
Archivists & Archives of Color Newsletter

Newsletter of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable

Vol.15 No. 2

Fall/Winter 2001

Greetings From the Co-Chairs

by Rosalye Settles

This past August, our annual business meeting was well attended, as were the SAA sessions focusing on initiatives and collections pertaining to people of color. This is very encouraging and testimony to the continued viability and strength of the Roundtable. During our meeting, we welcomed new friends and reconnected with others. Through personal remembrances and a presentation by Rodney Ross of the National Archives, we paid tribute to Dr. Harold T. Pinkett, a man whose long and illustrious career serves as a model for all of us. Thanks to the efforts of Wilda Willis, Thomas Battle and Karen Jefferson, Dr. Pinkett's contributions to the archival profession were made known to the entire archival community. This year we assisted Rose Roberto, the 2001 Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award winner, to attend the SAA meeting. Our success in extending the award this year was due to the outreach efforts of past Roundtable Chair Taronda Spencer.

At our meeting several members volunteered to continue the Roundtable Web site project. We thank them for their commitment to complete this initiative. Once completed, the Web site will be a benefit to all. During 2002 an administrative manual will be developed to facilitate a seamless transition from one Roundtable Chair to the next. Finally, negotiation with SAA has begun to enhance the nomination process for the Pinkett Award, which is unique among the annual awards given by SAA.

In the New Year, let us continue to strengthen our organization by encouraging minority students to enter the archival profession. Toward this end, please nominate a deserving student for the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award. Let others know about the award as well. Deadline for submission is February 28. Please send nominations to: Bill Brock, Collection Management Archivist, Presbyterian Historical Society, P.O. Box 846, 318 Georgia Terrace, Montreat, NC 28757.

Lets each of us do what we can to build upon the legacy of Dr. Pinkett and the goals of Roundtable.

For more information on nominating a student for the Pinkett Award (and the nomination form), please go to SAA's Web site at <http://www.archivists.org/recognition/index.html>

14TH Annual AAOC Business Meeting Minutes August 31, 2001, Washington, D.C.

Brenda Banks reported that the CHASP survey found that many non-archivists were put in charge of archives in HBCUs. As a result, the NEH gave Spelman College grant funding for the HBCU Archives Institute Training Project, to be held in Atlanta three times a year, one week each time. The institute starts with the basics: archival theory, collection development policies, preservation surveys. It also assigns mentors from larger institutions and has its own listserv. One of the requirements is the president of the HBCU must agree to support an archives program. Hopefully, this will encourage minorities to enter the profession. If you know of someone who would be interested in this, please have them contact Brenda Banks.

Taronda Spencer asked for a moment of remembrance to honor Harold T. Pinkett who passed away in March of this year.

Karen Jefferson read Diane Lachantener's tribute to Paula Williams (who also passed away this year) that was published in the last AAOC Newsletter. Additional tributes were given by Greg Hunter, Lucious Edwards, and Taronda Spencer.

Brenda Square reported that she is still working on the Roundtable's directory. Karen Jefferson asked that the information be put on the Roundtable's Web site instead so that its information is current and timely. A committee was formed to enhance the site, which currently just has the mission statement and officers. The Web site is hosted by the Amistad Research Center, Tulane University at <http://www.tulane.edu/~amistad/AAC.html>

Wilda Logan Willis, Roundtable Council Liaison, is rotating off of Council at the end of this SAA meeting. She introduced Danna Bell-Russel as the new Council representative for the Roundtable. She thanked members for their support of the Pinkett Award; there were nine applications for the award this year. SAA is in the black financially for the first time in many years due to publications sales. She announced Brenda Square is now chair of SAA's nominations committee. Willis encouraged Roundtable members to volunteer in SAA.

David Keller is writing a book on jim crow unionism and musicians. If you know of anyone he can contact please let him know.

Continued on page 2

14TH Annual AAOC Business Meeting Minutes (continued)

Archie Motley asked if a trip to Montgomery is scheduled during the 2002 SAA Meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. Tim Pennycuff, local arrangements committee, said they are planning such a trip through Selma.

Spencer announced the 2001 Harold T. Pinkett Award recipient is Rose Roberto. Roberto thanked the Roundtable for their support.

Wayne Coleman was the sole nominee for Roundtable Co-Chair. He was elected unanimously.

