

## MINORITIES ROUNDTABLE NEWSLETTER

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### From the Editors:

Greetings! This is the inaugural issue of the newsletter of the newly formed Minorities Roundtable (the name is subject to change) of the Society of American Archivists (SAA). The Minorities Roundtable (MRT), an informal group of SAA members concerned with the issue of minority participation in SAA, was approved by SAA Council during their Winter 1987 meeting.

The purpose of the MRT is to identify and address the concerns facing minorities within the archival profession; promote wider participation of minorities in the activities of the profession and its professional organizations; maintain a roster of minority archivists, curators and manuscript librarians; advise SAA on minority concerns; serve as a clearinghouse for minorities in promoting their wider participation at all levels of the profession and the SAA and to enhance the membership base of the SAA; support and promote all efforts to genuinely improve the status of minorities in the profession; and ensure the preservation of archival material pertaining to minorities. These were also the goals and objectives of the Minorities Task Force (see below), a body which preceded the MRT. The roundtable sees itself as an extension of the task force and will continue its work.

The roundtable is open to all SAA members who are interested in its goals and objectives. Nonmembers may attend meetings and contribute to the newsletter, however, one of the requirements for the formation and continued existence of a roundtable is that there be a minimum of 20 SAA members (as in dues paying!) listed yearly as members of the roundtable. Therefore, although we welcome all comers, we want to encourage membership in SAA. (Indeed, the editors/coordinators of the MRT -- Diana Lachatanere and Carol Rudisell -- share a third hat. We are members of the SAA Membership Committee. And, as members of that committee, one of our primary concerns will be the issue of low SAA membership rates among minority archivists and how to turn that around, if possible.)

The MRT will hold its first meeting during SAA's annual meeting in New York City, September 3, 1987, 11:15-12:45; the open house will be on September 5th, 11:15-12:45. (The dates of the annual meeting are September 2-6, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel). At that time we will determine future directions, and discuss the goals and objectives of the roundtable. An agenda for the meeting will be made available in the next newsletter. We invite those of you who cannot attend the meeting to send in your ideas, comments,

suggestions, etc. to be shared with those who will be there.

Newsletter:

The format of the newsletter will vary until we reach a consensus on the kinds of items and information that we want to include. The frequency of the newsletter will also vary in the beginning, although the current editors hope to put out two more issues in 1987. The future of the newsletter beyond that will be discussed at the MRT meeting in September.

During this trial and error period, your input as to format will be appreciated. Among the features that have been suggested are: reports of MRT business; announcements about MRT members (promotions, new employment, awards, panel presentations, lectures, publications, etc.); nominations, appointments and election of members to positions in SAA and other archival organizations; announcements of opportunities of specific interest to MRT members (jobs, grants, educational opportunities); brief sketches of MRT members and of repositories dedicated to preserving the history of minorities; recent acquisitions of significant collections; announcements of exhibitions and publications; and last, but not least, a letters to the editor section.

The editors welcome news items from SAA members and nonmembers alike. Please send all items to Diana Lachatanere, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Lenox Avenue, NY, NY, 10037, 212-491-2226. The deadline is June 15th for the next newsletter (August 1987).

If you know of someone who should be placed on the mailing list, send their name, address, institution/organization, and membership status in SAA or in a regional or local archival organization. We would also appreciate assistance in updating the mailing list. If colleagues who are no longer at your institution receive a newsletter please send me their correct address.

In this Issue:

For those who are not familiar with the Society of American Archivists or the Minorities Task Force, we have provided a brief statement describing the SAA as well as a history of the task force. The latter was written by Paula Williams, an original member of the task force. Other features include Newsnotes, and sections on People, Grants, Exhibitions and Recent Acquisitions.

The Editors would like to thank Karen Jefferson, Ervin L. Jordan, Jr., Charles B. Sherrill, Minnie H. Clayton, Debra Newman, John Fleckner, Edward Smith and Margaret Jerrido for contributing to this, our inaugural issue!

Diana Lachatanere and Carol Rudisell

### **What is the SAA?**

The Society of American Archivists, 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.

### **The Minorities Task Force**

In 1981 at the Society of American Archivists' annual meeting in Berkeley, California a resolution to establish a task force on minorities was passed by the membership. The purpose of the task force was to recruit minorities into the profession, compile a list of minorities, advance opportunities for minorities in the profession, assist minorities in becoming more active in SAA, and to interact with the Joint Committee on Opportunities for Minorities in Museums, Archives and Historical Agencies. The Joint Committee was composed of the SAA, the American Museums Association and the Association for State and Local History. Its purpose was similar to that of the SAA Minorities Task Force.

Paula Williams

## **NEWSNOTES**

### **NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORICAL RECORDS**

Eleven recommendations designed to encourage and aid full participation by Native Americans in the preservation of their national heritage are contained in the report, Native American Historical Records: Issues and Recommendations for Development. The report is the first of its kind to address Native American cultural issues. It reflects the deliberations of the Native American Archives Advisory Conference, a meeting of Native Americans, archivists and cultural resource specialists, convened in January by the Smithsonian's Native American Museum Program. To obtain a copy contact the Office of Museum Programs, Smithsonian Institution A & I 2235, Washington, D. C. 20560.

