

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

Vol. 2, Number 1

January 1990

Meeting Announcement

THE NEW JERSEY CHAPTER AAHGS

will meet

Saturday, January 13, 1990

at 12:00 Noon

at the

Afro-American Historical

Museum

1841 Kennedy Boulevard  
Jersey City, N.J.

AGENDA

1. Ratification of By-Laws
2. Plan for Election of Permanent Officers
3. Plan for Family History Exhibit

Refreshments and Tour of Museum  
For First-Timers

NOTE: Interim Officers and Committee Chairpersons will hold a preliminary meeting at 10:30 a.m.

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In preparation for the meeting-

- (1) Review copy of By-Laws given or sent to you in the mail.
- (2) Sign and return By-Laws Ratification form at the January 13th meeting, or mail it to Theresa Thomas by Thursday, January 11th, 279 Genesee Ave., Englewood, N.J. 07631
- (3) Bring family photos and/or documents for consideration for the family history exhibit. These items will be mounted on 32" x 40" Core Boards which will be available at the Museum at a nominal fee. Explanatory information is also requested.

CORRECTION

Mr. Lucius A. Bowser, R.P., M.P.H., of South Orange, should have been welcomed as a first-timer at the November 1989 meeting, instead of Hamilton Bowser, his brother. We apologize for this error in the newsletter.

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New Members - December 1989-WELCOME

Anna Durham, Atlantic Highlands  
Janice Jenkins, Jersey City

Guests and Potential Members in Attendance - December 1989

Amanda Edwards, Middletown  
Ellen Franklin, Jersey City  
Billy Pruitt, Pruitt Family Reunion, Inc., Jersey City

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

The NJAAHGS February 1990 meeting will be held Saturday, February 10, at Noon, at the Afro-American Historical Museum, 1841 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, N.J. The speaker will be one of our members:-  
Mrs. Ellen Thorne Morris will report on her research of Black Family Oral History in Monmouth County. She is also planning to briefly discuss computer genealogy. Mrs. Morris is a noted genealogist, local historian and author of By the Wayside: Indian And Black Family History in Monmouth County Everyone invited - family and friends!

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MEMBERSHIP IN THE AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY IS REQUIRED TO JOIN THE NEW JERSEY CHAPTER:

January 1 - December 31, 1990

\$25.00.....Individual

\$30.00.....Family (Spouse)

Please make check payable to AAHGS and forward to:

Mrs. Odell Washington, Treas.  
18 Lindsley Ave., Maplewood, N.J.  
07040

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to help in the Museum in which we meet. Urgently needed are exhibit designers, education specialists, librarians, researchers, graphic artists, maintenance people, writers, carpenters, electricians and those who like to work with young people. For further information, call the museum between 11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (201) 547-5262. BECOME INVOLVED IN NEW JERSEY'S ONLY AFRO-AMERICAN MUSEUM.

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POTENTIAL FUND  
\$\$\$\$RAISER\$\$\$\$

Ellen Thorne Morris has a proposition which sounds worthwhile for those who wish to proof-read an index of New Jersey colored troops in the Civil War. It consists of 60 pages and is camera ready. If interested, contact Mr. Theodore Brunson at the Museum (201) 547-5262 or Mrs. Ellen Morris (201) 531-0672. This may be an easy money-raiser. By the way, we do need access to a good copier!

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ANNUAL AAHGS CONFERENCE

Plan now to attend the annual conference May 3 - 5, 1990 in Washington, D. C. Outstanding historians and genealogists have been tapped to speak and conduct various sessions. In addition, the 2nd annual auction will be held to support the student internship program for 1990. Working under professional supervision at a leading museum, archival or academic institution, the student will research in his or her field of study while earning both expertise and a stipend. Following are suggestions of objects or services you may wish to donate. Please bring an object to our January meeting. Hopefully we will have enough donations to send a box to Washington, D. C. at an early date before the conference.

**A. Gifts:**

- Art Treasures** - sculpture, paintings, prints, batiks.
- Books, Music** - books, recordings, scores, autographed items, musical instruments, manuscripts, old letters, photos ..
- Collectibles** - toys, coins, china, jewelry, Africana, Black Americana.
- Folk Crafts** - handmade quilts, needlework, dolls.
- Recreation** - gift certificates for vacations, bed and breakfast in your home for a researcher, a dinner at a restaurant.

