

AAHGS

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORICAL AND
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC

Volume 8, Number 10

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1995



HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

NJ-AAHGS will meet for a Kwanzaa Observance and Holiday Celebration, Saturday, Dec. 9, 1995, at 12 Noon, at the Afro-American Historical Society Museum, 1841 Kennedy Blvd., Jersey City, N. J., 2nd fl.

10:30 a.m. Executive Committee will meet.

12 Noon - Refreshments - Women are requested to bring finger food, and men are asked to provide dessert and beverage.

PROGRAM:

KWANZAA with member participation - led by Odell Washington. Wear your African garb or festive dress. An enriching experience is guaranteed. Family and friends are welcome!

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY AND GENEALOGY BOOKS AUCTION - Members are encouraged to donate books for this activity for the benefit of the New Jersey Chapter. Please remember to

bring books the day of the meeting.

Note: Start-up Kits will be on sale for gifts to beginners, or for yourself if you are starting your family history research.

Also available at reduced prices will be back issues of Jersey Heritage.

Let's enjoy each other's fellowship in the last meeting of 1995.

(Due to cutbacks affecting the Library staffing, the Greenville Library closes from 1 to 2 p.m. for lunch. If the door is locked, please call the Museum at 547-5262 from the telephone in front of the Library. Someone will come down and admit you).

November 20, 1995 - The Hadley Players production featuring Janice Jenkins as Ida B. Wells "In Pursuit of Justice," won awards for Best Sound Design, Best Costume Design, Best Directors and Best One-Person Performance by Miss Jenkins. The Awards were presented at the 23rd Annual Black Theater Awards Ceremony in New York City. Congratulations Janice!

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Your officers and Executive Committee wish to extend their greetings for the upcoming Christmas and New Year and hope that 1996 will bring health and wealth to everyone. Further, I wish that you will make a New Year's resolution to continue your research diligently and share your work with the Society during the year.

As I am now undergoing recovery from major surgery, I trust that my spirits and will power will allow me to maintain my position as your NJ-AAHGS President and guide the Chapter through 1996.

I am looking for volunteers for the position of Membership Chairperson and Program Chairperson. Mr. Aaron Keyes has shown an interest in the Membership slot, and I welcome his offer. This is your Society and volunteerism is always welcome.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to each and everyone.

LUCIUS A. BOWSER,
President

THE WEATHER ALERT REPS
have been reactivated for Winter 1995. In the event of severe weather, each NJ-AAHGS Chapter member is asked to be responsible

for calling your County Reps by 9 a.m. the day of the scheduled meeting for information concerning cancellation. Following are the County representatives and their telephone numbers:

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>NAME AND TELEPHONE</u>
Hudson	Glenn Cunningham (201) 433-3487
Essex	Lloyd Washington (201) 763-4949
Middlesex	Lloyd Washington (201) 763-4949
Bergen	-Bernice Jackson (201) 837-0642
Monmouth	Amanda Edwards (908) 671-1216
Union/Ocean	Lloyd Washington 763-4949
Mercer	Lucius Bowser (201) 763-5892
Passaic	Lillian Page (201) 916-0114

DUES RENEWAL NOTICE

The NJ-AAHGS membership year will end December 31, 1995. All annual dues for 1996 will be due January 1, 1996. See Page Five of this Newsletter for application forms and instructions. Thank you for your cooperation in forwarding your dues ASAP.

100 Years Legacy:
Arenda Griffin Knight...

As researched by Marie Holston Newberry and Nellie Berry Askew, great-granddaughters of Arenda Griffin Knight of Alabama.

We took Amtrak to Montgomery, Alabama, in October 1992. With the help of the Executive Board of the New Jersey Chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, we had information on the location of the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

We knew some family history that we had been told by our Aunt Irene who passed away in 1988 at the age of 92. She told us that Arenda Knight (her grandmother) was born a slave and had been sold three times. Each time she was sold, her surname would change. The name she remembered her as was Arenda Griffin. With this information we checked the marriages of the Knights of Alabama in Barbour County, which is where we were told she had lived until her death in 1949. We acquired a marriage certificate of Dick Knight and Arenda Griffin, who were married in January 3, 1870.

From Montgomery we went to Clio, Alabama, in Barbour County, where our Grandmother, Mary J. Knight was born, and located a cousin, Kitt Knight Alexander. He told us that he was raised by Arenda Knight, who was his Grandmother.

