a popular rainy weather game, and got quite competitive.

All students participated in a weekly class called "Public School Music," which was held in Mrs. Helms' room. We learned the notes and staves and how to write them out. Several of us took private piano lessons from Mrs. Helms. We'd be sent singly over to the church to practice since, at the time, none of us had a piano at home. Mother subsequently acquired a used piano for about \$25 and my sister and I could then practice at home. I can remember one recital for the piano students. Mother made me a beautiful pink organy dress and I got my hair curled, for the first time that I can recall. I loved that dress, but that was a year when I shot up like a weed. It seemed that I outgrew that dress faster than any that I had before or since. In a few months, it was too short and, even with the hem let down I was not able to enjoy my pretty pink dress for very long.

Since Christmas always meant a play and program, or pageant, we'd soon start

learning Christmas carols. Back then, school started each morning with devotion, so learning religious songs was an accepted part of the curriculum. All of our school events were held at the church. We had a two-day holiday for Thanksgiving, at which time families usually enjoyed baked chicken dinners. I didn't know anybody who had a turkey dinner, though we did make turkey and pilgrim cutouts to decorate the school. By Thanksgiving, we would all have started learning our parts for the Christmas program.

Our Christmas pageant was held on Christmas Eve night. Mrs. Helms provided the musical accompaniment. Costumes were generally of crepe paper or sheets, and there was always crepe paper at our house. We "drew names" before Christmas vacation so every child bought a gift for someone, and those presents were put under the tree at the church. Our teachers gave each of their students a gift and those were also placed under the tree. One gift I remember was pencils engraved with my name. Wow! Another year we all got clear glass piggy banks. Mine was actually a pig, but my sister's was a barrel. My pig may be somewhere in my house now, because I know it made it through college and I think came to California with me.

Our school also participated in the "District Talent Show," held in town at Peake High School. I remember one early show, mainly because a group picture of the Gum Springs "talent" was taken in front of Mrs. Butler's house in town. I was no older than seven years old. I know that because my two Daniel first cousins, Sonny and Velma, are in the picture and they moved to California before I turned eight. I remembered that performance as "The Rag Time Ball Up In 'The Attic." My friend Loretta recalls it as "The Rag Doll Ball, etc.," which makes more sense as we were supposed to be toys. The girls wore white pinafores and pink blouses, except Cousin Velma, who had a special part and wore a pink pinafore. Jessie Brown was her partner, wearing knickerbockers. Cousin Sonny wore a cowboy outfit, and rode a hobbyhorse. Another talent show performance that I was in was called "Hansel & Gretel" but all I remember of that is that we wore pinafores, some pink

print, and some blue print, with white blouses.

Winter meant rain and cold, frost, possibly sleet, but rarely ever snow. Dressing for winter meant long underwear. Girls' long underwear had a 3-button drop seat in the back. Mother figured we would have difficulty getting those undone in a hurry, so she bought us boys' underwear, much easier to deal with when you're in a rush. We also wore tan cotton stockings. Mother cut our underwear off at the knee, but some wore theirs as purchased, meaning down to the ankle. If their stockings had holes, you saw white underwear showing through the holes in the tan stockings. Later on we graduated out of long Johns into "snuggles," or "bloomers." We wore outing princess slips over the long underwear, with cotton dresses and heavy winter coats, of course. Rosetta and I had black rain slickers and hats, plus knee high rain boots. The next big school event after Christmas was the Easter Pageant, held on Easter Sunday afternoon. Easter meant a new dress and new shoes that became our new Sunday shoes. Again there were playlets and speeches; every child had some part to play. After the pageant, the Easter egg hunt was held on the school grounds. I was a dead loss at finding eggs, with kids picking up eggs at my heels as I looked around trying to find an egg. Luckily for me we had chickens and lots of eggs to boil and color at home, so I knew I would get at least SOME Easter eggs. My sister and I shared one Easter basket that we used year after year, only getting new "straw" to put in it.

Soon after Easter, we began preparing for the "School Closing" program, though this did not mean new clothes. By School Closing (end of May) we were again barefoot, having worn out the soles of our one pair of "everyday" shoes so that the soles were flapping. My sister and I would wire the soles together for a little more wear. After that wore through, we'd outgrow them anyway, and so we would spend the summer barefoot, except for during the rare trip to town.³

During the year, 4-H club meetings were held at the school. Girls learned the basics of cooking and sewing. To actually cook, we went to the home of a volunteer, and

I remember going to Mrs. Lovie Roberts' house to cook. Most of the girls had cooking chores at home, so had plenty of practice. Boys learned about farming. The County Extension Agent and Home Demonstration Agent met with the adults at the school in the evening. There the men (and sometimes the women) learned about farming and the women learned sewing, cooking, canning, etc., and later various crafts. There was a countywide 4-H competition held in Gurdon at Bell High School. Marilyn Ivory and I won 3rd prize in 7th grade for our muffins. Those muffins were our first attempt at cooking with yeast, and on a wood-burning stove at that. We did the cooking at my house. The first batch of muffins apparently cooked "too fast" and grew little 'heads' where the dough popped out over the edge. We made a new batch and those ended the same way. But we had no more supplies to use, so we cut off the 'heads' and those were the muffins we submitted. I still have my 4-H pin.

