Black History Month 2015
Genealogy Conference
“A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture”

Hosted by

AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.,
STATE OF MARYLAND & WASHINGTON, DC CHAPTERS and
FAMILY HISTORY CENTERS

Central Maryland
Prince George’s County, Maryland
Agnes Kane Callum - Baltimore, Maryland
Montgomery County, Maryland
James Dent Walker - District of Columbia
Laurel MD and Washington DC Family History Centers (WDCFHC)
African American Special Interest Group/WDCFHC

Saturday, February 7, 2015

FAMILY HISTORY CENTER LAUREL
7200 CONTEE ROAD
LAUREL, MD 20707
8:30AM - 5:00PM
A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture

8:30AM – 9:00AM  Conference Registration
9:00AM – 10:00AM  Welcome/Opening Remarks by AAHGS Chapters/FHC

Words from Keynote Speaker, Solomon Northup Foundation

Workshop 10:10AM-12:20PM

Noreen Goodson  Genealogy for Beginners - (Beginner)

Workshops 10:10-11:10AM (Concurrent sessions)

Carol Kostakos Petranek  Family Search - (Beginner/Intermediate)
Aaron Dorsey  Slave Genealogy Research - Conducting Slave Era Research (Intermediate/Advanced)
Damani Davis  Researching Caribbean Ancestors - (Beginner/Intermediate)

Workshops 11:20AM-12:20PM (Concurrent sessions)

Angela Walton Raji  Using African American Newspapers to Construct the Story (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)
Shannon Christmas  Using DNA Testing for Genealogical Research - (Intermediate/Advanced)
Leslie Anderson  Myth Busting: What You Must Know About Black History (Beginner/Intermediate)

LUNCH 12:30PM - 1:15PM

Workshops 1:20-2:20PM (Concurrent sessions)

Robyn Smith  Cluster Genealogy (Intermediate/Advanced)
Leslie Anderson  Update! Using the Virginia Slave Births Index Effectively (Intermediate/Advanced)
Carolyn Corpening Rowe  Little Known Facts about the US Census (Beginner/Intermediate)

Workshops 2:30-3:30PM (Concurrent sessions)

Reisha Raney  Daughters of the American Revolution (Intermediate/Advanced)
Carolyn Corpening Rowe  Finding Women’s Maiden Names (Beginner/Intermediate)
Alice Freeman Harris  DEATH: One Event Creates So Many Records! (Beginner/Intermediate)
Aaron Dorsey  Slave Genealogy Research - Conducting Slave Era Research (Intermediate/Advanced)

Workshops 3:40-4:40PM (Concurrent sessions)

Bernice A. Bennett  Civil War Widows’ Pensions - (Beginner/Intermediate)
Sylvester Woolford  Underground Railroad (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)
Angela Walton Raji  Online Resources for African American Research (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)
Shelley Murphy  The "So What" Concept (Beginner/Intermediate)

4:45PM - 5:00PM  Closing Remarks by AAHGS Chapters/Door Prizes

KEYNOTE SPEAKER, SOLOMON NORTHUP FOUNDATION
A published author and poet, Clayton has worked within the banking and real estate title industries for the last sixteen years. Clayton has created a mini booklet of poetry that was inspired by different scenes within Solomon Northup's book "Twelve Years A Slave." He is also working with the Pittsburgh Public School’s Social Studies Department to ensure the text books used for the African American Studies classes mention Solomon Northup. With the increase in the interest in Solomon Northup, Clayton has become a lecturer, historian, and educator on Solomon Northup.

Solomon Northup Foundation Mission Statement:

• Keep the Solomon Northup flames burning through education, awareness and research
• Raise Awareness of modern day slavery and human trafficking
• Discover the fate of Solomon Northup; so that he may "...rest at last in the church yard where (his) father (Mintus Northup) sleeps." – Solomon Northup, Twelve Years a Slave.

http://www.solomonnorthupfoundation.com/about-us.html

“A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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**Anderson, Leslie** - Reference Librarian in Alexandria Library, Special Collections Branch where she co-authored *Alexandria* and served as editor of the multi-volume *Virginia Slave Births Index, 1853-1865*. She is the Recording Secretary for the Virginia Genealogical Society, a member of the National Genealogical Society (NGS), the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS), and several Virginia and Pennsylvania genealogical societies. Leslie received her MS in Library Science from Case Western Reserve University and her BA in American Studies from Wesleyan University. Her article, “Tabitha’s Story: Survival, Struggle, and Success” won the 2013 NGS Family History Writing Contest.

