
~ Archivists & Archives of Color Newsletter ~

Newsletter of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists

Vol. 24 No. 1

Winter 2010

Message from the Co-Chair

By Tamar Evangelestia-Dougherty

Dear Members,

I am extremely honored to address you as Co-Chair of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable.

I fondly recall the year 2003 when I attended my first AAC event at the SAA Annual Meeting in Los Angeles. Since then, I have been consistently impressed with the work and accomplishments of the roundtable.

My career primarily has been in academic rare book and special collections libraries, where the advent of "town and gown" initiatives have increased an awareness among archivists to focus on outreach efforts between repositories and the minority communities in which they reside. As Consulting Archivist for the Black Metropolis Research Consortium at the University of Chicago, I am working with archivists, museum professionals and community leaders to create a documentation strategy for the city's rich and vibrant legacy of African American history.

The Consortium's approach to women and minority documentation — to collaborate with actual creators of documents of historical significance, to formulate bonds between archivists and potential donors — is something that I wish we all would strive for as we turn our eyes towards the future of archivists and archives of color.

No longer can we afford to document in solitude behind the walls of our institutions. We must reach out to our diverse communities and let them know we are here.

In my conversations with potential donors, particularly those of color, I am amazed at the number of times I am told, "I did not think anybody cared about my stuff."

They often continue by adding, "I am only a photographer" or "an artist" or "a dance instructor"; "We are just group of Afro-Caribbean poets," "hairdressers" or "community organizers."

Though commendable, such modesty unfortunately leads to collective amnesia and denial. The photographer neglected to mention that he had photographed every African American cultural event in the city of Chicago since 1957; the woman I tracked down never said that she was the daughter of the first black hairdresser in Bronzeville; and information was

withheld that the dance instructor was, at the time, the only woman of color who owned a performing arts studio that trained black ballerinas during the 1968 riots. Why didn't he tell me that his mother worked alongside Martin Luther King, Jr. during his time in Chicago? I am glad I did not listen to him and, instead, chose to look through those boxes for myself.

Despite our efforts, still such questions persist...

"Who would be concerned with some old records of a black owned insurance company? We ain't no Prudential. So what if my grandfather was the president. How could those papers he left behind be of significance to anyone?"

These are the things I hear that lead me to ask my fellow AAC members: Are we doing enough? Are we letting our communities know that we are available and that their history *does* matter? Are we telling them what a record of significance is? Do we communicate the needs of our documentary record?

"Sure we have plenty of collections on the black political cartoonists who are male. The black male in Chicago is well documented in that regard. Is there anyone with information about black female cartoonists?"

These are the questions motivating me as an archivist of color who promotes archives of color.

We have the power to seek and educate.

I believe that one of the most significant contributions the AAC can make in this effort is by strengthening our resources for recruiting not only archivists of color but professionals who are interested in providing outreach to communities producing archives of color. Our understanding of such documents would be greatly diminished if we failed to help others understand who we are as archivists and what we can do to help them preserve their history.

As AAC members, I hope you will see the roundtable as more than simply a newsletter, electronic listserv, or a yearly gathering with colleagues but rather as a group of archivists who are committed to diversity within the profession and who are working towards discovering, interpreting, and preserving a diverse history.

I invite you to increase your involvement with our roundtable. Always feel free to contact your Co-Chairs - either Rebekah Kim (rebekah@glbthistory.org) or myself (tamarl@uchicago.edu) - with any questions.

Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable Business Meeting Minutes

*Wednesday, August 12, 2009, 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Hilton Austin (Texas)*

Submitted by Rebekah Kim

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I. Welcome and Introductions: Josué Hurtado (outgoing Co-Chair) called the meeting to order. He introduced himself, Rebekah Kim (Vice Co-Chair), Tomaro Taylor (newsletter editor, not present at the time of the introduction), Rose Roberto (webmaster, not present) and Janel Quirante (listserv manager, not present).