His mother was one of seven children of of Arenda and Dick Knight. We knew that our grandmother was one of their children, but we did not know how many children were born of the marriage. Some of the names he mentioned were familiar to us, but some were new. We spent only one day there and were so happy for all the valuable information we learned. His wife, Edith, was also very helpful. She remembered some things that he did not. She gave us an address and a telephone number of his brother who lives in Newark, New Jersey, which was a great achievement for us, because we did not know of any of our relatives named Knight in New Jersey. She also gave the telephone number and address of his sister in Detroit, Michigan.

In Alabama we took pictures of our new found cousins. This is the beginning of our search for our family history. Sadly, Cousin Kitt passed away in June 1994, one year and eight months after our visit.

The following reported by Marie Holston Newberry:

Arenda and Dick Knight had seven children, but the U.S. Census of 1880 lists two children and three with relationship not reported. I know that my Grandmother had

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brothers named Thomas, Louis and Dick. Also, a sister, Matilda, who was listed as relationship not reported. The son, James, I had never heard anyone speak of and daughter, Catherine, was never mentioned in my presence. This makes a total of nine children. This list of children was copied from the 1880 and 1910 U. S. Census: Mary Jane, Maggie, James, Thomas, Catherine, Louis, Matilda, Ida and Dick Jr.

Dick Knight was 46 years old in 1880 according to the Census of that year. He was the head of the family, a farmer and was born in Alabama. He had a lot of property that was left to my great-grandmother after his death. Since the 1890 U. S. Census was destroyed, and Arend was a widow and head of household in the 1900 Cenus, we do not know where he died. The Alabama Department of Vital Statistics does not have records available before 1908, I was told. I am now looking into records of taxes and deeds to see if I can find out any information. There is a book out about the history of Clio, Alabama, written by Alto Jackson, that mentions Richard Knight and his holdings. That is all I have to go on at this point.

Arenda Knight lived her whole life in Alabama. I went to Alabama in 1946 for the first time and saw her. I remember her as a very small lady, who seemed very old. She never said anything to me, just bowed her head when she was told who I was. Her daughter,

Matilda, was taking care of her at the time. I am sorry I did not talk to her and ask her things, but I was too young to realize that she was my history.

Mary Jane Knight, our grandmother, was born in 1874. I never heard her talk of going to school, but she could read very well. She would get her grandchildren to write letters to her friends and family in the South and to Detroit, Michigan, for her. When the letters were answered, she would go into a corner of the room and read them. When she wanted to answer the mail, she would get one of us to write. She would never let us read her mail.

Mary Jane married Anthony Holston on September 16, 1888, at the age of fourteen. I think they lived on the farm of her parents until they moved to Newark, New Jersey, in the early 1920's. She told me that they had eleven children. They were, according to the U. S. Census: Benjamin, Petronia, Arendy, Estelle, Vellie B. (the mother of Nellie Berry Askew), Artis (my father), Louis, Preston, Selman and Rillie Mae. I cannot remember why the Census would be missing the eleventh child's name.

Grandfather Anthony Holston came to Newark, New Jersey, to find a better way for his family. He started working for the city of Newark as a street cleaner, where he made enough money to send for

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ANNUAL DUES ARE DUE
FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS
AND FOR NEW MEMBERS

Kindly complete the following membership applications and forward checks as indicated below. For any further information about membership, call any of the officers or chairpersons listed on page seven of this newsletter.

Application - National Society

Name _____

Full Name
of Spouse _____

Mailing Address _____
(St., Ave., La., Ct., Apt. #., PO Box #)

City State Zip

Telephone # () _____

Fees:	Youth	Indiv.	Family	Company
(Circle One)	\$15	\$25	\$30	\$35

Signature _____ Date _____

Application - New Jersey Chapter

Name _____

Full Name
of Spouse _____

Mailing Address _____
(St., Ave., La., Ct., Apt. #., PO Box #)

City State Zip

County Telephone # () _____

Fees:	Indiv.	Family	Company	Patron
(Circle One)	\$12	\$20	\$35	\$250

Signature _____ Date _____

Make Separate Checks Payable To:

AAHGS and New Jersey AAHGS

Mail Both To:

New Jersey Chapter
Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc
1841 Kennedy Blvd., 2nd Floor
Jersey City, NJ 07305

Bulletin Board

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An After School Program - 3 pm
5 pm, is under way at the
Afro-American Museum,
Greenville Library, 2nd fl.,
1841 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey
City, New Jersey.
Conducted in cooperation with
Jersey City State College
Intern Students who are
assisting as tutors;
homework is required for
admittance of children five
years and older. For more
information call
(201) 547-5262.