What are the biggest myths about African American History? How can they obstruct your research? Every day, stories about people or objects are told that are not true. Some are outright fabrications. Others contain a kernel of truth that has been embellished over the years. Because they are catchy, humorous, or shocking, these stories often stick in our memories and some of the weird things we hear are actually true. (*Beginner/Intermediate*)

In 1853, Virginia began an annual registration of births and deaths. The “Birth Index of Slaves, 1853–1865” was later transcribed by the Work Projects Administration (WPA) and recorded on microfilm. While the information - name of informant, infant’s name, mother’s name, birth date, place of birth — is valuable to genealogists, working with the microfilm can be problematic. Hence, the creation of the *Virginia Slave Births Index, 1853-1865*. With the recent publication of *Volume 6: Geographic Supplement*, the chances of finding your people have increased. Get results with the Index, supporting documentation, and online resources. (*Intermediate/Advanced*)

**Bennett, Bernice A** - Parlayed her love of teaching, facilitating, coaching, training, writing, genealogical research, and public speaking into helping others search for their roots. She is the president of her own genealogy company, BB's Genealogy Research and Educational Services, LLC. Bernice is also the host of her own BlogTalkRadio show, Research at the National Archives and Beyond! Bernice has presented her research at the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, South Carolina Genealogy Society Summer Workshop, National Genealogy Society, the Southern California Genealogy Jamboree, The Midwest African American Genealogy Institute of St. Louis, Old Edgefield Genealogical Society Southern Showcase and the Baltimore and Washington DC Family History Center. Bennett received her BS degree in education from Grambling State University and a MPH in community health education from the University of Michigan. She holds membership in several national and local genealogical societies and the National Institute of Genealogical Research Alumni Association.

Explore the evidence and challenges faced by widows and/or former slave descendants of soldiers in the United States Colored Troops /Widows’ Pension Applications. Learn how the evidence shared stories of enslavement, slave marriages and also lack of information such as the soldier’s name when mustered, the name of the company and regiment or even a legitimate marriage license, and or birth certificate could disqualify a claim from being approved. (*Beginner/Intermediate*)


This session illustrates how to use DNA analysis in concert with traditional genealogical research methods to demolish brick walls. Need help in selecting a DNA Testing company? This session will also provide some information on companies that offer DNA testing and results. (*Intermediate/Advanced*)

“A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture”
**Davis, Damani** – A Reference Archivist at the National Archives Research Services Division (RD-DC) in downtown Washington, DC. Davis is a graduate of Coppin State University in Baltimore, MD and received his M.A. in history at the Ohio State University in Columbus, OH. He has lectured at national, regional, and local conferences on African American history and genealogy. A native of Philadelphia, PA, Mr. Davis now resides in Baltimore, Maryland.

| **Researching Caribbean Ancestors** | Damani will provide an overview of 20<sup>th</sup> century Caribbean migration to the U.S. and share tools so you can trace your own Caribbean roots. Damani will examine key record groups including naturalization, passport and ship passenger arrival records as ways to track your family history. Using federal records from 1890 to 1930, Damani will provide tips on locating your immigrant ancestors. *(Beginner/Intermediate)* |
| **Dorsey, Aaron** - Native of Oakland, California has been doing genealogical research for over 10 years. His undergraduate degree in U.S. History and graduate degree in Education Policy are from Stanford University. He began researching his family history after reading *Jubilee* by Margaret Walker-Alexander for a Survey of African American Literature at the College of Alameda. He has documented the history of his family in Alabama, California, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. However, the focus of his research has been concentrated in Texas where he has traced his ancestors to 1839. |
| **Slave Genealogy Research** | Conducting Slave Era Research will help the learner understand basic genealogical strategies to finding enslaved ancestors. Brick walls in tracing enslaved ancestors can be caused by improper research habits and lack of records. Learning to research effectively can help to avoid these brick walls. *(Intermediate/Advanced)* |
| **Goodson, Noreen** - Born and raised in Baltimore, MD; graduate of Morgan State College and Morgan State University; and elementary school teacher for 30 years in the Baltimore City Public School System. In 1981, she began researching her parents’ families in Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina. Currently the Corresponding Secretary/Secretary of Baltimore’s Agnes Kane Callum Chapter of AAHGS. Also a member of the Maryland Genealogical Society and of the historical societies of Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and Baltimore City. Currently researching the Goodsons’ of Richland County, SC. |
| **Genealogy for Beginners** | Beginning African American Research? – Watch Goodson hold your attention and get you inspired to really get started in depth with exploring your family history. This workshop provides novice African American researchers with some guidance, hands-on experiences and explanations concerning various aspects of researching your family’s roots with emphasis on Maryland resources. *(Beginner)* |