II. General Announcements

A. Harold T. Pinkett Award Announcement

1. Recipients of the 2009 Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award were introduced: Krystal Appiah (University of California, Los Angeles), I-Ting Emily Chu (New York University).
 - i. Krystal Appiah earned a Bachelor's degree in English from Brown University. She is currently enrolled in the Master of Library and Information Sciences Program at the University of California, Los Angeles. Appiah has expressed an interest in developing archival programs that reach out to African-American communities. She plans to graduate with a degree in public history to meet her goal of expanding archival programming and outreach to minority communities.
 - ii. I-Ting Emily Chu is a graduate student in the archival management program at New York University. She is a recipient of the Asian/Pacific/American Institute graduate assistantship and works with the Institute's archival materials in the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives. Chu also works on materials produced by Asian CineVision, which has placed its archives at NYU. She recently presented a poster at the national Council on Public History's 2009 Annual Meeting in Providence, Rhode Island and organized a session on Asian-American collecting efforts for the Archivists Roundtable of Metropolitan New York Inc.

Donations were solicited from the audience. A total of \$335.00 was collected for next year's winners.

- B. 2010 SAA Conference Call for Proposals:** Jillian Chub (2010 program committee co-chair) solicited session proposals for the 2010 Joint SAA, COSA, NAGARA Annual conference to be held in Washington, DC. There is no theme for the conference. Proposals that include members from each of the above organizations, speak to the commonality of archivists and records administrations, and incorporate concerns between the three organizations are encouraged. Incomplete session proposals will be declined. Session proposal forms have been revised and are available online. Tips on how to put together a winning proposal are also available online. The deadline for session proposals is September 24, 2009.

AAC can endorse two session proposals. The program committee is looking for proposals from a wide variety of institutions and people and is especially interested in proposals with an international perspective. Proposals now may be submitted electronically. The SAA Education Committee is also seeking proposals for pre-conference workshops, contact Solveig de Sutter.

- C. Report from NARA:** Wilda Logan described NARA's diversity initiatives.
- D. Miscellaneous Announcements from AAC Members in Attendance**

1. Marisol Ramos (senior co-chair of LACCHA) spoke about the Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives Roundtable and circulated the group's meeting agenda. She sought collaborators to keep lines of communication open between roundtables.
2. Susan Lugo (incoming senior co-chair of LACCHA) introduced the St. Croix Population Database, a product of the St. Croix African Roots Project (SCARP) and the Virgin Islands Social History Associates (VISHA) in partnership with Ancestry.com.
3. Evelyn Frangakis (Preservation, New York Public Library) announced the IMLS Preservation Administration Fellowship program at NYPL and Yale University Library. Eight 9-month preservation administration fellowships will be available from 2010 - 2012. NYPL will host five fellows, and Yale will host three.

4. Anne Gilliland (UCLA) announced a doctoral scholarship. Archival educators pursuing a doctoral degree at eight participating universities are eligible. Funded by IMLS, the scholarship includes a \$20,000 stipend plus fees for 4 years of study.

E. SAA Council Report: Deborah Richardson (incoming Council liaison) reported on Council Meeting highlights.

1. Council approved the following:

- a. Standards Committee mission revisions;
- b. Revisions to A&A listserv terms of participation;
- c. an Investments Committee to review and recommend revisions to the current Investment Policy and the creation of a Finance Committee;
- d. a Cultural Properties Working Group charged with taking the lead of discussions and advising Council on cultural property and sensitivities (volunteers sought);
- e. select changes to the Council Handbook (Governance Manual);
- f. and, new procedures governing online elections for sections – Roundtables will adopt, governance structure to report to Council, only SAA members and institutional members are eligible to vote. No person may serve as senior leader for longer than three years. SAA disbanded ALA joint statement of access.

2. Council solicited feedback on the Strategic Plan and Advocacy Plan.

F. Mosaic Award: Petrina Jackson announced the inaugural recipients of the Mosaic Scholarship: Janet Ceja (University of Pittsburgh) and Harrison W. Inefuku (University of British Columbia).

