

First Annual Genealogy Conference and Family History Fair a Success

The Striplin Performing Arts Centre in Selma, AL was the site of the 1st Annual Genealogy Conference and Family History Fair

on Saturday, February 17, 2007.

Ted Urquhart, President of the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance opened the program with a presentation on the state of Alabama ceme-

teries, how to identify and list cemeteries, and preservation techniques for headstones and graves.

Lee Anne Wofford, the Alabama Historic Commission's Cemetery Program Coordinator talked about the Historic Cemetery Marker program qualifications and procedures.

Mary Jones-Fitts discussed genealogy basics—how to get started and an overview—and researching slave records. Mary is the founder and director of Faunsdale Families, an organization of descendants of the original slaves on the Faunsdale Plantation in Marengo County, AL.

In honor of Black History Month and coinciding with the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery by Great Britain and the opening of the film *Amazing Grace*, Regis Marshall



Exhibitors Trooper Isaac Prentice President, Alabama Chapter #1 of the Ninth and Tenth (Horse) Cavalry Association and Natasha Page owner of Cotton House in Selma.



Mary Jones-Fitts discusses the Faunsdale Plantation exhibit with Tiffannie Struggs of Montgomery.

Nicoll spoke on *The Legacy of William Wilberforce*.

Melvin J. Collier concluded the day with a presentation on Family Reunion planning. Melvin is the Family Reunion Forum manager at AfriGeneas.com.

A buffet dinner and showing of a film about DNA research followed.

Black Belt of Alabama DNA Project Registers 60th Member

The Black Belt of Alabama DNA Project reached 60 members in April. The project started in September 2006.

Surname projects are often meaningless for African Americans whose family bonds may have been broken during the Enslave-

ment Period or whose families experienced one or more name changes after Emancipation. In addition, many African Americans—as many as 30% by some estimates—have European Y-DNA but have not been able to find the progenitors of their European lines. In these cases, researchers may have been able to trace their

ancestry by traditional means back to the first census after Emancipation in which their ancestors were identified by surnames and then hit the proverbial "1870 Brick Wall". The DNA Project is designed to help them to scale that barrier.

Anyone who can trace their ancestry to Alabama's Black Belt Region from about 1840 through 1880 is welcome to participate.

To join, visit the Black Belt DNA Project's website: www.familytreedna.com/public/BlackBeltDNA.

DISPATCHES FROM THE FIELD

BLACK HERITAGE FAIR February 10, 2007 Birmingham, AL

Jabrina Howard and B.J. Smothers represented BBAAAGHS on February 10th at the Black Heritage Fair in Birmingham. The Black Heritage Fair is an annual event sponsored by the African American Genealogy Study Group of the Birmingham Genealogical Society.



Rev. James R. Ephraim of First United Presbyterian Church of Forestdale and BBAAGHS President B.J. Smothers at the Black Heritage Fair



BBAAGHS Historian Phyllis Armstrong posing at Jubilee with member Pat Perry and husband

BRIDGE CROSSING JUBILEE March 3, 2007 Selma, AL

Millie Lee Dulaney, Joyce Nicoll and niece Beth, Phyllis Armstrong and B.J. Smothers set up a table at the Bridge Crossing Jubilee on March 3rd in Selma. The traffic at the table was steady throughout the day despite the cold and wind and we passed out a lot of BBAAGHS and Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance (ACPA) literature.



BBAAGHS President B.J. Smothers and BBAAGHS Vice President Millie Lee Dulaney enjoy a moment at the Bridge Crossing Jubilee

GENEALOGY WORKSHOP March 31, 2007 Camden, AL

Millie Lee Dulaney and Mary Jones-Fitts conducted a workshop in Camden on March 31st at the Camden Community Center on Claiborne Street. B.J. Smothers manned the display tables. There was a very nice turnout and we signed up seven new members!