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<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
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<td>Harris, Alice Freeman</td>
<td>Active member of AAHGS for almost seven years. In January 2010, Alice activated the Central Maryland Chapter of AAHGS in Columbia, Maryland, and is currently President of the chapter. Alice teaches African-American genealogy courses at Howard Community College and at other venues for new genealogists. In 2011, Alice was presented the AAHGS President’s Award for her service to the organization. Alice is passionate about genealogy and hopes to inspire others, particularly our youth, to learn more about their heritage.</td>
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<td>DEATH: One Event</td>
<td>Death certificates are vitally important for learning date/place of birth, name of parents, women’s maiden names, place of burial and other important information for genealogy research. Learn how to evaluate the information provided on death certificates. But what if the death certificate is missing? Many researchers don’t realize that death is actually the gift that keeps on giving long after a loved one is deceased. Explore dozens of unique records that may substitute for death certificates and provide the information you are seeking. (Beginner/Intermediate)</td>
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<td>Murphy, Shelley</td>
<td>aka &quot;familytreegirl&quot;, a native of Michigan residing in Virginia. She is a founding member &amp; current President of the AAHGS Central Virginia &amp; VP of the Central Virginia Genealogical Association. She has been a member of AAHGS since 2006, and holds memberships with the National Genealogical Society, Association of Professional Genealogists and Central Virginia History Researchers. She is also a Coordinator for the Midwestern African American Genealogy Institute (MAAGI), presents Genealogy 101 workshops at the local community college, and does presentations at state &amp; national genealogy conferences. She holds a Doctorate of Management in Organizational Leadership &amp; works as an adjunct professor for Averett University. Shelley’s tagline is &quot;Know your roots, they are long and strong.&quot; (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)</td>
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<td>The &quot;So What&quot; Concept</td>
<td>Have you searched for records and finally found that special person you have been looking for? So what? What does the record tell you? Is this all that you need? Have you searched for records and finally found that special person you have been looking for? So what? What does the record tell you? Is this all that you need? “So What” is a concept used to help analyze genealogical records and resources. The goal is to question the value of the evidence and plan the path to new leads and discoveries. (Beginner/Intermediate)</td>
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<td>Petranek, Carol Kostakos</td>
<td>Serves as a Co-Director of the Washington, D.C. Family History Center where she coordinates classes, conferences and community outreach projects. The Washington DC Family History Center (FHC) is open for genealogical research for the general public. FHCs provide local access to microfilmed family history records, family history computer resources, and internet genealogical websites. Carol volunteers at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. as a Citizen Archivist for the Civil War Widow's Pension Project and as a Genealogy Aide in the Research Room.</td>
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<td>Finding/Organizing Family History Data</td>
<td>If you know the name of at least one deceased ancestor, you can start a search on <a href="http://www.familysearch.org">www.familysearch.org</a>. You may find a wealth of information and resources to guide you through your search such as the six basic steps to doing family research. The site is one of the most popular online genealogical services and is free of charge. It’s linked to the world’s largest collection of genealogical resources and a global network of research centers. It contains a billion names from over 110 counties and territories including those found in the 1880 United States Census, the 1881 Canadian Census, the 1881 British Census, the Ellis Island database and the Freedman’s Bank Records. (Beginner/Intermediate)</td>
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**Raji, Angela Walton** - A founding member of AfriGeneas.com, Angela is also a genealogist specializing in information for beginners, through daily and weekly online genealogy chats on AfriGeneas. She is host of a weekly genealogy podcast, has developed a number of instructional videos, and is an expert consultant on video documentaries. Angela is a published author, host of three blogs, has had a ten-year ongoing message board, has three websites, and does the African Roots Podcast. A researcher with a national reputation, Angela’s contributions for over a decade have been recognized by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.

**Using African American Newspapers to Construct the Story**

11:20AM-12:20PM

Newspapers are a wealth of information for the genealogist and include marriage notices, death notices, legal notices, and information on other activities your ancestors may have participated in. There is also general information about the community and neighborhood where your ancestors resided. Angela will provide tips on locating this information and how to find older newspapers online in university libraries, historical societies and state archives/libraries. *(Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)*

**Online Resources for African American Research**

3:40-4:40PM

Internet sites are often the first tool beginners explore when researching family history. The challenge is to find out where to turn when researching African American ancestry. There are many options and Angela will discuss the online resources now available which are particularly helpful in researching African American ancestry. *(Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)*

**Raney, Reisha** - A systems engineer and mathematician with degrees from Spelman College and the Georgia Institute of Technology, Reisha is now the leader of the Fort Washington Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Harmony Hall. Reisha is a descendant of Thomas Jefferson’s grandfather and did the research on her ancestors. She is now one of only ten African American DAR regents.