Ceja is enrolled as a second-year Ph.D. candidate in the Library and Information Science Program at the University of Pittsburgh. She entered Pitt's archival studies program in 2007 after working as a film archivist in Los Angeles. Ceja will focus her dissertation research on archival methodologies used by Latinos as a tool of social practice and resistance.

Inefuku is a graduate student in the joint Master of Archival Studies and Master of Library and Information Studies Program at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. He earned undergraduate degrees in graphic design and visual culture from the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. His primary research interest lies in the position of the National Archives of South Africa

within the apartheid government and in post-apartheid South Africa.

III. Elections and Voting: Tamar Evangelestia-Dougherty (Consulting Archivist, Black Metropolis Research Consortium) was elected Co-Chair for the 2009 – 2011 term.

IV. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 2:45 PM

2010 Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award Citation

Established in 1993, the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award recognizes minority undergraduate and graduate students, such as those of African, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino, or Native American descent, who, through scholastic and personal achievement, manifest an interest in becoming professional archivists and active members of SAA. The Pinkett award was developed to encourage exceptional minority students to consider careers in the archival profession and, in turn, increase minority participation in SAA by exposing minority students to the experience of attending national meetings and encouraging them to join the organization.

To be eligible, minority students, with preference given to full-time students, must possess a minimum scholastic grade point average of 3.5 while enrolled in a graduate program focusing on archival management during the academic year preceding the date the award is given. The award consists of a certificate and a cash prize supporting full registration and related expenses of hotel and travel for attending the SAA annual meeting.

This year's Society of American Archivists' Annual Meeting, ARCHIVES*RECORDS/DC 2010, is a joint Annual Meeting of the Council of State Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and the SAA. It will be held at the Marriott Wardman Park in Washington, DC from August 10-15, 2010. The Award, jointly funded by the SAA Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable, will be presented during the meeting.

For more information and nomination forms, please visit:
http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/aac/Awards_Pinkett.htm

Electronic submissions are acceptable and should be sent to saahq@archivists.org. Please indicate the name of the award or scholarship in the email subject line; use standard file applications such as Word, Excel, or Adobe; attachments should not exceed 5MB.

If submitting via postal mail, the award application and supporting documentation should be sent to:

Society of American Archivists
ATTN: Awards/Scholarships
17 North State Street, Suite 1425
Chicago, Illinois 60602-3315
USA



Caption: Outgoing AAC Co-Chair Josué Hurtado with Pinkett Award recipients Krystal Appiah and I-Ting Emily Chu (left to right).

within it. Awardees also will receive a one-year membership in SAA and complimentary registration to the Archives*Records/DC 2010: the Joint Annual Meeting of the Council of State Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and the Society of American Archivists.

For more information on eligibility requirements and application procedures, visit <http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-mosaic.asp>. The application deadline is February 28, 2010.

University of Texas Libraries Human Rights Documentation Initiative Launches Website

*Submitted by T-Kay Sangwand
University of Texas Libraries*

In Fall 2009, the University of Texas Libraries launched the website for its new program, the Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HRDI). HRDI began in 2008 as a result of a grant from the Bridgeway Foundation to assist in the preservation of survivor testimonies, court proceedings and other records of the Rwandan genocide. The project was established to collect, preserve and provide access to records of human rights abuses around the world.

Joining the ranks of other prestigious institutions with human rights archives (Columbia University, Duke University, University of Connecticut), the HRDI specializes in preserving fragile, born-digital human rights documentation. The website features searchable archived human rights websites replete with such primary source documentation as newsletters, reports, videos, and photographs; a browseable list of human rights related archival collections at five archival repositories across UT Austin; an "HRDI Updates" blog; a Twitter feed (@UT_HRDI); and an events calendar. Some of the site's most unique resources are the websites archived through the Internet Archive's subscription service, Archive-It. The websites (typically by small non-governmental agencies [NGOs]) contain information on genocide, immigration, disappearances, ethnic conflict, and gender, sexuality and civil liberties in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North America; the languages represented are English, Arabic, Armenian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Farsi, French, German, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish.