Thanks to everyone who helped make our 1st Annual Conference and Family History Fair a huge success

PRESENTERS

Melvin J. Collier, AfriGeneas.com
Mary Jones-Fitts, BBAAGHS Board and Faunsdale Connection
Regis Marshall Nicoll, Wilberforce Forum
Ted Urquhart, Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance
Lee Anne Wofford, Alabama Historical Commission

EXHIBITORS

African American Cemeteries Online
African Atlantic Genealogical Society, Alabama Chapter
AfriGeneas.com
Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Metro Atlanta
Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance
Black Belt of Alabama DNA Project
Black Belt Community Foundation
Black Heritage Council
Dulaney Family Reunion
Faunsdale Connection
Future Education Center
Freedom Walk America
Montgomery Genealogical Society
National Council of Negro Women, Wilcox Section
Ninth and Tenth (Horse) Cavalry Association, Alabama Chapter #1
Norris Family of Selma and Wilcox County
Rep. Artur Davis
Selma-Dallas County Tourism and Convention Bureau
Sorenson Molecular Genealogy Foundation
Women in Land Ownership

VENDORS

Cotton House T-Shirts, Selma
Everyman Bookstore, Selma
Richard Bailey, Author, Montgomery

2006 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Phyllis Armstrong
Mary Jones-Fitts
Jabrina Howard
Joyce Nicoll
B.J. Smothers

Alabama Chapter of the African Atlantic Genealogical Society Holds Workshop Series

Beginning March 24 and continuing through May 26 the Alabama Chapter of the African Atlantic Genealogical Society in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Archives and the Friends of the Ar-

chives is sponsoring a series of workshops entitled "Preparing Your Family Tree for the Family Reunion."

The course is designed to provide assistance to participants researching their family histories and obtaining adequate documentation for presentations at family gatherings

and family reunions. The workshops will emphasize the unique aspects of African-American history and genealogy.

Participants can attend one workshop only or the entire series. The cost is \$10.00 per workshop or \$30.00 for the complete series.

HOW TO BEGIN YOUR FAMILY RESEARCH

March 24: 9:30 am—Noon

USING FEDERAL CENSUS RECORDS IN GENEALOGY RESEARCH

April 14: 1:00 pm—3:00 pm

LOCATING AND USING LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS

May 5: 9:30 am—Noon

HOW TO PRESENT YOUR FAMILY RESEARCH INFORMATION AT THE FAMILY REUNION

May 26: 9:30 am—Noon

All events take place at the Alabama Department of Archives and History, 624 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, AL. To register, visit www.archives.alabama.gov/whatsnew/workshop2.html or call (334) 242-4363.



Selma-Dallas County Public Library Welcomes BBAAGHS

The Library is the new meeting place for the Black Belt African American Genealogical and Historical Society
BBAAGHS meets on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 10:00 am in the Board Room

The Library is located at 1103 Selma Ave, Selma, AL 36703

Welcome New Members

*We met our membership goal of 40 charter members!
 Thanks to all who joined early and provided us
 with much-needed operating funds*

Phyllis Armstrong
 Suzette Arnold
 Joyce Nicoll
 Bennie J. McRae, Jr.
 Sonja Y. Graham
 Brenda J. Smothers
 Ceophus Kennedy
 Carolyn Graham
 Sylvia Rogers
 Maxine A. Yancy, PhD
 Lateefah Muhammad
 Suzanne Richmond
 Patricia L. Perry
 Isaac L. Prentice
 Etta Hatcher
 Susie Blackburn Boyce
 Josephine Martin
 Olivia Parker Aiken
 Gwen M. Holland-FWA
 Venice M. Williams

Millie Lee Dulaney
 Mattie Campbell Davis
 Ruthie H. Pitts
 Karim Aldridge Rand
 Cora Cade-Lemon
 Sharon K. Leslie
 Delores Knight
 JoAnn Robinson
 Jabrina Howard
 Mary Jones Fitts
 Sheryl Threadgill-Matthews
 Louretta Wimberly
 Wilcox County Library
 Theresa Richardson
 Helen L. Purnell
 Arzula C. Johnson
 Jimmie Lou Covington
 Selma-Dallas County Public Library
 Uniontown Library
 Elvin D.Lang

ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?