[from OAH Newsletter, November 1986]

### **RECENTLY ESTABLISHED ARCHIVES**

Founder and Chief Executive Officer Eabette Pevton of the Financial Engineers in Chicago has established the Museum of

Political History. Ms. Peyton says it will be an archival depository and educational resource for political parties, personalities, and platforms that helped to shape and continue to affect and effect American free enterprise democracy.

The museum, still in its embryonic stages, welcomes letters, papers, photographs, audio and video tapes that will highlight the political movement. In addition, Ms. Peyton is looking for 1) people who will serve in an advisory capacity and 2) sites to display the documents and photographs in a traveling exhibition. For more information, contact CEO Babette Peyton, The Financial Engineers, 1643 East 71st Street, Chicago, IL. 60649, (315-955-7571).

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Norfolk State University, one of the nation's largest black universities, recently established an archives and appointed history professor, Dr. Tommy L. Bogger, as its first Director of Archives. For additional information write to: Department of History and Geography, Norfolk State University, 2401 Corprew Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia 23504.

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The Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine of the Medical College of Pennsylvania is seeking names of and/or information about black women physicians, particularly those over 65. Write to: Margaret Jerrido, Assistant Archivist/Project Director, Black Women Physicians Project, The Medical College of Pennsylvania, 3300 Henry Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19129, (215-842-7124).

## PEOPLE

Thomas C. Battle has been appointed Director of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University. Dr. Battle served as Curator of Manuscripts at Moorland-Spingarn Research Center from 1973.

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Debra L. Newman has been named specialist in Afro-American History and Culture at the Library of Congress. Dr. Newman was previously employed with the National Archives and Records Administration (1972-86). Her last position there was as the black and women's history specialist. Her most recent publication BLACK HISTORY, A GUIDE TO CIVILIAN RECORDS IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (1984) received several awards.

[Library of Congress Information Bulletin, November 17, 1986]

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Brenda Banks of the Georgia Department of Archives and History was elected vice-president/president elect of the Society of Georgia Archivists.

Diana Lachatanere and Carol Rudisell have been appointed to the recently created Membership Committee of the Society of American Archivists. The committee has been charged, with among other things, developing membership and assuring that the best possible membership service is provided by the Members Services Office of the SAA.

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Ervin Jordan addressed a History Update Workshop session at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, on "Archival Work as an Alternate Profession in History" as part of a panel session, "History as Preparation for the Professions."

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Minnie H. Clayton served as a panelist on the topic, "Archival Materials and Manuscripts--Sources of Documentation for Playwrights," which was sponsored by the National Archives/Atlanta Branch at the Georgia Department of Archives and History. She also served as a panelist for a one-day workshop on "Issues in College and University Library Archives Administration" for the Emory University/Georgia Archives Archival Training Institute in June 1986.

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Harold T. Pinkett delivered two lectures on the relationship between archives and history in October at Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, VA.

## GRANTS

According to a report in the newsletter of the Organization of American Historians, the interpretation of the black experience in Colonial Williamsburg, which began on an experimental basis in 1979, will be expanded through a grant of \$400,000 from the AT & T Foundation. The grant will enhance existing programs and the historical research necessary to support them, including the addition of a senior scholar in black history, and researchers in the fields of early black music, dance and folkways. Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs in black culture encompass a variety of dramatic and musical presentations detailing the lives of slaves and free black people who comprised more than half of the population there in the 18th century.

[from DAH Newsletter, November 1986]

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The Rockefeller Foundation has granted \$175,000 to the University of Virginia's Carter G. Woodson Institute for Afro-American and African Studies for fellowships in the Humanities programs. The sum will cover a four-year period starting July 1, 1986, and will fund research in the Civil Rights Movement. The Institute is currently in the process of conducting oral history interviews and collecting original documents and papers relative to civil rights leaders and participants.

## EXHIBITIONS

"Field to Factory: Afro-American Migration, 1915-1940" opened February 5, 1987 at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in Washington, D. C. This exhibition marks the first time an in-depth Smithsonian exhibition has focused on such an important part of America's overall social and demographic history from an Afro-American perspective. The exhibition was curated by Spencer Crew, historian in the Museum's Archives Center. The exhibition will be on display through February 1988, after which it will travel to some 20 locations. For further information, contact the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) 202-357-3168.

[from Smithsonian Institution Press Release]

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The Anacostia Neighborhood Museum of the Smithsonian Institution is planning a major exhibition on black Christian churches in the United States. The exhibition will open in September 1987.

Edward Smith, historian at the Anacostia, conducted the research which will form the basis for this bicentennial exhibition on black church history. The focus of the exhibit will be on the contributions of these churches to the education and the political, cultural, economic and spiritual lives of their members and black American culture in general. For information, contact the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, 1901 Fort Place, SE, Washington, D. C. 20020.

[from Smithsonian Institution Research Reports]

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An exhibit, "The Afro-American Heritage in Records (1623-1986)," a display of letters, photographs, diaries, and other materials from collections in the Manuscripts Department/University Archives in the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia, will be exhibited in its Stettinius Gallery through the spring of 1987. For further information contact Michael Plunkett or Ervin Jordan at 804-924-3025.