In 2010, the website will roll out new features such as indexed and full-text searchable video testimonies and transcripts from the HRDI's partner organizations, the Kigali Memorial Centre and Texas After Violence Project, as well as a growing collection of individual human-rights related news articles, reports, photographs and video materials archived from the Internet. Visit the site at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/hrdi/>.

SAA Mosaic Award



Caption: Petrina Jackson (center) introduces Janet Ceja (left) and Harrison W. Inefuku (right), the inaugural recipients of the Mosaic Scholarship.

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) will award up to two Mosaic Scholarships in 2010 to students pursuing graduate education in archival science.

In its second year, the Mosaic Scholarship grants \$5,000 in financial support to minority students, while promoting diversification of the American archives profession and the American historical record. It will be awarded to selected applicants who demonstrate potential for scholastic and personal achievement and who manifest a commitment both to the archives profession and to advancing diversity concerns

Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation and Woodruff Library Partner to Prepare Tupac Shakur Writings and Papers for Scholarly Research

*Adapted from a posting to the
Society of American Archivists' listserve*

The Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation and Afeni Shakur-Davis, mother of the late platinum recording artist, actor and poet, Tupac Shakur, will partner with the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center to make available for scholarly research Shakur's manuscript writings and other papers.

Born in East Harlem, New York, Shakur honed his acting and performing skills at the city's 127th Street Repertory Ensemble and the Baltimore School of the Arts in Maryland. He first came to prominence in the early 1990s as a featured rapper for the vocal group Digital Underground and went on to become one of the most significant cultural icons of the hip hop generation. Prior to his untimely death at the age of 25, Shakur had released five record albums and appeared in four motion pictures to great success. Ten albums, numerous compilations and four feature films were all released posthumously, including *Tupac, Resurrection*, which received an Academy Award nomination for "Best Documentary (Feature)."

More than a decade after his death on September 13, 1996, Shakur remains one of the most influential writers and performers in the hip hop/rap genre and continues to be the top-selling hip hop recording artist of all time, having sold more than 75 million albums worldwide. A prolific writer, Tupac wrote *The Rose That Grew From Concrete*, when he was only 19 years old. The book contains numerous poems in Tupac's own handwriting and has enjoyed a substantial amount of success, selling more than 250,000 copies. Select poems from the book will now be included as part of The Tupac Shakur Collection.

The Tupac Shakur Collection, now housed within the Woodruff Library's Archives & Special Collections Department, features Shakur's handwritten lyrics and track listings, personal notes, video and film concepts, fan correspondence, promotional materials and other items providing a unique insight into his career and creative genius.

"The Woodruff Library Archives has done a phenomenal job archiving my son's materials," said Afeni Shakur-Davis. "I thank their staff for partnering with my family and the Foundation in helping to make these important documents available in a professional manner that will benefit scholars for years to come."

Currently, Library staff are re-housing the collection's 11 boxes of material into archival boxes and folders, and preparing a finding aid listing the categories and order of items included. A digital (online) finding aid will be prepared

to further enhance scholarly access. The Tupac Shakur Collection is expected to be open for research in Fall 2010.

"The Woodruff Library is honored to collaborate with the Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation to preserve the artistic legacy of Tupac Shakur," said Loretta Parham, CEO & Library Director. "Mr. Shakur was a multi-dimensional artist who helped define a musical genre, and as the academic library serving four institutions of higher learning, it is our mission, as well as a great privilege, to help promote scholarship and research of his work, and the mechanics of his creative process and the hip hop culture."

The Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center (AUC) serves the collective research and information needs of Clark Atlanta University, the Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College and Spelman College. The Library's Archives & Special Collections is the repository for historical materials documenting the AUC institutions, as well as manuscript collections and organizational records, including the Morehouse College Martin Luther King, Jr. Collection and the Maynard Jackson Mayoral Administrative Records.