**Daughters of the American Revolution**

2:30-3:30PM

With 3,000 DAR chapters nationally and internationally, DAR now has teams of volunteers to assist with your research. Reisha will use her own research experiences to share information on using DAR resources to research your ancestry. *(Intermediate/Advanced)*

**Rowe, Carolyn Corpening** - A graduate of North Carolina Central University, Carolyn recently retired from her career at the Library of Congress. She has served as National President of AAHGS and has held a number of other positions with the national organization. She is also a charter member of the Prince Georges County Maryland Chapter. Carolyn currently serves at the national level as AAHGS Financial Secretary.

**Little Known Facts about the Census**

1:20-2:20PM

The U.S. Census is a once-in-a-decade event. However, there are a number of little-known facts about the census that, if known, could help you become a better researcher. Carolyn will share some of these facts. *(Beginner/Intermediate)*

**Finding Women’s Maiden Names**

2:30-3:30PM

Finding the maiden name of a female ancestor can sometimes be difficult, but can lead to a whole new branch of your family tree. This means new surnames, new families, and new connections in just knowing that maiden name. Carolyn will share tips on how to find maiden names of female ancestors during your research. *(Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)*
Smith, Robyn has been researching her family and others for 17 years. An engineer by day, Robyn makes good use of those research and problem-solving skills in the field of genealogy. She specializes in Maryland research, African-American and slave research and court records. Robyn has a strong interest in promoting the documentation of families and communities, and emphasizing the use of proper genealogical standards in our research, such as using original records and source citations. Robyn teaches an Advanced African-American Genealogy class part-time at Howard Community College in Columbia, MD, lectures locally and has published several genealogy articles in local journals. Her two newest lectures are on using land records and cluster research. Also the author of genealogy blog called "Reclaiming Kin" which can be viewed at http://msualumni.wordpress.com.

Cluster Genealogy
1:20-2:20PM

Are you ready to take the next step in breaking down those brick walls? Cluster genealogy is a research technique employed by genealogists to learn more about an ancestor by examining records left by the ancestor’s cluster. A person’s cluster consists of the extended family, friends, neighbors and other associates such as business partners. Our ancestors often migrated in family groups, as church congregations, or as a group of neighbors. They went to war with, bought land from, and were buried near friends and relatives. (Intermediate/Advanced)

Woolford, Sylvester - Born in 1943 to Sylvester and Grace Saunders Woolford, grew up with his parents and sister, Lelia, in a house on New London Avenue in downtown Newark. Woolford earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration and accounting from Delaware State University and then a master’s degree in business administration from Rutgers University. Woolford’s study of historical U.S. Census data, land records, death records, deeds, courthouse records, newspapers and other sources has helped him put together a detailed portrait of what life has been like for black Americans in Delaware before, during, and far beyond the Civil War. Also a member of the AAHGS Delaware Chapter.

Underground Railroad
3:40 - 4:40PM

“The Dover Eight: A Story of the Underground Railroad.” Sylvester Woolford will present a lecture on the history of the Underground Railroad in the First State, Delaware. (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced)

“A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture”

In 1915, Carter G. Woodson labored under the belief that historical truth would crush falsehoods and usher in a new era of equality, opportunity, and racial democracy... In honor of this 100 year milestone, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) selected: “A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture” as the 2015 National Black History theme. HTTP://WWW.ASALH.ORG/BLACKHISTORYTHEMES.HTML
**Conference Planning Committee**

AAHGS Central Maryland - Alice Freeman Harris  
AAHGS Prince George’s County, Maryland - Jane Thomas  
AAHGS Agnes Kane Callum - Baltimore, Maryland - Noreen Goodson  
AAHGS Montgomery County, Maryland - E Patricia Hallman  
AAHGS James Dent Walker - District of Columbia - Virginia Mercer  
Washington DC Family History Center (WDCFHC) - Carol Petranek  
African American Special Interest Group/WDCFHC - Bernice Bennett, Frank Jenkins, Jacqueline Tillman-Lewis

The *Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc.* (AAHGS) strives to preserve African-ancestored family history, genealogy, and cultural diversity by teaching research techniques and disseminating information throughout the community. Our primary goals are to promote scholarly research, provide resources for historical and genealogical studies, create a network of persons with similar interests, and assist members in documenting their histories.

The *Washington DC Family History Center* (FHC) is a branch of the Family History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and is open for genealogical research by both church members and the general public. FHCs provide local access to Church microfilmed family history records, family history computer resources, and internet genealogical websites.