

AAHGS

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

Volume 8, Number 8

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1995

You are Invited to attend the

SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING
of the
New Jersey Chapter of the
Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc.

Saturday, October 14, 1995

At Noon

at the Afro-American Historical Society Museum
1841 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey, 2nd fl.
of the Greenville Public Library

WELCOME, FLORENCE AMOS, Presiding

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS - 1995-1997:

LUCIUS A. BOWSER, President
GLENN D. CUNNINGHAM, Vice-President
SANDRA BOLDEN, Treasurer
BERNICE JACKSON, Secretary

APPOINTED CHAIRPERSONS:

Billy Pruitt, Coordinator of Family
Reunion Project
Amanda Edwards, Queries
Patricia Barrett, Clipping file
Coordinator
Nettie Johnson, Chapter Photographer
Elizabeth Peale Johnson, Newsletter
Jersey Heritage Journal - Theodore Brunson,
Billy Pruitt, Janice Jenkins and
Elizabeth Peale Johnson

ADDRESS - LUCIUS A. BOWSER, PRESIDENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS - JANICE JENKINS

(Bring finger food- special dessert and beverage will be provided)

EVERYONE URGED TO ATTEND - FAMILY AND FRIENDS WELCOME!

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

It has been my pleasure to serve as New Jersey AAHGS President for the past two years. I wish to thank all of you for your support and encouragement. As our Chapter moves into its sixth year of existence, I am reminded of something Jean Sampson Scott said to me. She said that the main objective of our Chapter should always be to advise, assist and support the members in the art of family research and the true history of African Americans. I am sure that Mrs. Scott, and our founder, James D. Walker, would be happy with the way we are proceeding. I know that the new officers who will be installed at the October 14, 1995, meeting, will continue to move our Chapter forward. Please continue to give them your full support as you have given to all of us who have gone before them.

The Library will be open on October 14, 1995. The reopening date was September 17, 1995.

On Sunday, October 15, 1995, the Chapter will again have a table at the Family History Fair at Loeb Center, New York University, . 12 Noon to 5 p.m. Come out and learn what is new in genealogy and give a hand at our table.

-Lloyd E. Washington
President

GLENN D. CUNNINGHAM
RECEIVES FEDERAL
APPOINTMENT

Glenn D. Cunningham was recently appointed by President Clinton to the position of Federal Marshal of New Jersey. Glenn, the Vice-President of NJ-AAHGS, has had a distinguished career in law enforcement and in the City government of Jersey City.

In addition to his success in law enforcement and local affairs, Glenn is an accomplished researcher in family and local history.

Congratulations to Glenn and best wishes for continued success from the officers and members of NJ-AAHGS.

BOOK NEWS

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE
IN MERCER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
A HISTORY AND GUIDE

By Roland C. Barksdale-Hall

This 56-page book focusses on the life of Nathaniel Lawson, a Civil War veteran, as well as a son and grandson of underground railroad operators in Mercer County, Pennsylvania. It features various accounts of life as experienced by African-Americans in Mercer County, as well as 68 photographs.

To order by mail (postage incl.) \$11.43, check payable to Penn State Bookstore, 147 Shenango Ave., Sharon, Pa. 16148. Good local history!

Bulletin Board

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IN REMEMBRANCE OF JAMES DENT WALKER

James Dent Walker, organizer and charter president of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc., died in Washington, D. C. on October 6, 1993. We pause to remember the significant contribution that he made to genealogy and the furtherance of Black family history research. We are benefitting from his leadership and foresight daily.

September 18, 1995 - The U. S. Post Office issued a series of stamps honoring the achievements of jazz musicians, including Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker and Eubie Blake.

Steve Conte's cable television show, Family Historian, can be seen State-wide in New Jersey on CTN (Cable Television Network of New Jersey) on Tuesdays at 9:30 p.m. (began September 5, 1995).

Paul Robeson graduated Phi Beta Kappa and was the valedictorian of the Rutgers University class of 1919. He eventually worked his way through Columbia Law School, then gave up law and became a world-renown singer and actor. Announcement was made this past August of his election to The College Football Hall of Fame. (The New Jersey Herald, August 25, 1995, p. B-3).