Wayne Coleman and Tim Pennycuff encouraged attendance at next year's annual meeting in Birmingham. They also thanked the Roundtable for sponsorship of this year's session on Birmingham and announced that C-SPAN filmed the session.

The collection for the Pinkett Award netted \$375.00.

Announcements:

Brenda Square - Amistad Research Center has two openings for archivists.

Ralph Metcalfe, Jr. - passed out flyers for The Metcalfe Collection, U.S. Congressman Ralph Metcalfe's archives.

Archie Motley - the new head of the Chicago Historical Society is African American.

Linda Edgerly - The Winthrop Group has three positions available in New York. They are looking for any materials on Muhammad Ali. If members are interested in working in corporate or organizational archives, please contact her.

Taronda Spencer - Reuther Library at Wayne State University has an opening.

Duke University - they are looking for an archivist for the John Hope Franklin Center

Donna Wells - provided flyer of "the other Washington" detailing U Street and African American neighborhoods and attractions.

Thomas Battle gave a tribute to Dr. Harold T. Pinkett, remembering how he taught archives courses at Howard and helped develop Howard's archives and those of other HBCUs. Rodney Ross, who wrote Pinkett's obituary for the SAA and MARAC newsletters, played a tape of an interview in which Pinkett discusses his career and publications. Wilda Logan Willis called Pinkett "the Martin Luther King, Jr. of archivists".

More Than Luck...

by Rose Roberto, recipient of the 2001 Pinkett Award

The year 2001 has been good to me. I graduated from UCLA, landed a great first professional job, and met a wonderful man. Winning the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award added to the lucky streak I was already enjoying. The scholarship allowed me to attend the SAA conference, and thanks to the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable, I had an

enriching experience attending workshops, meeting other professionals, and involving myself with SAA.

One week after the conference I felt grateful for another reason: I was already home in California—not on a plane bound for LAX. The attacks on September 11 occurred exactly one week after all of us were together in Washington, DC. By sheer luck, it seems the conference committee planned the annual meeting at the right time and many of us were directly spared from this tragedy. Many in our profession were not, and my thoughts and prayers are with them. Nothing I can say in this short space is sufficient about that event. But maybe nothing more is necessary, since we are all human beings who can relate to each other on a level beyond records, documents and words.

There were other unfortunate events that touched many people this year. Silicon Valley, the symbol of technology and prosperity in the 1990s, is not the only area that feels the bite of recession. The decline of the economy has cost many friends and colleagues their jobs. In addition, many institutions have had to cut spending, curtailing access to collections and ending programs that have greatly benefited users. However, archivists and other information managers face the same challenge they have always faced: how can we do enough with fewer resources?

I can predict the future no better than anyone else. However, I do know that human endurance, the survival of ancient wisdom, and insightfulness and success, are not merely tied together by luck. We will ourselves to get through tragedies, we will ourselves to collect and preserve knowledge, and we will ourselves to save evidence of what is good about our society and pass it on to others.

Several fortunate things happened to me this year. However, chance did not bring me to this profession. It was people who believe in the importance of what they do.

Floyd McKissick, Sr. Papers and Related Collections Now Open for Use at UNC-Chapel Hill

by Tim Pyatt, Director, Southern Historical Collection

The Southern Historical Collection completed its two-year project, "Improving Access to North Carolina's African American Documentary Heritage," on 30 June 2001. Funding provided by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) enabled the Library to process eleven collections, six of which came from North Carolina Central University's African American Resources Collection. The collections were arranged, processed, and reboxed according to best archival practice by AAOC Roundtable member Teresa Church. All finding aids were created using Encoded Archival Description with USMARC records for the collections loaded onto OCLC and the Library's Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN)-shared online catalog.

Continued on page 3

Career Moves

Rebecca Hankins left the Amistad Research Center after 12 ½ years as an archivist and is now employed at the University of Arizona Library Special Collections as an archivist/assistant librarian.

Deborah Mieko Burns is now full-time archivist at the Japanese American Service Committee. Previously she served as half-time archivist and half-time community assessment coordinator.

Lela Johnson Sewell-Williams is Moorland-Spingarn Research Center's new Assistant Curator. A native of Pittsburgh, she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in American History and Black Studies from South Carolina State University and her Master of Arts degree in American History with a concentration in Archives, Museums and Historical Editing. Currently, she serves as the Assistant Curator of Manuscripts within the Manuscript Division of the MSRC at Howard University.