Wednesday, December 6, 1995, -
Kwanzaa Celebration - 1 pm,
Mary B. Burch Theater, at
Essex County College, 303
University Ave., Newark, NJ.
Donation - Can Goods. For
information call (201)
877-3208.

Wednesday, December 6, 1995 -
Discussion: Invisible Man by
Donn Rogosin, 6:30 pm., at
the Newark Public Library,
5 Washington St., Newark, NJ.
For information call (201)
596-6550.

Through December 11, 1995, the
Newark Public Library, is
conducting a book drive which
is part of a statewide pro-
gram sponsored by the New
Jersey Library Association.
Donations of new, unwrapped
books suitable for children
from pre-school through age
14 are being requested for
Second Annual Books for Tots
to Teens, a special holiday
book program. Books can be
dropped off in special col-
lection boxes located at the
main library Children's Room

or any of the branches. Book
distribution to disadvantaged
and underprivileged children
will begin December 18th.
For information call Michele
Cappetta, (201) 733-5642.
The Main Library is located
at 5 Washington St., Newark,
New Jersey.

Janice Jenkins, who received an
award on November 20, 1995,
for best one-person
performance of Ida B. Wells
in "In Pursuit of Justice,"
has been booked for four
weeks in February 1996.
Details in the January 1996
NJ-AAHGS Newsletter. For
information about further
bookings, call Janice at
(201) 451-4940.

An African Heritage Tour
Visiting Dakar, Senegal, West
Africa conducted by William
Still and Friends, February
28 - 25, 1996, in
celebration of Black History
Month. For further
information call:
E-Z Tours (212) 246-2116
Mon-Fri 10 am-6 pm. or
(800) 348-7200 Mon-Fri
10 am - 6 pm.
Mr. Still (718) 479-239 day-
time.

(A number of the NJ-AAHGS
members have gone on
historical tours with
Mr. Still and Friends and
have been very pleased).

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!



100 Years Legacy:

Arenda Griffin Knight -
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them. Those that were not married came. They joined Zion Hill Baptist Church on Nickerson Street. Reverend Pullins was the Pastor, and they remained members until their deaths.

My father, Artis, came to Newark with his father. He worked for Federal Electric Products Company, made the money to go back to Alabama and married my mother, Willie Ma Card. They were married on April 4, 1926 in Clio, Alabama. From there they went to Detroit, Michigan, where I was born. He worked in an automobile plant before returning to Newark. The job he had before he left was waiting for him, a job he worked for until he retired, some forty-five years later. (Marie Holston Newberry is a member of NJ-AAHGS and resides in Montclair, New Jersey.)

REMINDER

Remember to bring books for the auction to be held at our meeting on Saturday, December 9, 1995. Only books in good condition should be donated. You are encouraged to bring books which would be of interest to our members as they pursue their historical and genealogical research.

NJ-AAHGS DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS
AND CHAIRPERSONS:

Lucius A. Bowser, Pres.
(201) 763-5892.
Glenn D. Cunningham, V.Pres.,
(201) 433-3487.
Sandra Bolden, Treas.,
(201) 792-3142.
Bernice Jackson, Secy.,
(201) 837-0642.
Billy Pruitt, Family Reunion
Project Coord.
(201) 332-3330.
Amanda Edwards, Queries,
(908) 671-1216.
Patricia Barrett, Clipping
File Coord.
(908) 232-3430.
Nettie Johnson, Chapter
Photographer,
(908) 846-3054.
Elizabeth Peale Johnson,
Newsletter Editor,
(201) 875-4802.

KINDLY FORWARD ALL NEWS FOR THE
NJ-AAHGS NEWSLETTER TO:
Elizabeth Peale Johnson, 124
Mt. Salem Road, Wantage, N. J.
07461-3725, or Call it in,
(201) 875-4802 by December
15th.

VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! IF YOU CAN
HELP, CALL THE NJ-AAHGS
PRESIDENT, LUCIUS A. BOWSER,
ASAP (201) 5892).