Since the Tuskegee Airmen were

featured in a documentary on HBO last month, a number of newspaper articles have been written about these Black pilots of World War II who suffered many injustices, but persevered to make an important contribution to the war effort of the U. S. Announcement was made that a travelling exhibit sponsored by the Miami Museum of Science will travel nationally in 1996, including artifacts and mementos from Tuskegee veterans. (The New Jersey Herald, September 22, 1995, p. B-7).

October 9, 1995, the James Dent Walker Chapter AAHGS will sponsor an all-day Everton workshop, Climbing Your Family Tree Can Be Fun! at the Blackburn Center, Howard University, 2400 Sixth St., NW, Washington, D.C. Co-sponsors will be the D.C. Genealogical Society and the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center of Howard University. Registration fee before September 21: \$26 members/\$35 nonmembers. Send your check (payable to AAHGS: James Dent Walker Chapter) to T. Greene Reed, M.D., 11516 Patapsco Drive. Rockville, MD 20852-2454. (Include up to six surnames of interest to you.

October 14, 1995 - 6TH ANNUAL MEETING, NJ-AAHGS CHAPTER, at the Afro-American Historical Society Museum, 1841 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey, at Noon. All welcome!

October 15, 1995 - FAMILY HISTORY FAIR, 12 Noon to 5 (Continued - Page Seven)

HAVE A GULLAH GOOD TIME!
(Contributed by
Lisa Crawley)

If a mix of Low Country seafood, a gospel shout and a trail of historic Black landmarks suits your fancy, then plan to head to St. Helena, South Carolina, for the 15th annual Penn Center Heritage Festival November 9-12, 1995.

Located in Beaufort County, just across the bridge from Port Royal, the island is home to a large Black community noted for their authentic Sea Island culture.

Here African retentions remain strong in the preservation of the Gullah dialect, basket weaving craft and gospel shout.

The festival includes four days of Afrocentric goods and crafts, an educational symposium and church services, a parade and live music performances, and much more.

St. Helena's celebs include noted author, Gloria Naylor; Kitty Green, owner of Gullah House restaurant featured in Lawry's seasoning ads; and Ron and Natalie Daise of the Nickelodean Series, Gullah, Gullah Island.

For further information call the Penn Center at (803) 838-2432.

(NOTE; Lisa attended this festival last year and highly recommends it).

AN UNFORGETTABLE TRIP
IN SUMMER 1995

A trip taken this past summer to Egypt included NJ-AAHGS member, M. Leon Banks. Led by William Still and Friends, the group visited Cairo, Luxor and Aswan the capital of Nubia in ancient times.

Sights of Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx, the Coptic Museum, and the Egyptian Museum, as well as a view of village life and a cruise on the Nile, were just some of the wonders that Mr. Banks experienced. In his own words, he expresses how this trip, which lasted from July 14- 28, 1995, affected his life:

"My Fellow Nubian/
Americans:

"We were asked to make comments or give our concepts about Egypt by the Nubian P. R. person on our arrival in Aswan, Egypt, during our stay from July 13 - 28, 1995.

"When you really see and bear witness with wonder to the tales of Egypt, which have confounded scholars of the world throughout the centuries, then perhaps you'll actually shiver with amazement at this kingdom world. I felt personally touched with a certain kinship to the making of its shining history and magnificent past and will be compelled to continue to learn more about it in the future.
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The following was presented by John Sass of Bloomfield, N.J. at a meeting of the Genealogy Club of the New Jersey Historical Society on September 16, 1995. We thank Mr. Sass for allowing us to include this guide in this newsletter.

GENEALOGY - HOW TO START

1. Read one of the "How to" books at your local library.
2. Write down everything you know about your family and its history.
3. Talk to or write to your relatives, especially older ones, and find out what they can add to your knowledge of the family.
4. Obtain birth, death and marriage records from the Bureau of Vital Statistics.
5. Obtain religious records (Baptisms, confirmations, etc.) from church records.
6. Visit, call or write to cemeteries where your family is buried, copy down gravestone inscriptions, photograph the gravesite, and check the cemetery's office for additional information.
7. Visit, call or write to the local newspaper and/or library for the death listing and/or obituary.
8. Visit, call or write to funeral directors if they are still in existence.

Call or visit the local

florist, and the monument company nearest to the cemetery.