Join the efforts of the Black Belt African American Genealogical and Historical Society to preserve the heritage of African Americans in Alabama's Black Belt Region

INDIVIDUALS, STUDENTS, HOUSEHOLDS, ORGANIZATIONS \$35

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO BBAAGHS, INC. (DO NOT SEND CASH)

For membership benefits please visit our website: www.bbaaghs.org

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE (DAY) _____ PHONE (EVE) _____

EMAIL _____

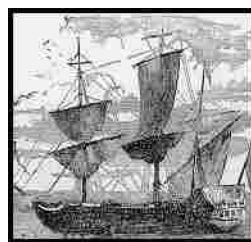
**PLEASE MAIL THIS APPLICATION TO: BBAAGHS, INC.
 C/O B.J. SMOTHERS, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR, PO BOX 1228, SELMA, AL 36702**

Director of Museum of Mobile to Talk on the Slaveship Clotilda and Africatown

Sheila Flanagan, Acting Director of the Museum of Mobile will talk about the Slaveship Clotilda and the last African slaves to be brought to America at the Old Depot Museum, 4 Martin Luther King Street, on Saturday, April 21, 2007 at 12:00 noon. The event

is free and open to the public.

She will be joined by Lula Ellis, Chair of the Africatown Community, a town founded by the Clotilda captives and still home to their descendants.



Sylviane Diouf's recently released book entitled *Dreams of Africa in Alabama* reconstructs the lives of the people in West Africa, recounts their capture and passage in the slave pen in Ouidah and de-

scribes the experience of slavery alongside American-born enslaved men and women of the last recorded group of Africans brought to the United States as slaves and tells how they reunited, bought land and founded their own settlement known as African Town.

The Museum of Mobile is currently hosting *The Captive Passage*, a touring exhibit that chronicles the transatlantic slave trade. The Museum of Mobile is the last stop on the tour that closes September 3, 2007.



**Black Belt
African American
Genealogical &
Historical Society**

PO Box 1228
Selma, AL 36702
334-877-4846

The BBAAGHS Newsletter is published monthly. The deadline for each issue is the last day of the prior month.

May issue — Apr 30th

Jun issue — May 31st

Jul issue — Jun 30th

Send articles, shorts, announcements, book reviews, photos, letters and queries to:
editor@bbaaghs.org.

*The Adinkra symbol **Sankofa** literally means, "return and get it". **Sankofa** teaches us that we must go back to our roots in order to move forward. Whatever we have lost, forgotten, forgone or been stripped of, can be reclaimed, revived, preserved and perpetuated.*

**BLACK BELT AFRICAN AMERICAN
GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Phyllis Armstrong, *Historian*

Jabrina Howard
Joann Robinson
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Louretta Wimberly

MISSION

BBAAGHS is a non-profit organization currently seeking 501(c)(3) status.

BBAAGHS' mission is to discover, collect, organize and preserve the genealogy and history of African Americans in Alabama's Black Belt Region. The group meets regularly on the 3rd Saturday of the month at Selma-Dallas County Public Library, 1103 Selma Ave, Selma, AL.

Anyone interested in researching their African ancestry or preserving African American historic buildings and sites is invited to attend.

EVENTS AND MEETINGS CALENDAR

April 21, 2007	10:00 AM— 12:00 Noon	Regular Monthly Meeting Selma-Dallas County Public Library 1103 Selma Ave., Selma, AL 36702 Info: www.bbaaghs.org
April 21, 2007	12:00 Noon— 3:00 PM	Speakers: Sheila Flanagan, Acting Director of the Museum of Mobile and Lula Ellis, Chair of the Africatown Community Topic: The Slaveship <i>Clotilda</i> and the last Africans brought to America
May 2, 2007	4:30 PM— 6:00 PM	Genealogy Workshop Uniontown Library Info: Mary Jones-Fitts, 334-627-3772 or email: mljonesv@aim.com
May 5, 2007	9:30 AM— 12:00 Noon	Genealogy Workshop African Atlantic Genealogical Society Alabama Department of Archives & History Topic: Locating and Using Local Government Records Info: http://www.archives.state.al.us/
May 26, 2007	9:30 AM— 12:00 Noon	Genealogy Workshop African Atlantic Genealogical Society Alabama Department of Archives & History Topic: Presenting Family Research at the Family Reunion Info: http://www.archives.state.al.us/