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The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture will present a major exhibition, "Blacks and the U. S. Constitution," April 26-July 25, 1987 as its contribution to the New York Public Library's library-wide observance of the 200th anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution. The exhibit will place the black presence in American society, and views the Constitution as a living, dynamic, constantly changing document -- that has been altered by the black presence and the struggle for freedom. In addition to the exhibition there will be a number of complementary interpretive and program elements: a slide-video tape kit, a traveling exhibition component, a catalog and gallery guide, and a series of interpretive lectures and forums.

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The Freeport Memorial Library in New York recently had an exhibition commemorating the role of the 503rd AAA Gun Battalion,

a black anti-aircraft unit of World War II. The exhibit, "We Point with Pride" was a photographic record of the 503rd, curated by Lt. Abraham Kaufman, one of 28 white officers who commanded the men of the battallion. Mr. Kaufman, who was appointed battallion historian, found the negatives in his basement and donated a set of the photographs to the Freeport Library.

[from mid-atlantic archivist, Winter 1987]

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

### **Atlanta University Center, Archives and Special Collections**

The James P. Brawley Collection, 1880s-1985 - Office Files, Clark College Records, memorabilia, artifacts, books and other publications. Dr. Brawley was President Emeritus of Clark College and historian on Black Methodism. (Depositor, Mrs. Georgia Williams Brawley)

Archives Collection of the Society for the Study of Black Religion, video-cassettes and audio-cassettes of the Society's Annual Meeting Proceedings, 1977-85. (Depositor, Dr. Lillian Ashcraft-Eason, historian for the Society)

### **Howard University, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center**

(Collections recently made available for research use)

Ophelia Settle Egypt Papers, 1930-80. Sociologist, social worker, educator and author. Included are photographs, articles, programs, correspondence, writings by her, and material documenting her affiliation with civic and professional organizations and churches in Washington, D. C.

Hazel Harrison Collection, 1900-50. Concert pianist. Included are correspondence, clippings, photographs, programs, and music manuscripts documenting her career.

Carl Van Vechten Collection, 1920s-50s. Philanthropist, author, photographer and art critic. The collection includes programs, announcements, catalogs and invitations documenting Afro-Americans in the arts.

### **Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Rare Books, Manuscripts and Archives Section**

Robert S. Browne Papers, 1961-81. Correspondence, subject files, writings and speeches on race and economics, international relations, politics and the Vietnam War; materials from the National Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana in 1972. Browne also donated the records of two organizaitons he founded, the Black Economic Research

Center and the Twenty-First Century Foundation.

Julian Mayfield Papers, 1968-84. Writer, actor, educator and political advisor to Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Forbes Burnham of Guyana. Includes personal papers, correspondence, manuscripts, and material documenting his various careers as an actor, political advisor and university professor.

Shivery Family Papers, 1865-1974 Business and personal papers and photographs documenting the lives of the Shiverys and related Southern black families from slavery to the present.

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS

"Beyond the Basics," a workshop for archivists of smaller repositories (1-2 person staffs) will be held April 20-24, 1987 at Graymoor in Garrison, NY. For further information, contact Brother Denis Sennett, Friars of the Atonement Archives, Graymoor, Garrison, NY 10524.

[from mid-atlantic archivist, Winter 1987

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The Northeast Document Conservation Center is planning to conduct a two-day workshop on the Conservation and Management of Photographic Collections, April 30 and May 1, 1987, at the Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford. Enrollment will be limited. For further information, contact Gay Tracy, Northeast Document Conservation Center, Abbot Hall, 24 School Street, Andover, MA 01810.

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The Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) will be holding its 15th anniversary celebration and meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, May 7th through the 9th, at the Belvedere Hotel.

Program topics will include appraisal of college and university records, photographic preservation, archivists and the law, disaster preparedness, the care and preservation of artifacts, and grant writing. Several sessions on computer systems will be offered including discussions of networking and in-house systems. Of special interest to the beginning archivist will be a session on developing an archival program from scratch.

Members and nonmembers can attend. For further information, contact Brother Denis Sennett, MARAC Secretary, Friars of the Atonement Archives, Graymoor, Garrison, NY 10524.

[from mid-atlantic archivist, Winter 1987]

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"Freedom Fettered: Blacks and the Constitutional Era in Maryland 1776-1810" is the title of a conference to be held at Morgan State University October 2-3, 1987 in celebration of the



bicentennial of the Constitution. The conference is co-sponsored by the Maryland Hall of Records, the Maryland Commission for Afro-American History and Culture, and the Maryland Historical Society which is planning an exhibit of Joshua Johnston's art.

The Conference Committee is seeking papers on all aspects of Afro-American life in Maryland from the writing of the first Maryland Constitution in 1776 to the amendment prohibiting the black vote in 1810. Funds for honoraria and travel expenses will probably be available. For further information contact the Conference Coordinator, Elaine G. Breslaw, Professor of History, Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD 21239, 301-444-3344.

[from QAH Newsletter, February 1987]