**B. Genealogical services** - Offer to do research for 5 to 20 hours in your geographic area, computer work, editing

**Note:** This could be our biggest money-maker.

**C. Advertising** - for our catalog (See Advertising and Gift Form)

**Your business**

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER WILL BE WELCOMED.

Please give to Betty Peale Johnson Or Mail to her at: R.D. 1, Box 638 Sussex, N.J. 07461 (201) 875-4802

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DO YOU KNOW? - Lloyd E. Washington -

That the New Jersey State Archives is not open nights or week-ends; and

That the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Department of Health, has ceased indefinitely searching records for genealogists?

Also, that reference services at the Rutgers University Alexander Library have been reduced?

ALL ABOVE DUE TO BUDGET AND STAFF REDUCTIONS!

WHAT TO DO? - Write to the Governor, State House, Trenton N.J., 08625, immediately, requesting reinstatement of services.

(Information from the newsletter of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists)

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EDWARD T. BOWSER, SR.

Edward T. Bowser, St., East Orange, N.J., was the father of our member Lucius A. Bowser. Before Mr. Bowser died in October 1988, he had served as a leader in the State of New Jersey and in the City of East Orange and County of Essex. He was the first Black State Assemblyman, serving from 1950 to 1956 in Trenton. He was the first Black member of the East Orange City Council, the first Black on the East Orange Board of Adjustment, the Parking Authority, the Police Commission and the City's first Black Chief Building Inspector.

As a Mason in the Prince Hall Masonic organization since the age of 22, Mr. Bowser was instrumental in obtaining the first Masonic Temple, New Jersey Grand East in Newark. He was the Grand Master of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge from 1948-51 and also Past International Grand Patron of the Conference of Grand Chapters of the United States, Canada and Liberia for the Order of the Eastern Star.

The foregoing activities of Mr. Bowser are examples of the extent of distinguished service that he gave to his community and State throughout his life.

(More About Mr. Bowser in Subsequent Newsletters)

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PRUITT FAMILY REUNION, INC.

Billy Pruitt of Jersey City attended the December 1989 NJAAHGS meeting and made a short presentation regarding the work he has done in organizing and incorporating the Pruitt Family Reunions. Plans are currently being made for the 1990 Reunion which will take place August 31st to September 2nd in Atlanta, Georgia. The family history has been compiled and registered with the Library of Congress. One hundred and fifty Pruitt families have been registered in sixteen States, Africa, Italy and Germany. Some of the noted Pruitts are Clifford B. Pruitt of Los Angeles, who played basketball at UCLA and who is presently playing professional basketball in Europe; African Methodist Episcopalian Bishop Rev. Robert L. Pruitt of Washington, D. C. who is presently in Africa; Rev. Harry S. Pruitt of Chicago, Illinois, a nationally known religious radio announcer; Pilot Fletcher H. Pruitt of Clinton, S. C., a 1947 Tuskegee Institute graduate; Henry P. Cromer, the County Sheriff of Greenville, S.C.; and Billy M. Pruitt who created the long skip, hop and jump in basketball while a student at Geer-Gantt High School in Belton, S.C. These outstanding Pruitts, as well as hundreds of others in the family are all descendants of William "Grandpa Billy" of Due West, S.C. The family history covers seven generations from 1821 to the present.

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We thank Lucius A. Bowser for providing the above information concerning his father, Edward T. Bowser, Sr. and Billy Pruitt for furnishing the information regarding the Pruitt Family Reunion, Inc.

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

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SURNAME RESEARCH

Lucius A. Bowser, R.P., M.P.H.  
758 Stirling Dr. East  
South Orange, N.J. 07079-2425

BOWSER, ASH, ELLIOTT,  
WATKINS, RICKS -  
Norfolk, Suffolk, Portsmouth, Va.  
Pa.