Being the first archivist at South Carolina State University (a centennial Historical Black College and University), as well as serving as the project archivist for the Robert "Bob" Johnson Dance Collection (founder of the Pittsburgh Black Theater Dance Ensemble), has afforded her with a diversity of opportunities to work with personal as well as organizational records and artifacts. Additionally, she served as a Manuscripts Librarian within the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book division of The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of the New York Public Library located in Harlem. While at the Schomburg Center, Sewell-Williams served as the project archivist for the Center's Hip-Hop Archive Project.

Floyd McKissick, Sr. Papers (continued)

The finding aids are available on the Library's Web site in both SGML and HTML formats and can be viewed as part of the UNC-CH Manuscripts Department's finding aids directory. In addition, a Web page for the NCCU finding aids was created: <http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/nccu.html>

A graduate student from UNC-CH's School of Information and Library Science mounted a Web exhibit about NCCU's African American Resources Collection. It can be viewed at: <http://www.ils.unc.edu/~rothj/exhibit/shcexhibit.htm>

Also in June, Teresa Church mounted an exhibit in the Manuscripts Department entitled "The Life and Times of Floyd McKissick". The McKissick papers comprise over 156,250 items (126.0 linear feet) and contain materials pertaining to his law practice in Durham, N.C.; his service,

beginning in 1966, as national director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); his work as advisor to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and his interests in politics and education. Many items relate to Soul City, N.C., a town owned and operated by African Americans near Warrenton, N.C.

UNC-CH greatly appreciates the support received from NHPRC. This project would not have been possible without their support. The hard work and commitment of project archivist Teresa Church also made the project's ambitious plan of work an obtainable goal. The response from researchers has already been gratifying. Since opening the McKissick papers in June, researchers from Great Britain, New York, Ohio, and several from North Carolina, have consulted the papers. Several graduate students plan to draw their dissertation topics from the papers. We are grateful to the collection donors, who had the foresight to save, preserve, and place these important research collections in an archival repository.

Detroit Memories CD-ROM Available

by James E. Hanks, Director of Archival Services
Archive Impact

We are happy to announce the completion of our new interactive CD-ROM, American Scrapbook - Detroit Memories, Volume 1. This is an educational computer software program which tells the story of life in Detroit in the early 20th Century. It focuses on ethnic diversity, the roles of minorities and women in the workforce, and features primary source materials from several Detroit archives and libraries. Among the many subjects we researched was the story of the Paradise Valley neighborhood, which was a cultural hub for the African American community. Ragtime music from the period accompanies dozens of photographs. Designed to complement the variety of publications celebrating the 300th Anniversary of Detroit, the CD-ROM is a useful tool for students to learn about urban history.

In December, we are conducting a workshop called "Showcase Your Collections With New Media Technology". This is being hosted in Chicago by The HistoryMakers, (<http://www.thehistorymakers.com/>) a national African American video oral history archives. Topics discussed will include multimedia, and museum planning.

Archive Impact will soon debut thephotocity.com, an on-line photographic stock house that features the work of Detroit photographers of the past and present. Recognizing the real need to present images of diversity and ethnicity, thephotocity is actively seeking the work of minority artists. Archive Impact's commitment to Detroit is firmly established by the company's presence in the historic Michigan Building near Grand Circus Park. We will continue to direct projects that will generate public awareness and enthusiasm about the history and culture of Detroit. For more details, see <http://www.archiveimpact.com/>

Schlesinger Library Acquires Papers of Shirley Graham Du Bois

by Deborah Richards

The Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America and Harvard University's W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research announce the acquisition of the papers of Shirley Graham Du Bois (1896-1977). An intriguing woman and influential artist and activist, Graham Du Bois was a composer, playwright, biographer, teacher, civil rights champion, left-wing activist, American Communist Party member, participant in the African liberation struggles, and proponent of Maoist China, as well as longtime friend, then partner and wife of W.E.B. Du Bois during his last 12 years. The collection documents her professional and personal lives through correspondence, drafts of articles and books, music scores, and photographs.