At one competition I demonstrated "Sewing on a Button," (featuring a toothpick under the button, used to make a shank, which handy, knowledge I used in my sewing as an adult) but didn't win anything that time. We also learned how to make tooth powder using salt, soda and oil of wintergreen. A few of us continued participation in the Gum Springs 4-H after we were attending high school in Arkadelphia, and one year Loretta Helms and I went to the State 4-H conference as part of the Clark County contingent. My demonstration that time was "Preparing a Good Lunch," for which I won nothing, as I recall. Loretta did win a prize for her sewing. The conference was held at Arkansas AM&N College and this was my first visit to the college I later attended.

Occasional parties for the entire family were held at our elementary school, with a jukebox and dancing in one room, food and games in the other room. At least one funeral was held at the school. In 1950, my Cousin Velma died in California shortly before her tenth birthday, and her remains were brought to Gum Springs for burial. At the time, the St. Ruth Baptist Church building had been torn down and a new church was under construction. Church



services were being held in the school, and that is where her funeral was held.

When the Gum Springs African American community was moved in 1952, the school went too. I attended 8th grade in the new location, about two miles from the old location. Now I could walk home for lunch. After the school was consolidated into Peake Elementary, the building and grounds were purchased by Charlie Henderson and renovated to become his family's home.

After sharing my memories with a few family members, I received these additional "Memories of Gum Springs Elementary":

From my cousin, Pauline Wilson:
 "When I went, Mrs. Maude Williams was the teacher for the little kids and Professor (Henry) Wheeler taught the big kids. On rainy days we played bingo & lotto. We had the old raggedy outside toilets, the sides with holes in them. The boys would peep through the holes at the girls. Mrs. Maude's husband was a carpenter and she had him build two new ones, probably the same ones you used. Uncle Richard (Gillette) taught (me) the first year I started. I was afraid of him and I didn't learn anything that year. I don't know how I got to the second grade; I guess because mother was his sister he just passed me."

From my cousin/friend Eddie Ivory, older sister of my classmate Marilyn Ivory:
 "There was a swing in a tree, across the creek at the back of the baseball field. I loved to swing there and headed for the swing every morning before school. I started going to school about age four, tagging along after my older siblings, Bobbie and James (Sonny), crying if I could not go. So the teachers said, 'let her come.' Mrs. Helms was my first teacher as she taught the lower grades at that time. Mrs. Maude

Williams was the principal and taught the higher grades. Mrs. Butler came later when Mrs. Williams resigned."

Notes:

1. Honey in the Bee Ball: The person who is "it" closes their eyes, head leaning against a tree, building, etc., and chants:

Honey in the bee ball, bee ball, bee ball, I can't see y'all, see y'all, see y'all
 Last night, night before, twenty-four robbers at my door
 I got up, let 'em in, knocked 'em in the head with the rollin' pin
 All ain't hid you better be, I'm lookin' "

[The only reference I can find to "Honey in the Bee Ball" is to a song by Louis Jordan, recorded December 20, 1938. And Louis Jordan is from Arkansas. First verse of the song: Honey in the bee ball, I can't see ya'll. All here! It's a game the kids play, underneath the southern moon!]

My cousin, Florine Wilson, who lived "in town," remembers saying "Honey in the Bee Ball." So do Aunt Jimmie Dandied, from Spring Hill, and one of my associates who lived in Hot Springs as a child. My sister, Rosetta, remembers it the same as I do. "Huntin' the Bee Ball," and so does Eddie's sister Carolyn Ivory. Maybe "Huntin' the Bee Ball" was a Gum Springs corruption that got carried forward down through the years?

2. Outing is a type of flannel. Our slips were usually pink with stripes and, until recently, I thought they were called "princislips."

3. I spent every summer barefoot, even after I was in college, until "thong sandals" came along and I started wearing those in the summer.

The AAGSNC Writers Group was started about two years ago. Its purpose is to provide mutual support in getting our family histories into writing and published, whether it is as a reunion book, a formal family history, a series of stories, or a novel. Annette Madden has served as the nominal point person for the group and has taken on the responsibility of preparing a topic of discussion for each meeting.

The group is working principally with two books: *Your Can Write Your Family History* by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack and *Producing a Quality Family History* by Patricia Bow Hatcher, CG. The group covers a topic from one of these books at the start of each meeting and then spends the rest of the time reading and critiquing each other's submissions. The group meets bimonthly.