In addition to the archival partnership with the Woodruff Library, the Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation has recruited some of the nation's top scholars to assemble the *Tupac Shakur Secondary School Curriculum*, a 7th - 12th grade academic curriculum and a college-level reader. In this comprehensive curriculum, the poetry, music and views of Tupac Shakur are used to teach basic hip hop studies units within academic disciplines such as fine arts, history and language arts. This learning tool can be used separately or in conjunction with any state-mandated learning standards curriculum. Both the release of the secondary and college-level curricula will coincide with the opening for research of The Tupac Shakur Collection at the Woodruff Library in Fall 2010.

UCSB Ethnic and Multicultural Archive Launches Teatro Campesino Online

*Adapted from the November/December 2009 edition
of Archival Outlook*

More than 100 vintage video recordings of the world-renowned Latino theater company El Teatro Campesino are now available online courtesy of the California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (CEMA) at the University of California, Santa Barbara's Davidson Library. The digitized videos, 118 in all, make up the Teatro Campesino Online Collection and can be accessed on CEMA's ImaginArte website at <http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu/project-description.html>. The most influential Latino theater company in the country, El Teatro Campesino has made major contributions to Chicano culture in the United States and, more broadly, to the development and expansion of the boundaries of theater.

Rare Photos of Africa Open New Options for Research

*Adapted from a posting to the
Society of American Archivists listserve*

A searchable collection of rare photographs chronicling Europe's colonization of East Africa became available recently thanks to the efforts of staff at Northwestern University Library.

The Humphrey Winterton Collection of East African Photographs: 1860 - 1960 (<http://repository.library.northwestern.edu/winterton/>) began attracting the interest of Africa scholars and others in 2002 when it was acquired by Northwestern's Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies. The library officially launched the online collection June 25, 2009.

"The 7,000-plus photographs in this extraordinary collection document the changing relationships among Africans and between Africans and Europeans during 100 years of dramatic historic change," says Herskovits Library curator David Easterbrook. They include formal and informal portraits of Africans and their colonizers, photos of slaves and slave traders, images depicting the building of railroads and urban areas, as well as images representing traditional African life and the work of explorers, colonial officials, settlers, missionaries, military officers, travelers and early commercial photographers.

Visitors to the site can search for photographs by subject or browse them in a way that replicates how British collector Winterton organized the collection into 65 albums, scrapbooks and boxes. A "browsing feature" developed by Northwestern University Library technology specialists, for example, reproduces the experience of flipping through a photo album's pages.

Jonathan Glassman, a Northwestern associate professor of history in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and specialist in 19th- and 20th-century East Africa and comparative race and slavery, says the collection's special value lies in its unusual subject matter.

"The most familiar photographs from this era tend to dwell on what photographers considered East Africa's glamorous aspects -- its spectacular wildlife, landscapes, settler life or the occasional posed portrait of an African sultan or Maasai warrior," he says. "What stands out about the collection is the large number of items that document prosaic matters -- matters that are precisely the most difficult for the student of African history to get a handle on."

Because the images are tagged with extensive metadata, they can be searched by date or keywords. A school group viewing the site in its pilot stage, for example, asked Easterbrook to see if the collection included any photos relating to President Obama's ancestry. The result: 31 photos of people and places

were

found.

According to Easterbrook, photos going back as far as the 1860s are extremely rare in the history of photography in Africa, and opportunities to see and study them are rarer still. The creation of the digital Winterton site changes that.

To optimize its value as an educational tool for students of all ages, the online collection was designed in consultation with a group of kindergarten to high school educators and members of Northwestern's renowned Program of African Studies.

Generous funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services made it possible for Northwestern University Library not only to digitize the Winterton Collection images but also to design innovative tools to preserve and display them in electronic form.

With the launch, the Winterton Collection becomes the third Herskovits Library collection available online. The others are a collection of 113 antique African maps dating from the 16th to the early 20th century (<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govinfo/collections/mapsofafrica/>) and a collection of 590 posters reflecting the culture and politics of contemporary African nations (<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/africana/collections/posters/>).