Anna Durham  
15 Middletown Avenue  
Atlantic Highlands, N.J. 07716

BUSH, CUFF, CATLIN -  
Pennsylvania and Virginia.  
BUNFORD, MAYERS, MARSHALL -  
Maryland.

Amanda M. Edwards  
14 Gillville Lane  
P.O. Box 83  
Middletown, N.J. 07748

REEVES - Monmouth Co., N.J.  
EDWARDS, MC COLLUM -  
Douglas, Ga.,  
"Chesny" S.C.

Elizabeth P. Johnson  
R.D. 1, Box 638  
Sussex, N.J. 07461

PEELE, CHAVERS - N.C.  
LEWIS - Ga.  
MAYBIN- Ala.

Pruitt Family Reunion Inc.  
145 Van Nostrand Ave.  
Jersey City, N.J. 07305

PRUITT - Va. and S.C.  
PERKINS - Va. and N.C.

Lloyd E. Washington  
18 Lindsley Ave.  
Maplewood, N.J. 07040

HANNAH WASHINGTON- Va, Fairfax Co  
JAMES WASHINGTON-N.Y. State  
CHARLES MATTHIES, NYC  
CHARLES SEYMOUR - Conn.  
ESTHER REYNOLDS WASHINGTON -  
NY, State of NJ  
CHARLES JOHNSON -Hartford,  
Conn. and Springfield, Mass.  
ANNIE MANLEY MATTHIAS -County  
Cork, Ireland

**THE SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE**  
515 Lenox Avenue and 135th Street  
New York, New York

Telephone: (212) 862-4000

Open: MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY 12:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.  
THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Closed: SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Census Records 1790-1900 plus Soundex 1880-1900 for entire country

Books, magazines, manuscripts, pamphlets, personal papers,  
photographs, prints, and newspaper clippings by, and about  
African-Americans.

Over 400 African-American newspapers on microfilm. Collection  
includes long runs of titles dating back to Freedom's Journal  
1827.

Photocopies on premises or by arrangement with photographic  
service of the Center

Printed Census Indices 1790-1880 most states

Oral History-5000 hours of Oral History includes interviews,  
conferences, and lectures on audio tape

The most complete records and information on African-American  
people in this area.

The Center has 2 CATNYP computerized catalog units, 15  
microfilm machines with photo attachment (25 cents bring change)  
and some microfiche machines.

(Information above furnished by Lloyd E. Washington)

**THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street  
New York City, New York 10018-9965

Telephone: (212) 930-0828

**U.S. History, Local History and Genealogy Division - Room 315N**  
Open: MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, SATURDAY 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.  
TUESDAY 10:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.

Closed: SUNDAY AND HOLIDAYS

Census records (film) 1790-1910 New York State Only

New York City Directories-some other Municipalities (Jersey  
City, New Jersey)

New York City Telephone Directories 1929 to present (white pages)

Extensive genealogy material including rare books, documents,  
and special collections

Death indices from Board of Health for New York City 1799-1865

Microfilm arranged alphabetically and chronologically

Printed death books for the five Boroughs from 1888

Marriage index from August 1888 to 1937

Printed census indices from 1790-1888 all States

Maps of all Boroughs from 1830

Passenger lists, Port of New York January 7, 1820 - July 5, 1902

Index to passenger list 1820-1846 and 1897-1902

Newspapers-New York Times from 1851, other major newspapers at  
the Annex Building across the street

Microfilm machines about 30 and 10 microfiche machines, 23 Catnyp  
computerized catalog machines (3 in the Genealogy Room and  
20 in main reading room)

(Information above furnished by Lloyd E. Washington)

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER  
of the  
Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society

Ratification of By-Laws

TO: Theresa L. Thomas, Secretary  
279 Genesee Avenue  
Englewood, N.J. 07631

I have reviewed the proposed By-Laws for the  
New Jersey Chapter of the Afro-American Historical  
and Genealogical Society.

Please check:

I hereby ratify the proposed By-Laws without modification.

I hereby ratify the proposed By-Laws with the following  
comments:

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Signature

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Kindly bring this form, properly signed, to the January 13th  
meeting, or mail to Miss Thomas before Thursday, January 10th.  
Thank you for your cooperation)