9. Check the Federal Census records and Soundex for 1920, 1900 and 1880.

10. Check the New Jersey State Census for 1915, 1905 and 1895.

11. Check the county courthouse or Hall of Records for wills, administrations, deeds, inventories, etc.

12. Investigate naturalization records at the city, county or state courts.

13. Investigate immigration (passenger list) records at the National Archives in NYC.

14. Check military records.

15. Visit your local Mormon Family History Center. You may be able to obtain church & other vital records on microfilm.

16. Visit, call or write to State and County historical and genealogical societies.

17. Attend lectures and presentations on genealogical research at your local

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REMINDER

NJ-AAHGS ANNUAL MEETING
Saturday, October 14, 1995
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Society Museum

STILL FAMILY REUNION 1995

The Still Family Society held its annual celebration to commemorate the 126th year of the Still Family Reunion on June 25, 1995, at Jacob's Chapel Church, Mt. Laurel, New Jersey. Over 125 family members, relatives and friends attended this event which included a morning worship service, the dedication of a new tombstone for the Dr. James Still's burial site, a delicious picnic lunch and fun and games for the adults and children.

Dr. James Still, the progenitor of the Still Family Reunion, would have been proud and inspired to see that his initial family gathering had become a legacy.

We, the members of the Still family take pride in keeping the legacy alive. Our goal is to train our youth to pick up the torch, which the "Doctor of the Pines" lit. Hopefully, they will carry it on through future generations. (Contributed by the Still Family Society, Inc.)

GENEALOGY - HOW TO BEGIN -
Continued from Page Five

18. Attend genealogical conferences in your area.
19. Buy a computer and subscribe to a genealogical bulletin board (Prodigy).
20. Hire a professional

genealogist? Can get expensive.

AN UNFORGETTABLE TRIP IN
SUMMER 1995
(Continued from Page Four)

"Even though they say that Egypt is the zenith of civilization, Egypt (to me) is a mere child to the whole Motherland. Nevertheless, you must come and see the rest of Africa's other sister- Egypt, beside the many lost civilizations to be rediscovered.

Yes, some light has entered the darkened past of the continent, and it may be hard to revisit to some, in the future, but, I believe there's a calling for a rebirth, a spiritual awakening during this transitional period of re-emergence for all of us. Although, the real challenge is facing the dawning of this brand new 21st century.

"Go (to) Africa, Go! Just the name 'Africa,' in itself implies - Excitement!"

THANK YOU!

NJ-AAHGS wishes to express sincere appreciation to the Nominating Committee for its work in bringing in a slate of officers for 1995-1997: Florence Amos, Bernice Jackson and Odell Washington.

BULLETIN BOARD (Continued from
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at New York University, Loeb Student Center, Washington Square South at LaGuardia Place, Manhattan. Free Admission. Learn how to: Research Your family History; Care for family photos and papers; Use libraries and archives; locate missing relatives, and Interpret and translate documents. Included among the workshops will be an Afro-American genealogy research session. For additional information call (212) 415-5547.

October 21, 1995 - Black Women Writers Champagne Book Party at the Newark Public Library, Centennial Hall, 5 Washington Street, Newark, New Jersey. Featuring author Jan Spivey, writer/illustrator, who will discuss "Stories for Our Children." (\$15.00 reservation). For information call (201) 643-7189.

NJ-AAHGS members Lloyd and Odell Washington and Nettie Johnson will be travelling October 14 - 20, 1995, on a South Carolina Heritage Tour conducted by William Still.

CALL FOR PAPERS - The Federation of Genealogical Societies and the Rochester Genealogical Society announce "In Your Ancestors' Image: A Conference for the Nation's Genealogists," to be held in Rochester, New York, 14-17 August 1996. Roger D. Joslyn, Program Chair for the 1996 FGS/RGS Conference, has issued

a call for papers. This call is an invitation to all interested to submit suggestions for lecture topics that they would be willing to present at the conference. A form for submitting proposals is available from: Roger D. Joslyn, C.G., F.A.S.G., P.O. Box 4061, New Windsor, N. Y. 12553-0061.

CALL FOR PAPERS - Oral History Association Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn-Center City, Philadelphia, Pa., October 10-13, 1996. Theme: "Oral History, Memory, and the Sense of Place." For further information or to submit proposals, contact: Howard L. Green, New Jersey Historical Commission, CN 305, Trenton, N.J. 08625, (609/984-3460 (phone), 609/633-8168 (fax). Deadline: December 15, 1995.

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