The Coca-Cola Company Gives \$7.2 Million to Atlanta University Center

*Submitted by Adrian B. Carver
Robert W. Woodruff Library
Atlanta University Center*

The Coca-Cola Company has announced that it will give \$6 million to Spelman College, Morehouse College, Clark Atlanta University and the Morehouse School of Medicine, all part of the Atlanta University Center. This support will assist students at these Atlanta-based historically black colleges and universities with scholarship funds where economic hardship is impacting the likelihood of the completion of their education. Additionally, the Company announced that \$1.2 million will be given to the Robert W. Woodruff Library on the campus of the Atlanta University Center to upgrade the Library's IT infrastructure and enhance the ability to manage and provide access to critical archival documents, such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. papers.

Muhtar Kent, chairman and CEO, The Coca-Cola Company, made the check presentations at the Robert W. Woodruff Library to Dr. Beverly Tatum, president, Spelman College; Dr. Robert Franklin, Jr., president, Morehouse College;

Dr. Carlton Brown, president, Clark Atlanta University; Dr. John Maupin, Jr., president, Morehouse School of Medicine; and Ms. Loretta Parham, CEO and Library Director, Robert W. Woodruff Library at the Atlanta University Center. "The

Coca-Cola Company will always look for opportunities to make a difference in the communities where it operates, especially in our hometown,” said Mr. Kent. “On behalf of our associates who call Atlanta home, we are proud to provide \$7.2 million to these leading institutions of higher learning. We view this as an investment in the next generation of students who will pass through these campuses, continue their education and benefit from having Dr. King’s papers within arm’s reach.”

The Coca-Cola Company created and funded a \$10 million Promotional Achievement Award Fund (PAAF) program for its United States based African-American employees as part of a class-action lawsuit settlement in 2000. The fund was designed to encourage and provide educational opportunities for African-American employees in the United States and was operational from 2004 to 2008. During that time, employees accessed \$2.8 million for education. The remaining money in the Fund, as a term in the settlement, was designated by The Coca-Cola Company to be distributed to eligible institutions in the Atlanta University Center.

In accepting the scholarship support, Dr. Beverly Tatum said, “The students and the faculty of these institutions are grateful and thankful to The Coca-Cola Company. This support will be of immense help to a number of students wanting to realize their dreams through education. Given the current difficult times, initiatives like these assume an even greater significance.”



(Left to right): Ingrid Saunders Jones, Senior VP, Global Community Connections, The Coca-Cola Company; Muhtar Kent, Chairman and CEO, The Coca-Cola Company; Loretta Parham, CEO and Director, Woodruff Library; and Alex Cummings, Chief Administrative Officer, The Coca-Cola Company.

Haitian Archives Update

Adapted from an article posted in the SAA's "In the Loop" newsletter for Tuesday, February 2, 2010

The SAA Council will discuss the conditions of archives in Haiti at its meeting in Washington, D.C. Maygene Daniels, SAA Fellow and past president, will represent SAA at a meeting of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield (a non-profit organization that protects cultural property around the world during armed conflicts and other emergencies) member organizations in Washington on February 5. SAA is seeking the most effective ways that it can assist Haitian archives. Information from the Council's discussions and from the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield meeting will be distributed as soon as possible. To learn about the state of libraries, records, and those in the profession affected by the recent earthquake, visit the Digital Library of the Caribbean Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?v=wall&gid=76719774322>.