WGBH's Media Archives and Preservation Center Completes Say Brother Project Work

by Emily R. Novak

The WGBH Media Archives and Preservation Center is pleased to report the completion of its 2000-2001 grant funded project to arrange, describe and provide intellectual access to 215 Say Brother television programs from 1968 to 1982. WGBH Boston is the largest station-to-station program supplier of programs to the public radio system and provides PBS with one-third of all programming seen on public television nationwide.

Funded by a National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation and Access grant for Archives and Special Collections, the WGBH Archives has preserved masters of Say Brother television programs formerly available in 2-inch (Quad) videotape format only. In addition, 150 hours of field footage on 3/4-inch and 1/2-inch helical tape was appraised and transferred for processing, along with program and producer files on paper.

Say Brother is one of the longest-running public affairs programs for, and about, African Americans in the United States and offers invaluable interview footage with local and national African American activists, artists and politicians. This WGBH program is now known as Basic Black.

The project's two goals were to provide physical access to programming via standard preservation formats for moving image materials and content access via print and Web-accessible finding aids. The print version, will contain traditional finding aid components, while the Say Brother Web site will take advantage of opportunities afforded by the Web, including detailed subject access and minute-long streaming QuickTime media clips. Clips were selected for 150 programs to capture the feel and spirit of the show, and feature excerpts from interview, discussion and performance programming.

The URL is <http://main.wgbh.org/wgbh/saybrother/>

Project work was conducted by the Winthrop Group's consultant Emily R. Novak, whose previous clients include the Muhammad Ali Foundation and the United Nations. Ms. Novak arranged and described the collection, selected clips to be streamed and worked with WGBH's Interactive and Production Services departments to design and develop the Web site.

To celebrate the completion of the project, an educational forum is currently being organized by Say Brother project consultant Sarah-Ann Shaw. Ms. Shaw is a former Say Brother staff commentator, lifetime public advocate and veteran WBZ-TV Boston reporter. Throughout the project, Ms. Shaw served as project advisor to the Archives and worked with current Say Brother/Basic Black Community Committee members, former Say Brother staff and Ms. Novak to infuse texts generated by the project with firsthand experience.

For more information about Say Brother project work, please contact Archives Director Mary Ide at (617) 300-2368.

Peabody Archives Receives Funding to Build on "The Storm Is Passing Over"

by Elizabeth Schaaf

The stunning success of "The Storm is Passing Over," an exhibit mounted to highlight the need to identify and preserve documentation on the musical life of Maryland's African American communities, demonstrated the depth of public interest in this field and the richness of undiscovered resources. Two new grants, from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and the Maryland Humanities Council, will make it possible for Peabody to build on this pioneering project.

The Peabody Archives, in cooperation with the Musicology Department of the Peabody Conservatory and the History Department of The School of Arts and Sciences of The Johns Hopkins University, will inaugurate an oral history program and a Web site devoted to the musical life of Maryland's African American communities. Through Internet access, this digital window will make Peabody's collections more accessible to the community, providing easy access to researchers and the general public well beyond Maryland's borders. These resources will make it possible for scholars to compare Baltimore's once thriving jazz scene to other important local music centers like Kansas City, Chicago and New Orleans. Online resources will include an exhibit of images of musical organizations, jazz and symphony orchestras from the 1920s and 1930s; night club scenes in the 1940s; scenes from Pennsylvania Avenue's golden years and photographs of individual musicians who began their rise to fame in Maryland (Cab Calloway, Chick Webb, Anne Brown - the star of "Porgy and Bess", and Sonny Til).

Continued on page 5

Peabody Archives (continued)

As "The Storm is Passing Over" toured throughout Maryland, visitors to the exhibit made a treasure trove of documents and images available to the Archives (many as gifts and others for the purpose of securing archival copies for study). Interviews, chance and planned, with members of the African American community, as the exhibit traveled from Maryland's Eastern Shore to Western Maryland, yielded up precious stories and convinced Peabody's archivist of the need to mount an oral history project that would preserve eye-witness accounts of the vast changes that had taken place during the lives of these elders. Veteran musicians told stories of touring segregated America, the conditions travelling Black musicians were forced to endure in the decades before integration and of the troubles wrought by the easy availability of drugs and alcohol. More importantly, however, were their accounts of what it took to be a professional musician -- the discipline, the training, the stamina, and the joy of creating their own music. Through images and oral histories, their stories and their traditions will be preserved for future generations of scholars.

The project will be guided by archivist Elizabeth Schaaf, Dr. John Spitzer, and Dr. Ron Walters.

The Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress on the American Memory Collections Web Site at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/doughtml/>

Frederick Douglass, nineteenth-century African American abolitionist and orator, risked his freedom after his own escape from slavery by becoming an outspoken antislavery lecturer, writer, and publisher. After he moved to New York his house became a stop on the Underground Railroad, as he and his wife helped escaped slaves fleeing to the North. During the Civil War he advised President Lincoln and recruited and helped organize regiments of African American soldiers for the Union. After Emancipation, he continued fighting for civil rights for African Americans, but also took up the cause of rights for women and other oppressed members of society. In his later years, he served as a bank president and in several government posts, including minister to Haiti and U.S. marshal of the District of Columbia.

The Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress consists primarily of the papers that were in Douglass's library when he died in 1895. The printed Speech, Article and Book Series shows the writings of Douglass and his contemporaries in the abolitionist and early women's rights movements. Included are handwritten drafts of Douglass's third autobiography, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, and a biography of Anna Murray Douglass, his wife of 44 years, written by their daughter, Rosetta Douglass Sprague. The Subject File Series reveals Douglass's interest in diverse subjects such as politics, emancipation, racial prejudice, women's suffrage, and prison reform. Douglass's scrapbooks of newspaper articles document his role as minister to Haiti and the controversy surrounding his second marriage to Helen Pitts.

The site will also feature an illustrated timeline that will give a brief narrative of Douglass's life. A family tree will show Douglass and his relatives, and links will be provided to online texts of all three of Douglass's autobiographies.

New Online Collection - Southeastern Native American Documents

GALILEO, the Digital Library of Georgia, the University of Georgia Libraries, and the University of Tennessee at Knoxville Library are pleased to announce the availability of Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842, an online collection of over 1000 documents related to the history and culture of the Native American populations of the southeastern United States. The documents are from the collections of the University of Georgia Libraries, the University of Tennessee at Knoxville Library, the Frank H. McClung Museum, and the Tennessee State Library and Archives. They are comprised of letters, legal proceedings, military orders, financial papers, and archaeological images.

To access the Southeastern Native American Documents collection online, go to <http://www.galileo.peachnet.edu>, select "Digital Library of Georgia," then select "Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842." If asked for a GALILEO password, select "Public Databases" at the bottom of the password screen.

Co-Editors

Joellen ElBashir
Cathy Lynn Mundale

The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable Newsletter is published twice a year. It is financially supported by the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center and the Society of American Archivists.

Address all correspondence to:

Joellen ElBashir
Moorland-Spingarn Research Center
Howard University
Washington, D.C. 20059
(202) 806-7480
Fax: (202) 806-6405
E-mail: jelbashir@howard.edu

or

Cathy Lynn Mundale
Robert W. Woodruff Library
Atlanta University Center
111 James P. Brawley Dr., SW
Atlanta, GA 30314
(404) 522-8980 x1218
Fax: (404) 978-2109
E-mail: cmundale@uic.edu

Mission Statements

The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable

The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable was established in 1987 as an interest group within the Society of American Archivists. The Roundtable's purposes are to:

- 1) identify and address the concerns of Archivists of African, Asian, Hispanic and Native American descent
- 2) promote wider participation of said archivists in the archival profession
- 3) promote the preservation of archival materials that pertain to people of color

The co-chairs of this Roundtable are:

Rosalye Settles
Dept. of the Treasury
Office of Foreign Assets Control
1500 Pennsylvania Ave, NW Annex
Washington DC, 20020
(202) 622-1281
rosalye.settles@do.treas.gov

Wayne Coleman
Birmingham Civil Rights
Institute
520 16th Street North
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 328-9696
wcoleman@bcri.bham.al.us

The Society of American Archivists

The Society of American Archivists (SAA), founded in 1936, is a professional association of individuals and institutions interested in the preservation and use of archives. Its membership includes individuals serving government, academic institutions, businesses, churches, libraries, historical societies, museums, and professional associations in more than sixty countries. Through its publications, annual meetings, workshops, and other programs, SAA provides a means for contact, communication and cooperation among archivists and archival institutions:

Society of American Archivists
527 Wells Street, 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60607
Telephone: (312) 922-0140
Fax: (312) 347-1452
E-mail: info@archivists.org
Web page: <http://www.archivists.org>