People...

~~~~~ Archivists at Work

Rose Roberto, AAC Webmaster and Faculty Team Librarian at the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, recently published "British Slave Trade Legacies: Technology Intersection Culture" in the *Society of Archivists (UK) Journal*, vol. 29 issue 2 (October 2008): 207 – 232. The article describes two issues raised by the British Slave Trade Legacies, a web archiving project that collected websites and online material related to and generated from the 2007 bicentenary of Parliament abolishing the British slave trade. The paper describes the validity of the 2007 anniversary as marked by cultural stakeholders as well as the challenges of documenting the anniversary, thereby adding to the historical legacy material of this topic. The inclusive role of the archivist in the 21st century is also discussed in the context of new digital age challenges. The paper is available from the Taylor & Francis website: <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a913245191> or by contacting the Ms. Roberto at r.v.roberto@leeds.ac.uk.

Spotlight on...

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### *The African American Library at the Gregory School*

*Submitted by Vince Lee  
African American Library at the Gregory School  
Houston Public Library*

The Gregory School stands as a monument honoring the memories and sacrifices of past generations of African Americans who lived and thrived during a period in history where segregation, civil rights, oppression and educational disadvantages were the norm. Built in 1926, the two-story, 26,000 square-foot, former elementary school named for Edgar M. Gregory (Union officer and Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau for the Texas area), is located in historic Freedmen's Town, in Houston's Fourth Ward. This area is considered to be the city's oldest established African American community. By 1876, The Gregory Institute had become part of the Houston Independent School District, serving as the first public education institution for African American children.

The State Historical Commission designated the Gregory State building as a State Archaeological Landmark. In 2008, ground-breaking was initiated and work began to restore the former school and transform it into The African American Library at the Gregory School. The Library opened its doors on November 14, 2009 after renovations were completed.

#### **Collections and Archives**

The archival collection will provide historical information documenting the experience of African American residents, businesses, institutions, and neighborhoods throughout Houston and the surrounding region. To serve students, instructors, and researchers, the African American Library at the Gregory School will house a variety of primary source materials. Donations are welcomed to help grow the collection.

#### **Freedmen's Town Gallery**

This exhibit chronicles a crucial period in Houston's history — the post-emancipation establishment of an African American community. This community later became known as Freedmen's Town, Fourth Ward. The exhibit incorporates a wide variety of stories proving the power of a people's commitment to one another by building and sustaining family, communities of worship, and social organizations that served as the foundation for this thriving, self-contained neighborhood.

#### **African Americans in Houston Gallery**

The African Americans in Houston Gallery celebrates those generations of people whose cultural heritage played a significant role in what the city of Houston is today and what it will be tomorrow. Integral to the exhibit are photographs and artifacts representing the seven principles that are universal to the development of communities: unity, self determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

#### **Oral History Studio**

The Gregory School is equipped with the latest audio and video equipment to conduct oral history recordings. Oral history interviews will be conducted with individuals who have made important contributions to Houston's African American experience. Recordings will be transcribed and researchers will have access to both the transcripts and the original recorded interview. Some of the interviews will be posted online in order to broaden their availability to researchers unable to visit the Gregory School in person.

#### **Contact Information**

Address: 1300 Victor Street, Freedmen's Town, Fourth Ward,  
Houston, Texas, 77019  
Telephone: 832-393-1440  
URL: <http://www.thegregoryschool.org>

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#### **Call for Volunteers**

The Association of National Committees of the Blue Shield (ANCBS) seeks archivists, restorers, curators, librarians, architects and other experts willing to help their Haitian colleagues in assessing the damage to their country's cultural heritage and identity. Blue Shield also wants to support recovery, restoration and repair measures necessary to rebuild libraries, archives, museums, monuments and sites.

To register as a volunteer, please fill out the form at:  
<http://haiti2010.blueshield-international.org/>.

The actions of Blue Shield also can be followed on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?v=info&gid=24728134340>) and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/blueshieldcoop>).

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VISIT THE AAC'S WEBSITE TO READ  
PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THE  
NEWSLETTER:

<http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/aac/Activities.htm>

**Editor**

**Tomaro I. Taylor**

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FAX: (813) 396-9006

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**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, Latino, 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:



**Rebekah Kim** (left), Managing Archivist, GLBT Historical Society, 657 Mission Street #300, San Francisco, CA 94105  
[Rebekah@glbthistory.org](mailto:Rebekah@glbthistory.org)

**Tamar Evangelestia- Dougherty** (right), Consulting Archivist, Black Metropolis Research Consortium, 5720 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637  
[tamar1@uchicago.edu](mailto:tamar1@uchicago.edu)

***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:

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